1976


Karen Jo Ann Koenigs

Loyola University Chicago

Recommended Citation
http://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/1560

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.
Copyright © 1976 Karen Jo Ann Koenigs
EARLY EVALUATION OF THE NOVEL: PERIODICAL REVIEWS
OF MID-EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LONDON

by
Karen Jo Ann Koenigs

A Dissertation Submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate School of
Loyola University of Chicago
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

June
1975
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There is too little space here to name the many people who helped me in this undertaking, but the list begins with my friends among the Dominican Sisters of Edmonds, Washington. In particular, I thank Sister Kathleen Logan for her patient assurance and Sister Corinne Epps whose typing skills and generous moral support brought me through the final labor.

I am deeply indebted to my director, Dr. Douglas White, for his candid criticisms and remarkable understanding; to Dr. Eileen Baldeshwiler and Dr. John Shea for their helpful comments, and to the late Rev. Carl J. Stratman whose attention to the details of research was inspirational.

Particular acknowledgment should be given to The Newberry Library, Chicago, for both the excellent periodical holdings and the friendly atmosphere for scholarship the staff and readers supply.

Finally, I dedicate this piece to my parents, Eva and Clete Koenigs, who have never doubted in me.
VITA

Karen Jo Ann Koenigs was born in Pasco, Washington on November 6, 1936.

She completed her elementary and secondary education in Seattle parochial schools, graduating from Holy Angels High School in June, 1954.

In September, 1954, she entered the religious order of the Dominican Sisters, Congregation of the Holy Cross, now in Edmonds, Washington, with whom she began her college studies under the auspices of Seattle University. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Holy Names College, Spokane, in July, 1960 and did graduate work in speech and hearing therapy at the University of Washington, Seattle, while she taught in elementary and secondary schools in Washington State.

She began her graduate studies in literature at Loyola University in September, 1964, as an NDEA Fellow in Literary Criticism. In September, 1968, she was awarded an Arthur J. Schmitt Doctoral Scholarship to continue her studies.

Ms. Koenigs has been teaching at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, since September, 1969.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, 1740 TO 1767</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE LONDON MAGAZINE: 1740 TO 1767</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE MONTHLY REVIEW: 1749 TO 1767</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE CRITICAL REVIEW: 1756 TO 1767</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. References to Novels in the Magazines between 1740 and 1767</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Number of Novels and Plays Treated by the Reviews per Year</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. First Appearances of Evaluative Words Expressing Emotion</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this study is to determine the concept or concepts of the novel held by the reviewers in London periodicals between 1740 and 1767. I will describe their notions about the nature and function of the novel, the evolving standards by which they judged it, and their techniques for dealing with the novel as an independent genre. Since few of these critical definitions are explicitly stated in the periodicals, the standards for judgment and understanding must be synthesized from scattered remarks on particular novels.

As a useful comparison, I have also screened the reviews of drama, in the same selected periodicals, in order to determine the basis for critical evaluations applied to a literary form with a long history. The common terminology and similar approaches in these contemporary reviews of both novels and plays cannot be ignored, and it was part of the original thesis of this study that early criticism of the novel was directly influenced by the standards used for judging drama. However, this hypothesis had to be modified, and comparison of later reviewers' opinions of the drama and the novel shows the process by which the concept of the novel
and the critical modes of approaching the genre differentiated from the principles associated with the drama.

Existing scholarship concerning the early reception of the novel in periodical reviews usually stresses the role of criticism in shaping the novel. In *The History, from 1700 to 1800, of English Criticism of Prose Fiction*,¹ Joseph G. Heidler drew from many sources "to show the effect of the growth of criticism of the novel upon its structure and technique" (p. 15). Only a very small portion of this ambitious undertaking was drawn from periodical literature. Robert D. Mayo² concentrated on British periodicals to investigate the kinds of fiction they contain and the attitudes towards this fiction. Besides the larger time period, his study differs from mine because his material is chiefly the fiction found in magazines and not the reviews. Edmund P. Dandridge³ studied the criticism in periodicals between 1700 and 1752 to assess the contribution of the periodical critics to the development and acceptance of literary criticism by the general reading public. His focus is on criticism as a genre and not on the development of the novel.


³"Literary Criticism in British Periodicals to the Mid-Eighteenth Century" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, 1959).
In two separate articles, Claude E. Jones surveys the novel and the drama as seen in the first thirty years of the Critical Review to discover public reception of the two genres. In neither case does he attempt a chronological breakdown but uses a topical outline and treats the entire period as a single block. Some of the generalizations he forms are consistent with my findings, but his work does little to integrate the Critical Review with the criticism of other publications. Therefore, he does not observe how the Critical Review often differs from the other publications in its assessment of the novel.

William Park uses both the Monthly and Critical reviews, indiscriminately, to show that "critics were very much in touch with their times and that no critical lag existed between the understanding of the reviewers and the innovations of a new generation of novelists" (p. 35). He focuses on the shifts in emphasis from nature and verisimilitude to feeling, and from morality to propriety. Though it is helpful, the seven and one-half-page article does oversimplify the trends of criticism of the novel by starkly contrasting isolated passages before and after 1760 and by

---


giving little indication of the slighter and more gradual nuances of change.

The four periodicals selected for the present analysis are written by and for a large sector of the reading and writing public. The Gentleman's Magazine originated as an eighteenth-century Reader's Digest, culling items from the leading publications, but it eventually developed its own style and departments of information which included reviews of books and plays. It became the largest-circulating magazine in British history and continued publication well into the nineteenth century. The London Magazine was an outright imitator of the Gentleman's Magazine but it appealed to a slightly lower class of reader. The Monthly Review, begun in 1749, was the first journal dedicated solely to informing the public of the contents of the hundreds of books invading the booksellers' shops. The Critical Review, starting seven years later, was more selective than its prototype, and it also exhibited a greater refinement of critical method.

The usefulness of selecting periodicals to estimate the contemporary attitudes of the reading public towards the novel should be made quite clear. First of all, they represent a relatively stable continuum in which gradual change can easily be perceived. With sporadic publications we are not only uncertain of the readership but are in danger of
interpreting the enthusiasm of the minute as more significant or permanent than it actually was.

Secondly, we have no literary source closer to the people who bought (or borrowed) and read the early novels than the reviewer who recommended them. How these reviewers addressed their audiences, what roles they assumed, their choice of words, their arrangement of ideas within their essays, and what principles of criticism they applied tell us something about the general knowledge and taste of the reading public. We may in fact discover that the practical use of certain critical concepts precedes their solidification in the works of major writers and philosophers. We discover, for example, that the London Magazine reviewers described novels in terms of the emotional sympathy they evoke long before they use the term "sympathy" or "sentiment" (with an emotional connotation) or before Adam Smith's publication on The Theory of Moral Sentiments. On the other hand, certain technical critical terms such as the unities never seem to have been very influential with the magazines' and reviews' audiences. If they use the terms "unities" and "poetic justice" they take on the new meanings drawn from the sentimental movement. Using periodicals, we have the opportunity to trace the gradual changes in ideas and attitudes and to learn something about the process of change in literary tastes.
CHAPTER I

THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, 1740 TO 1767

The pages of the most celebrated and influential periodical of mid-eighteenth century London were crowded with details of political, military, and ecclesiastical events, of scientific and medical developments, of economics and foreign affairs, and of the social and domestic happenings which constitute the interests of a thriving population. As part of this bright array, the Gentleman's Magazine\(^1\) included occasional reviews of drama, a few articles on the more prominent novels, and further comments on the fiction and other general titles itemized in the publishers' book lists.\(^2\) The quality of these contributions as representatives of prevailing attitudes about literature is better measured once we have examined the nature of this periodical, including its writers, audience, and general content.

---

\(^1\)Hereafter also referred to as Gentleman's or simply GM. The abbreviated form will be used in the text after quoted passages, followed by the volume number, month, year, and page numbers.

\(^2\)See Appendix A, Table 1, showing the distribution and frequency of mentions of chief novels in the Gentleman's Magazine.
None of the publications to be examined bore the personal imprint of its founder more distinctly than the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Edward Cave's acute business sense, his interest in politics and science, his mediocre literary taste, and his questionable critical skills affected the editorial policy and contents of his publication until long after his death on January 10, 1754.

Samuel Johnson, who was employed by Cave and who composed the biographical tribute to him appearing in the *Gentleman's*, February 1754, described the publisher's resolution and perseverance as "very uncommon; whatever he undertook neither expense nor fatigue were able to repress him," and he once told Boswell:

Cave used to sell ten thousand of "The *Gentleman's Magazine*"; yet such was then his minute attention and anxiety that the sale should not suffer the smallest decrease, that he would name a particular person who he heard had talked of leaving off the magazine, and would say, "Let us have something good next month."

Because of their close friendship, Johnson most likely modified the harsher realities of Cave's conduct,

---


5 For example, note the difference between the assessment given by Johnson: "His mental faculties were slow; he saw little at a time, but that little he saw with great exactness. He was long in finding the right, but
but we cannot deny that Cave's idea of a miscellany was one of the most profitable and long-termed in journalistic history. Before the magazine had completed its ninth year, the fifth edition of some of the earliest numbers had been printed (GM 9: Mar. 1739, [111]). Hawkins states that Johnson's accounts of Parliamentary proceedings published as "Debates in the Senate of Great Lilliput" (which began June 1738) "increased the sale of Cave's pamphlet from ten to fifteen thousand copies a month." 6 More specific figures of

seldom failed to find it at last" (GM 24: Feb. 1754, 58), and that of Sir John Hawkins: "Cave's temper was phlegmatic: though he assumed, as the publisher of the Magazine, the name of Sylvanus Urban, he had few of those qualities that constitute the character of urbanity. Judge of his want of them by this question, which he once put to an Author: 'Mr. _____, I hear you have just published a pamphlet, and am told there is a very good paragraph in it upon the subject of Music: did you write that yourself?'"


6 Ibid., p. 123. William B. Todd ingeniously arrives at a similar number by projecting from a single clue given by Cave in a fine-print notice to a disappointed contributor in the November 1734 number: "Our Time is limited, and every page in our Book [sic] is a Guinea Charge to us." Basing his estimates on the cost of paper and expenses for 1,000 copies, Todd figures that "each 1734 number must have approximated 9000 copies. . . . If the issue was some 9000 in 1734 it may well have reached 10,000 several years later (when Johnson began to edit the "Debates") and in the period July 1741-Mar. 1744 (when he was sole author of this section) gradually increased to it, temporarily, several thousand more or, if all these earlier estimates are correct, to 18,000." "A Bibliographical Account of the Gentleman's Magazine, 1731-1754," Studies in Bibliography: Papers of the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia 18 (1965): 85-86.

Unfortunately for Todd, D. F. McKenzie and J. C. Ross discredit this argument on the basis of Todd's miscalculation of the amount of paper needed for 1,000 copies of
circulation are unavailable. Johnson conveys the spirit of the enterprise if not an accurate count when he describes the Gentleman's as "a periodical pamphlet, of which the scheme is known wherever the English language is spoken" (GM 24: Feb. 1754, 57).

Two qualities characterize Cave's venture: variety and impartiality. The motto "E. Pluribus Unum" on the volume title page with a cut picturing a hand grasping a bouquet of mixed flowers represented the variety which was to be supplied by the "no less than 200 Half-sheets per Month [which] are thrown from the Press only in London, and about as many printed elsewhere in the three Kingdoms" plus "some other Matters of Use or Amusement that will be communicated to us" (GM 1: 1731, Preface). In an advertisement

seven half sheets (seven reams, not fourteen). A Ledger of Charles Ackers: Printer of "The London Magazine" (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 34. They further point out the wide margin of error possible when estimating numbers of original copies from a list of extant copies (p. 18), a procedure which Todd used to arrive at estimates of the first five editions of the first number of the Gentleman's Magazine (p. 85).

Both of these were borrowed from the old Gentleman's Journal and suggest Cave's attempt to identify with that magazine's purpose of entertaining men of rank and letters. However, his magazine's real ancestry is more closely related to the historical miscellanies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which were compilations aimed primarily at informing and recording. For a further discussion of these and their echoes in the GM, see C. Lennart Carlson, The First Magazine (Providence, R.I.: Brown University, 1938), pp. 36-48.
placed in the *Universal Spectator* for January 30, 1731, Cave promised

> a Collection of all
> Matters of Information and Amusement: Com-
> priz'd under the following Heads, viz.
>   Publick Affairs, Foreign and Domestick,
>   Births, Marriages, and Deaths of Eminent Persons,
>   Preferments, Ecclesiastical and Civil.
>   Prices of Goods, Grain and Stocks.
>   Bankrupts declar'd and Books Publish'd
>   Pieces of Humour and Poetry
>   Disputes in Politicks and Learning.
> Remarkable Advertisements and Occurrences.
> Lists of the Civil and Military Establishment. . . .
> With Instructions in Gardening, and the Fairs for February.

Items representing all of these categories except the last two, gardening and fairs, appear with considerable regularity during the period of 1740 to 1767.

In the first number, January 1731, Cave divided the material into seven main headings; the contents of the first three comprised the bulk of the issue: "I. A View of the Weekly Essays; II. Poetry; III. Domestick Occurrences."

The last four encompassed vital statistics of several types, books published, and observations on gardening. From 1732, the outline expanded for "Political Points" which, in August of that same year, moved to the post of main heading as "The Proceedings and Debates in Parliament," and remained there in one form or another, taking up well over a third of each issue of the forty-eight-(and later fifty-six-) page octavo, until November 1745. By this time, a section entitled "Dissertations and Essays from Correspondents," introduced in October 1735, replaced the Weekly Essays in importance.
and quantity, so that the format of the magazine was virtually the same from December of 1745 through 1767.

Another motto appearing on the title page of each issue, Horace's "Prodesse et Delectare," suggests the emphasis on the practical that motivated Cave himself and distinguished his magazine. One manifestation of this quality was his promise to print "impartial Abridgments," a plan which not only garnered the confidence of his reading public, but which was in part responsible for the longevity of his publication amidst more biased and short-lived political newssheets. Originally, he had arranged the reprinted or abridged essays in chronological order according to date of publication, a plan followed by The Monthly Chronicle, then the most encyclopedic source of political information being printed, but he soon abandoned this in favor of a topical arrangement so that readers could immediately see opposing arguments on major issues, and Cave, of course, though a Whig, would be committed to neither side.

In recording literary matters, Cave's magazine also maintained the reputation of being a nonpartisan sounding board. One correspondent prefaced his critique on some Latin poetry which appeared in the Gentleman's with the following:

---

8 For a list of the chief newssheets, the dates of their existence and political sponsorship around the time of the appearance of the Gentleman's, see Carlson, The First Magazine, pp. 47-48.
Mr. Urban, 9

As your Book has been the usual Canal whereby the Analysis and Characters of some ingenious Books have been conveyed to the Public, and as more Impartiality is to be expected from your Correspondents than from the Authors of literary Journals, who have oftentimes been suspected of the epidemical Vice of the Age, private interest, I choose to convey to you my opinion of a late elegant Performance in a learned Language, and my Notions of Modern Latin Poetry in general.

(GM 12: Feb. 1742, 98)

Although it is true that we have no assurance of the sincerity of this correspondent's intentions, this passage still illustrates the general understanding of Cave's intent.

Cave's endorsement of literary achievement was less manifest on the pages of the Gentleman's than his more practical interests, although this is probably due more to his poor literary taste, and that of his readers, than to neglect. His reprints of literary articles from other publications give us some idea of popular literary topics, especially those which were likely to be controversial, such as the quarrels of churchmen over Tom Jones and the effects of William Lauder's long-lasting hoax disparaging Milton's Paradise Lost, a fraud which even Johnson unwittingly took part in perpetuating. 10 Eventually, Cave drew a number of

---

9 Cave used the pseudonym "Sylvanus Urban, Gent." for the Gentleman's to emphasize the universality of content and likewise, the breadth of circulation he anticipated.

10 Johnson wrote a lengthy essay supporting the proposed printing of Adamus Exsul, one of Lauder's forgeries (GM 17: Aug. 1747, 404). D. J. Greene, "Some Notes on Johnson and the Gentleman's Magazine," PMLA 74 (Mar. 1959): 83-84, attributes an editorial note concluding the
correspondents who sent in literary articles and reviews, of some quality, but that such was not always the case is attested by the letter written by Samuel Johnson before he left Leicester, dated November 25, 1734:

Sir,

As you appear no less sensible than your Readers of the defects of your Poetical Article, you will not be displeased, if, in order to the improvement of it, I communicate to you the sentiments of a person, who will undertake, on reasonable terms, sometimes to fill a column.

His opinion is, that the publick would not give you a bad reception, if, besides the current wit of the month, which a critical examination would generally reduce to a narrow compass, you admitted not only poems, inscriptions, &c. never printed before, which he will sometimes supply you with; but likewise short literary dissertations in Latin or English, critical remarks on authors antient or modern, forgotten poems that deserve revival, or loose pieces like Floyer's ["Treatise on Cold Baths"], worth preserving. By this method, your literary article, for so it might be called, will, he thinks be better recommended to the publick, than by low jests, awkward buffoonery, or the dull scurrilities of either party. . . .11

Another approach was apparently necessary to elicit a contract from Cave because it was not until after Johnson submitted a complimentary ode, "Ad Urbanum," printed anonymously in the March 1738 issue, 12 that he became a regular contributor. It is another sign of Cave's predilection for


12 Boswell, 1: 113-14.
politics over literature that Johnson's largest production for the magazine was the monthly account of the "Proceedings of the Senate of Lilliput" which he at first stylistically adapted from William Guthrie's sketchy accounts from possibly June, probably September 1738; then wrote entirely from notes of Parliamentary speeches given him by others after February 1741 to February 1743. 13

In order to muster readership and to attract first-rate poets, Cave sponsored poetry contests for a few years during the first decade of the magazine's existence. But the verse he printed never exceeded the mediocre. Whether this is because of a reluctance of first-rate poets to publish in the monthlies, or because of Cave's poor taste in selecting verse is difficult to say. 14 The significant fact is that

13 Carlson, The First Magazine, pp. 99-103. Johnson's literary contributions to the Gentleman's are listed in the notes 19 to 22 below.

14 It is true that Cave dabbled in verse himself, and the few extant examples suggest that his ear and imagination were limited to iambic cadence and hard couplet rhyme. Further subtleties of language and image seem to have escaped him, bearing witness to the following story by Hawkins:

"I remember that, calling in on him once, he gave me to read the beautiful poem of Collins, written for Shakespeare's Cymbeline, 'To fair Fidele's grassy tomb,' which, though adapted to a particular circumstance in the play, Cave was for inserting in his Magazine, without any reference to the subject. I told him it would lose of its beauty if it were so published: this he could not see; nor could he be convinced of the propriety of the name Fidele: he thought Pastora a better, and so printed it." The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D, pp. 48-49.
poor verse was printed in the Gentleman's and Cave's ultimate responsibility for this certainly suggests low poetic standards on his part.

Unlike many contemporary publications, particularly the weeklies, the Gentleman's printed very few purely fictitious narratives. Until the fifties when the taste for the sentimental was growing, fictional items in this magazine seldom exceeded one page in length and more often approximated one hundred words. These narratives were usually sent in by correspondents, and were in the form of anecdotes, fables, little moral stories, and brief histories. Cave did try a six-part story from April 1737 to March 1738 entitled "A Story Strange as True," but it apparently failed to engender enough interest to create a demand for the conclusion, which was never published. Because his subject matter was aimed primarily at "gentlemen," fiction, especially the romance—which was considered most appealing to women—was omitted during the early years. Even the surge of interest in longer fiction in the fifties produced extended "epitomes" of plays and some reprints of tales from longer books (especially foreign works) or other periodicals rather than many original pieces.\(^\text{15}\) In this respect, the Gentleman's

may be said to have failed to educate its reading public towards a broad view and acceptance of serious fiction.

Cave saw that publishing book reviews would increase business for his own printing press\textsuperscript{16} while providing a needed public service. However, the original stimulus for his inclusion of long book lists seems to be the emergence of his chief competitor, the \textit{London Magazine}, begun by several booksellers who had published the \textit{Monthly Chronicle}. When it began in April 1732, the \textit{London Magazine} made a detailed "Register of Books" one of its chief features. Cave's first reaction was to expand his own book lists, adding summaries as well as more titles,\textsuperscript{17} and to arrange

\cite{1740-1815" might be pointed out here. John Hawkesworth's \textit{Almoran and Hamet}, announced in the \textit{Gentleman's} book lists for June 1761, is also reprinted in the \textit{Gentleman's} that same month (pp. 273-77) from the Public Ledger in a different abridgment than that published in the \textit{Monthly Review}, also June 1761. Mayo acknowledges the \textit{Scots Magazine}'s epitome (July-Aug. 1761) as a verbatim reprint of the \textit{Monthly}'s, but does not mention the \textit{Gentleman}'s or the Public Ledger's version. (See p. 452.)

\textsuperscript{16}A list of publications from Cave's place at St. Johns Gate again points out Cave's interests in the areas of politics, history, and science. The only literary publications seem to be collections of poetry written by his personal friends, Mrs. Carter, Moses Browne, and Robert Luck. See "Autobiography of Sylvanus Urban," \textit{GM} 127: Apr. 1857, 387.

\textsuperscript{17}Cave's list of books for May was probably plagiarized from the \textit{London}'s. There are common misspellings, and at this point, the \textit{Gentleman}'s appeared several days later each month than the \textit{London}. 
the entries in topical rather than chronological order, a system he irregularly followed in succeeding months. But by the end of 1733, the monthly catalogue in both magazines was reduced to one page of fine-print titles and a minimum of elaboration on their contents. The short evaluative accounts of books appearing in the sixties are entirely absent in the thirties and forties, and with a few exceptions when Johnson again joined the staff, in the fifties. As for more extensive reviewing, Cave has been given credit for forming a literary club which drew up a plan for publishing an "impartial account of every work publish'd, in a 12 d. monthly pamphlet" which was to be designated as the Monthly Review. But before Cave could put the plan into action, Ralph Griffith's Monthly Review began publication in 1749 and, for a time, provoked Cave into increased emphasis on book reviewing in the Gentleman's.

Early references to fiction in the Gentleman's consisted of a few critical poems--usually derogatory--about current novels, and the serialized presentation of Memoirs of an Unfortunate Young Nobleman (GM 13: Feb. 1743, 93-94; Apr., 204-5; June, 306-7, 332). Not until December 1748 and June 1749 when Clarissa was the subject of letters to the editor (GM 18: 548-50; GM 19: 245-46) was a novel treated at any significant length.

Even after this, as can be seen in the table in Appendix A, criticism of the novel in the Gentleman's
appeared sporadically and was just as inconsistent in degree of consideration. Compared with the treatment of drama, which received an average of nearly three major or minor articles per year from 1747 to 1767, only eight articles during the same period deal with specific novels at any substantial length. This in itself indicates where reader interest lay between the two genres, but it is not entirely reliable as an index because the dramatic articles were chiefly plot summaries with critical judgments given only if space permitted. The articles on the novels, however, were written chiefly to convey an opinion about the books, and only one, the major article on Tom Jones (GM 20: Mar. 1750, 117-18), contains a plot summary. On the other hand, we can see that public interest in the novel was growing faster than the amount of criticism in the Gentleman's suggests, for a number of parodies, pamphlets, essays, and poems about novels appeared on the book lists. These and simple references to popular novels are included in the table in Appendix A.

It seems likely that over a period of twenty-eight years through the terms of three editors, the Gentleman's

18 After Cave's death, Johnson is believed to have taken the editorship for fifteen months until David Henry, Cave's brother-in-law, and John Hawkesworth took over a co-editorship. Cave's nephew, Richard Cave, appears to be a joint publisher with Henry, according to the title pages, until February 1760, but other evidence shows Hawkesworth's strong hand in literary selections. See Donald D. Eddy,
would have had a number of different reviewers, but at this late date they are impossible to identify. Samuel Johnson, the most illustrious, is credited by Boswell with very few contributions on literary matters, none of which are reviews.19 But internal evidence recently examined by Donald J. Greene20 and Arthur Sherbo21 supports the theory that Johnson was a theater critic for the magazine between 1750 and 1755, and that he reviewed numerous books as well, including at least four pieces of fiction.22


19 These attributions include a letter on the proposed life of Savage (GM 13: Aug. 1743, 416), Boswell 1: 164; "An Essay on Epitaphs" (GM 10: Dec. 1740, 593-96), 1: 17, 148; and, stretching the subject a little, biographies of famous non-literary people. An apparent attempt by the Gentleman’s to compile a list of Johnsonian biographies printed in the magazine by 1750 is revealed in a footnote in the October issue, p. 464. Eight subjects are given.


21 In "Samuel Johnson and the Gentleman’s Magazine, 1750-1755," Johnsonian Studies, ed. Magdi Wahba (Cairo, 1962), 133-59, Sherbo adds The Black Prince (Feb. 1750) and Boadicia (Dec. 1753), and, on stylistic grounds only, suggests Creusa (May 1754) and Barbarosa (Dec. 1754) as part of the reviews in Johnson’s canon.

22 Sherbo selects 36 of the 348 reviews between 1750 and 1755 as having "a right to be considered by Johnsonians." The four works of fiction include the Female Quixote (GM 22: Mar. 1752, 146) which was originally attributed to Johnson by G. B. Hill; The Impertinent (GM 22: Aug. 1752, 387)
Other reviewers for the Gentleman's are more difficult to specify. Owen Ruffhead, the 1769 biographer of Pope, was the chief reviewer for the "New Publications" for an unknown number of years before John Hawkesworth took the position in April 1765. He continued in this function until 1772. Hawkesworth began contributing poetry to the Gentleman's in 1741, and by 1753 he was co-editor of the magazine with David Henry. Hawkesworth also contributed book reviews to the Monthly Review during the seven years he was chief reviewer for Gentleman's, and, on the basis of this, Donald D. Eddy has presented convincing evidence that the twenty-two reviews signed "X" appearing in the Gentleman's between 1767 and 1773 are Hawkesworth's. 23

No other names of Gentleman's writers during this period are connected with book reviewing although it seems that the three men listed could hardly have handled all of the book commentaries appearing between 1740 and 1767. For this reason, and because even identified reviews were unsigned, we will appropriately refer to "reviewers of the Gentleman's" rather than to specific writers.

Despite the likely influence of commercial interests


such as book-selling and magazine competition upon their selections, it is possible to discern a sense of responsibility on the part of the reviewers towards their audience. We should remember that the Gentleman's was destined for a wide reading audience which for the most part was little acquainted with systems of literary criticism, and because of the nature of the contents of the magazine, it is reasonable to suppose that its readers were not buying it primarily for its literary articles.\textsuperscript{24} The reviewers, therefore, not only represent a larger magazine policy as they select the books and plays and write the reviews, but they are sources of general information and write on the level which they believe their audience to understand. By examining their approaches to the subject matter, their word selection and the priorities upon which they base their evaluations, we can gather hints of their attitudes towards their audiences and even toward the art itself.

Consciously or not, the reviewers 1) evaluated the morality of the work; 2) attempted to assess the effect of art on an audience; and 3) investigated the correctness of a work according to the established rules of art which,  

\footnote{24 Because of the modest number and quality of reviews appearing on the pages of the Gentleman's, it is unlikely that Cave was using such material primarily to attract permanent readers of high literary taste. The argument that he included these articles to maintain a curious and fickle public could be much stronger.}
however, they sometimes questioned. Although these elements are continually overlapping, I will attempt to consider each as pointedly as possible on the following pages.

**Morality as a standard**

In May 1743, there appeared in the *Gentleman's* an essay "From the Champion. No. 5" entitled "On the Character of an Excellent Actor." The point of the article is to praise David Garrick and to define what a good player adds to the written script. In what is partly a digression, the author reminds his readers of the prejudices against the stage which were still being pressed by moralists and he advances the positive values of the drama as a teacher of morality.

Such as condemn Plays in general are certainly unacquainted with human Nature, and are far from having right Notions of the shortest Method of instructing. That the World is a Stage, and that all Men are Players, is not only a trite but a true Saying, so true, that it is simply impossible a Play should please, if the Characters are not just. I, therefore, cannot devise any better Method of informing young People as to what Men are, and the World is, than by shewing them good Plays, and giving them a true Relish for them. An Art that can do this is surely worthy of Esteem; it is sad Reasoning to say, that because there are many bad Plays, therefore Plays are bad. Yet this is Mr. Collier's Argument, and indeed the capital Argument of all who have written against Plays. One of the best Answers to

---

25 Henry Fielding edited the only periodical entitled the Champion which is known today, but the publication ceased in 1740, three years before this "reprint." I have been unable to find this essay among the extant issues of his paper.
this Objection is to put the candid Judge in mind, that there are as many moral Sentences in Terence as in Seneca; and that at least a third Part of the fine Collections of Stobaeus are taken from Greek Plays; so that I think I may fairly call it an Absurdity to say, that the best Things are taken out of the worst Books. If it should be replied, that this does not justify modern Plays, I rejoin, that the bare Name of Moliere is sufficient to refute this Cavil. He did more to reform France than all their Preachers and Moralists, for he shewed Vice to be ill Breeding, and that a bad Man ought to be ashamed to show his Face.

(GM 13: May 1743, 254)

Two issues later, a moralist signed "P.B." refutes these grounds for recommending plays in a letter addressed to the Gentleman's Magazine. Continuing the analogy that "all the world's a stage," he addresses himself to the question "whether Plays are the shortest Method of instructing us in the accomplishments necessary to merit his [i.e., 'the Divine Disposer of the Drama's'] gracious Plaudit." He then suggests other places, including books, where virtue may be learned in theory and practice and concludes that the stage ends in the teaching of vice. It is, he says, the practice of the "Plays most in vogue... to promote the kingdom of Darkness" (GM 13: July 1743, 373).

The basic assumption by both writers is that art can influence its audience but the issue in question is whether plays depicting vice should be permitted. The "Champion" writer insists that characters portrayed on the stage should be "just," that is, that they should--as do men in real
life--display both virtue and vice. But he believes that because of the comparison, as presented by a skillful actor, the good will be more attractive and vice will be shown for what it is. P.B. represents the fearful, Puritanical outlook of Jeremy Collier and his fellow moralists who believe that exposure to vice is always pleasant and produces vicious behavior. In his lengthy (2,000-word) article, he uses six of Terence's plays to illustrate that one should be primarily concerned with the "Drift and Design of the whole" rather than to estimate the "Value of a Book . . . by the Number of good Sayings which may be pick'd out of it" (pp. 373-74).

He leads to several conclusions:

I think, that Knowledge may be better obtained by Conversation with and Observation of Men and Things themselves; and that he must have but very imperfect and romantic Notions of Mankind, who borrows them from Tragedies and Comedies. (p. 374)

All, however, that can be said in Defence of these Vanities, as exposing Vice and Folly by such Representatives, &c. amounts but to just this. We hire People to feign themselves Fools, Rogues and Debauchees, that we, seeing in them the Odiousness of these Irregularities, may avoid them.

Alas, you may spare your Money, and your Hirelings their Labour; for, the World never wanted Objects in whom Vice and Folly may be seen in its native Deformity gratis: . . . The only proper Method of discountenancing Vice and Folly is to promote Religion (Practical Christianity, I mean; which comprehends all that is contained in the Terms, Virtue and Morality) as this is duly

26 His example of Moliere who presented caricatures of virtue and vice suggests that he does not necessarily mean that each character present both good and evil.
inferior moral atmosphere of the court of Charles II in which Otway was writing. His concluding paragraph (in part) summarizes his attitudes on the function of art as well as on the qualities of the artist:

To paint the calamities of human life; to interest the affections in behalf of suffering virtue; to excite just ideas of the superintendence of providence, and a resignation to the divine will; to raise an abhorrence of vice, and animate the soul in its progress towards perfection, are the proper ends of tragical representations, and these require a heart soften'd and humanized by a tender sense of all the social and benevolent affections, an accurate knowledge of the distinctions and boundaries of characters, together with a high relish of moral excellence. Whoever considers the frame and structure of the human mind, and the nature and end of dramatic poesy will be convinced of the truth of this proposition, which, in short, is, that to constitute a great Poet, the primary and essential qualification is TO BE A GOOD MAN. (GM 18: Dec. 1748, 553)

For critics like Hawkins, the quality of a play is determined by its level of morality. He seems to agree with the "Champion" writer that nature is best mirrored when good and evil are portrayed together as long as the good is highly emphasized through quality characterization and evil is clearly denounced. But, in addition he stresses that the purpose of the performance must be stated in the form of a moral lesson. While the artistic elements of the play are important they are clearly subservient to its morality.

That a tendency to promote the cause of Virtue is essential to Epic and Dramatic poetry, will hardly be contested; and accordingly we find the great poets not content with barely holding up the mirror to Nature, and exercising the virtuous affections of mankind (which yet, it must be confess'd, are valuable ends of these species of writing) but that they have constantly endeavoured to inculcate some prudential maxim, or moral precept. (GM 18: Nov. 1748, 503)
He illustrates this concept of the moral precept as a criterion of good art by comparing the Orphan with the artful instruction of Shakespeare's "well-wrought Fable[s]," concluding that the Orphan exhibits no useful instruction: except that one shouldn't conceal love of another from a close friend "which, at best, is greatly beneath the dignity of the Tragic Muse to inculcate, and which, as circumstances vary, may be either very wise, or extremely foolish" (pp. 503-4).

Although, according to Hawkins, the Orphan fails on both counts, we see here two modes of moral influence in art, i.e., the psychological, which influences the spectator through the aesthetics and the execution of the work, and the purely didactic which "inculcates" or teaches by the justice or outcome of the plot. In Hawkins' words, the former method will "excite just ideas . . . raise an abhorrence of vice, and animate the soul . . . ;" the latter will "inculcate some prudential maxim or moral precept."

While Hawkins presents both of these as necessary characteristics for his approval of a moral work of art, reviewers from the fifties and onward insistently emphasized the latter, the "prudential maxim, or moral precept," as the focus for any statement on a play's value. By stressing the didactic purpose or usefulness of a work, they informed the reader whether it was good or bad for him, regardless of whether or not it contained other admirable elements. The
moral maxim could be quite distinct from the emotional impact or appeal of a play, but the latter might never be described.

The advantage of such a technique is that it is brief and most suitable for the short, succinct reviews called for within the publishers' lists of plays. A few examples will demonstrate the variety and nature of these moral extractions or "designs."

The general design of this piece is to expose the knavery of auctioneers, and the folly of their dupes. . . .

(GM 23: Dec. 1753, 578)

The lesson . . . of the poem could not be directly taught by a comedy, but Mr. Murphy has, with the utmost delicacy, strongly taught it by implication . . . reminding the married ladies that they should still remember to sacrifice to the graces.

(GM 30: Feb. 1760, 68-69)

The author's view is to ridicule a fanciful delicacy and refinement which expecting more than is consistent with the condition of life, does not enjoy the felicity that life can give.

(GM 35: Jan. 1765, 48)

As the short summary became more common, the "moral design" included a statement not only of the lesson but of the subject matter of a work as well. Economy of statement is, perhaps, always of merit in the business of journalism, but these short summaries certainly overlooked the more pleasing and entertaining aspects of drama, and they also suggest something of the attitudes the reviewers had toward their reading public. Bearing in mind the extremely moralistic element represented by P.B., mentioned earlier, and the fact that the periodical was distributed to a
middle-class population, now growing, which in its upward mobility had a basic commitment to the Protestant work ethic, we can see how the Gentleman's emphasis on the educational offerings of art would appeal to the more conspicuous values of their readers. A reader who might feel uncomfortable attending a play which was explicitly advertised as pure diversion, could look to the Gentleman's to justify his attendance on the basis of a play's didactic merits.

So far, I have drawn the illustrations of the emphasis on morality in the reviews from articles on drama. Reviews of fiction were much less frequent during the period covered by this study, and they show little evidence that new rules were being discovered to deal with the new genre. The announcement of Pamela in the "Register of Books" for November, 1740, which is without comment or special notice; and "The Fortunate Country Maid" (GM 10: Apr. 1740, 208) are

the only publications listed in the Gentleman's during 1740 which can be classified as novels or as extended prose fiction, even though—as we see from the London Magazine's book lists—many such books were circulating at that time. The following January (1741), there is an announcement of a coming second edition of Pamela to satisfy the "Demands in the Country, it being judged in town as great a Sign of Want of Curiosity not to have read Pamela, as not to have seen the French and Italian Dancers" (GM 11: Jan. 1741, 56). The succeeding months show Pamela reproduced in many guises and by February 1742, several other long works of fiction have been listed, five or six being imported from other countries as "tales." Most of the titles included in the listings, however, suggest that the work was being recommended for its moral content, e.g. The Fair Moralist, Instructive and Entertaining Novels, and The Instructive and Entertaining Fables of Pilpay, an Ancient Indian Philosopher. Later titles which appealed to the editor become a little more subtle in their appeals to truth, morality, and mercy (The Virtuous Orphan; Alexis, the Worthy Unfortunate), but the formulas are quite similar. It might be noted that authors of novels also showed the effect of these moral standards, for, following the tradition of Defoe, their titles often disguise the fact that the books are works of fiction. They appear rather as "memoirs of," "history of," "the adventures of," "the life of," "letters between," and
as moral tales or tales of woe. Most of the titles indicate an attempt to authenticate or baptize the fictional contents.

During the sixties, the book lists do contain more short comments on the books listed, and the comments are mostly similar to the summary of a moral maxim that pervades the play lists.

There are a few longer reviews in the sixties, however, and even here the maxim becomes a springboard for further discussion such as in the following example:

The design of this fiction is to show that inexhaustible wealth, and exemption from death, will not produce a perpetuity of sensual enjoyment. But the author should rather have shewn, that a perpetuity of such enjoyment would not satisfy the mind. . . .

(GM 37: July 1767, 365)

The reviewer here continues by suggesting alternative plots and lessons; he deals with the novel in summary, pays no attention to specific passages, and merely uses the novel as the basis of a serious philosophical discourse of his own.

Some of the Gentleman's views may be found in articles not written primarily as reviews. Tom Jones plainly shocked a reading world which had been mesmerized by Pamela's preoccupation with her virtue. The readers wanted more leisure to prepare for their fictional amours than Tom's tight traveling schedule would permit. Shortly after his appearance, a rash of items accusing and caricaturing Jones appeared. In addition, passages from the book were used to illustrate "the wretched fate of those sinning against
chastity" (GM 19: Mar. 1749, 126); and the book was cited by a Bishop as one of the reasons for repentance, of which the recent Divinely-sent meteors and earthquakes were reminders (GM 20: Apr. 1750, 177; see also GM 19: Aug. 1749, 366-67, and Dec., 547-50). In the midst of this negative criticism, Thomas Cawthorne wrote a poetic critique daring to praise Fielding for blending the opposites in nature:

Virtue and vice, unmix'd, in fancy stood,
And all were vilely bad, or greatly good . . .

When Genius spoke: Let Fielding take the pen!
Life dropt her mask, and all mankind were men.

(GM 19: Aug. 1759, 371)

A reprint of "A literary Article from Paris" after a translation of Tom Jones into French by M. de la Place, appeared in the March, 1750, number and attempted to compare French and English standards of morality. Taking the position that the English are more tolerant of immoral practices than the French, the author describes French women as shocked at the "repeated breaches of faith in Tom Jones to his mistress" and French fathers and mothers as exclaiming "against that resolute boldness with which Miss Western abandons her father's house to preserve herself inviolate to her lover." He explains:

---

29 Passages from Roderick Random were also used here.

30 This is the only unqualified praise I find for any of Fielding's works in the Gentleman's.
The love of liberty in the English, renders them generally more disposed to forgive the disobedience of a daughter, when her obedience might make her miserable. Inconstancy in a lover, will no more be pardon'd by an English than a French woman, but the first will sooner pass by a slight neglect; in general, the English ladies are more jealous of a man's sentiments, the French of his actions. (GM 20: Mar. 1750, 117)

The tone of the entire article, however, is enthusiastic once the moral issues have been aired. 31 Even though the article comes from France (which later suppressed the edition of Tom Jones being reviewed, according to the GM footnote, p. 118), Cave does not reprint any objection to the evaluation, and as it is consistent in other respects with English criticism, we may assume some sort of tolerance for its views on morality—if only for the informational interest—among English readers. From this we may assume some tendency to value a novel for its lively presentation of life apart from its depiction of conventional morality.

Summary of moral views. The Gentleman's application of morality as a standard was essentially the same for both drama and fiction. Until 1747 for the drama and 1749 for the novel, neither the magazine's contents nor the book lists indicate a demand on the part of the public for extensive discussion of any one piece. One might except Pamela which is not given any long review but the imitation

31 Further remarks from this article will be made in the discussions on rules of art in this chapter.
and moralistic controversy which are enumerated in the Gentleman's book lists may constitute a commentary though none is to be found within the magazine itself. Some early articles containing long critical remarks by other than defenders of religious morals made a pronouncement on the moral tone of a work, but later this degenerated into capsulized statements of the moral lesson embodied in the fable, a reviewing method which characterized the later brief commentaries found in book lists. By 1765, when Hawkesworth was "New Publications" editor, the moral statement was little more than a statement of theme on which the reviewer superimposed his own ideas on the value of the play or novel.

Very early in the history of reviewing in the Gentleman's, the degree of balance between virtue and vice being presented by an author was the chief indication cited for good or bad art. But, as we shall see in the next section, these considerations eventually gave way to realizations that art affected its audience with means more subtle than an automatic rewarding of the virtuous and punishment of the vicious.

Artistic influence and the audience

The reviewer for the Gentleman's appears to have been an objective synthesizer. He does not linger over passages with exceptional poetic merit nor does he make
comparisons among different plays or works of fiction. He has the temperament of a journalist; he is decisive, terse, and judgemental within a confined and well-worn area of critical opinion. His only luxury, where space permits, is to quote extended passages to illustrate beauties or defects in order to justify his evaluations.\(^{32}\) We can derive some of the basic assumptions a reviewer carried to his evaluation of a novel from the manner in which he treats such topics as poetic justice, probability and adherence to nature, and sentiment.

**Poetic justice.** In a letter to Mr. Urban criticizing the *Foundling*, "H.G."\(^{33}\) lists several examples in this tragedy where poetic justice is defective. He notes that the author not only has not punished vice but has not rewarded the virtue of his principal character: "for nothing is properly the reward of virtue, as such, that is not the consequence of it" (GM 18: Mar. 1748, 116). It is accidental, not directly due to her virtue, he maintains,

\(^{32}\) Those who write letters which are published in the *Gentleman's* take on this same cast of thought. They may object to a certain reviewer's conclusions, but they refute him with his own methods and, for the most part, on his own grounds. Furthermore, their letters are given the same status in the magazine as is accorded the regular reviewers. For these reasons, I include their comments upon drama and fiction as a further reflection of the total outlook on art presented by the *Gentleman's* and its readership.

\(^{33}\) Possibly John Hawkesworth who was contributing poetry at this time signed "H. Greville."
that the heroine's circumstances are changed for the better, and having a reformed rake for a husband should not be considered a reward. H.G. also objected to the misleading presentation of Faddle and Belmont because "we are apt to approve and disapprove characters not in proportion to the virtue and vice which we discover in them, but to the prevalence of some other qualities accidental to both." For example, we despise Faddle because he is depicted as a coward, not because he is conspiring out of greed, and we (according to the reviewer) also tend to dislike Belmont, even though the author wants us to esteem him, because there is too much emphasis on his earlier indiscretions. In other words, H.G. is saying that the audience responds to virtue and vice during the process of the play as well as to the outcome; therefore, the imposition of sanctions at the end may not be enough to erase earlier impressions if the audience has found immoral actions attractive or has seen virtuous ones derided or frustrated.

In a point-by-point, almost chiding, response to the above critique, an unidentified correspondent takes issue with H.G.'s system of poetic justice. He accuses H.G. of requiring justice to be "drawn up in a blacker manner than necessity, not to say charity, required" (GM 18: June 1748, 258). He, too, puts poetic justice in a framework of moral consistency, and, realizing the limitations of drama, he concludes, "I do not say that Fidelia's virtues are, or
can be rewarded as they deserve; it is sufficient if they are recompensed in the utmost stretch that she desired, and as far as the nature of the fable would allow" (p. 258).

From this point on, no further mention is made of poetic justice in the Gentleman's. While we cannot draw a firm conclusion from these two articles about the concept of this convention held by readers and writers of this magazine, we can say that at least by 1748 there was some recognition that poetic justice in a play is not determined simply by its outcome.

Instead, both of these writers saw that there are subtle influences at work on the spectator during the unfolding of the performance which may or may not coincide with the events of the plot. Two lines of reasoning derived from these two articles support this: 1) Strong responses to the characters occur to the spectator long before the plot rewards or punishes them; 2) There may be dimensions in the play (including characterization, setting, and subject matter) which determine the manner and matter of the outcome as strongly as the moral rectitude of the characters. To override the probabilities of psychology and the functioning of the real world is to stretch the credibility of the audience beyond an acceptable point.
Probability and nature. The equivalent concept for probability in drama was expressed in reviews of the novel by various forms of the phrase "adherence to nature." "Adherence to nature" was applied to motivation, consistency of behavior, and referred to a conformity with real-life experience.

How does an examination of the uses of these terms by the Gentleman's reviewers further our understanding of their concept of how audiences reacted to a novel or play? What do these writers show to be their theories even when they do not address themselves directly to the rules for judgment but simply indicate whether or not a piece conforms to an assumed standard or when they do no more than itemize the improbabilities they find in a play or novel?

First of all, they apparently see an improbability as a hindrance either to one's understanding or enjoyment of a work. The extent to which it interferes, or to which one lets it interfere, is an indication of one's expectations.

Probability is the critical judgment of consistency within the realm of credibility. Naturalness of conduct, of the succession of events, and of the portrayal of the events themselves are the objects of this standard. It replaces the term "decorum" because of its wider scope. Decorum was applied chiefly to diction as the primary means of depicting a character's dramatic and social roles. Any mixture of speech or conduct with that appropriate to higher or lower types of characters was considered undecorous because it conflicted with the conventions of the dramatic art rather than with the realities of daily life which "probability" took into consideration.
and total awareness of the object one is experiencing. If a viewer permits the fact that a character enters the stage by an unlikely entrance to interfere with the impact of the message of love or death that the play carries with it, then we can say that his expectations are focussed more on stage direction than they are on absorbing the emotional substance of the play. When a reviewer cites a number of improbabilities stemming from the uncertain motives of major characters, for instance, we may justly observe that to him, one critical area for the appreciation or understanding of that play rests on his understanding of what the motivation should be or would be.

Secondly, we can observe that all improbabilities are not of equal importance. One reviewer may overlook or only briefly mention inaccuracies of dialect in order to comment at more length on the comic aspects of a scene which also contains improbable elements of plot or psychology. On the other hand he may ignore such errors because he responds positively to the "spirit" or the "humour" of the piece. Under these circumstances a critic clearly places greater emphasis on the non-rational appeal of art, on either its imaginative or emotive effects, or both.

H.G., whose views on poetic justice have already been noted, lists one-half page of improbabilities such as:

"It is improbable, that Sir CHA. RAYMOND, a man of sense, eminence, and fortune, should leave an infant daughter
and jewels of great value in the hands of a servant, 
without engaging any of his friends to superintend her 
conduct. . . .  
(GM 18: Mar. 1748, 115)

While he apparently attributes the ineffectiveness of the 
tragedy to inconsistency of character, he shows even greater 
concern with the unlikelihood of events, as the rest of the 
passage shows:

That he had friends of fortune and influence, appears 
by his son's being educated in Belmont's family, and 
obtaining a colonel's commission, before his father's 
attainder was revers'd. Had any of these known with 
whom Fidelia and so valuable a deposit were left, and 
had her governante been made accountable to them, would 
it have been possible for her to have pretended the 
child had been sick, died, and was buried, without 
giving them the least previous notice, or afterwards 
accounting to them for her trust? If no particular 
orders had been given, would it not have been expected 
that she should on this occasion have applied to some 
of Mr Belmont's family, to whom she could not but be 
known, as she was a domestic of Sir Charles's before 
his misfortune? Would not her neglecting such applica­
tion, her embezzling the jewels, and sudden retirement, 
have been sufficient causes of suspicion? . . .
(pp. 115-16)

The respondent to H.G. agrees that there is need 
for convincing incidents, but his approach is to see the 
intent of those "improbabilities" in the Foundling. To him, 
improbability, as such, is subordinate to the larger purpose 
of setting up comic situations. With "a little more of 
that good-nature, which Mr. Pope has allow'd to be a neces­
sary accomplishment in a critic" (GM 18: May 1748, 207), he 
patiently points out the advantageous side to each develop­
ment labeled an improbability by H.G. His emphasis is on 
the structure of the comedy itself, and his approach is
remarkably like Henry Fielding's whose assessment of this play, also reprinted in the Gentleman's from his Jacobite Journal, acknowledges certain improbabilities, but, in general, praises the artful contrivance and tensions resulting from mixtures of virtue and vice in the characters. Fielding says:

The character of young Belmont is very finely drawn. The struggles between a virtuous disposition and vicious [sic] habits are most nobly and usefully painted: The redemption from evil; by the conscious shame which results from having a base action set before him in its true and genuine deformity, shews great knowledge of human nature in the author; and perhaps something which is yet more to his honour. (GM 18: Mar. 1748, 117)

Both H.G.'s respondent and Fielding consider a character who has too much virtue or too much vice as "improbable, unnatural, and absurd, as hardly consistent with the infirmities of life" (GM 18: May 1748, 209). They see the tensions arising from a mixture of vice and virtue in a character as part of the enjoyment of the performance and as a more accurate reflection of reality. Here "probability" and "nature"\(^{35}\) are terms used to explain the process whereby what is known in real-life is put onto the stage in ordered but recognizable form.

Some reviewers whose method of criticism was to catalogue the beauties and the faults of a work listed what

\(^{35}\)"Unnatural" in drama also typically applied to stage direction, as when a character is said to be "unnatural" when he talks aloud to himself (GM 17: Mar. 1747, 140).
they perceived to be improbabilities under faults. One critic notes that determining probabilities is a reflective operation "which the mind is not at leisure to make when the passions are strongly excited, and curiosity is impatient for the catastrophe" (GM 24: May 1754, 229). This writer recognizes two levels of enjoyment—the immediate, emotional involvement and the retrospective, rational evaluation. He points out two methods of reviewing on the basis of these levels. A reviewer may try to re-create the experience of the art for his readers, or he may objectify the instructive elements for his readers' edification. During the forties, it should be noted, most reviewers chose the latter course; in the sixties they were more likely to stress the reader's involvement in the plays they described.

The search for improbabilities slackens in the 1760's. One reviewer responds to his own speculation that "the incidents are not sufficiently probable" in the comedy, *The Way to Keep Him*:

This however, if it be allowed, is an objection that will lie against every dramatic piece upon the stage; the improbability is not such as can in any degree

---

36 The beauty/faults method was occasionally applied to the novel also. One—said to be French—writer used a review as a sort of exercise for seeking out faults in *Clarissa* (e.g. "Whether probability is preserved in the detestable audacity of Lovelace; to carry a lady of quality to a brothel . . ." ) only to present three half-pages of footnotes answering his own objections! (GM 19: Aug. 1749, 347-49)
lessen the pleasure of the representation, or invalidate the moral, and it cannot therefore derogate from the merit of the piece so much as from the candour of those that shall urge it.  

(GM 30: Feb. 1760, 74)

He shows greater concern with the way in which didactic elements of the play may interfere with its structure as an action.

Upon the whole the improbabilities of this piece [the comedy, the Double Mistake] are not greater than those of many other dramatic entertainments that keep their ground upon the stage; the principal fault is its want of incident and the frequent deviation of the dialogue into sentiment and dissertation, which do not at all conduce to carry on the action.  

(GM 36: Jan. 1766, 22)

In these two passages we see probability as a standard of criticism subordinate to the entertainment of the audience and the furtherance of the action. It appears that many reviewers of drama (for none contradict this in the sixties) see comedy in terms of a total action and are quite inclined to overlook even large infelicities if the total performance is sufficiently entertaining.

These examples have been drawn from criticism of drama, but criticism of the novel shows a similar pattern. During the decade of the forties, the term "probability" was applied particularly to the methods of narrative in the novel. One reviewer examining Clarissa in 1749 praises Richardson's use of the epistolary style for its probability and cites this as a distinguishing factor between the romance and the novel:
Romances in general . . . are wholly improbable; because they suppose the history to be written after the series of events is closed by the catastrophe; a circumstance, which implies a strength of memory, beyond all example and probability, in the persons concerned, enabling them, at the distance of several years, to relate all the particulars of a transient conversation: Or rather it implies a yet more improbable confidence and familiarity between all these persons and the author. . . . There is, however, one difficulty attending the epistolary method, for it is necessary that all the characters should have an uncommon taste for this kind of correspondence, and that they should suffer no event, nor even a remarkable conversation to pass without immediately committing it to writing; but, for the preservation of these letters, once written, the author has provided with great judgment, so as to render this circumstance highly probable. (GM 19: Aug. 1749, 345)

The domestic, the distinctive, and the detailed are consistently subjects of praise throughout the Gentleman's novel-reviewing. There is no talk of universals; on the contrary, minute description was considered the energizing force of the new fiction. Several articles comment on detailed description which "animates and enlivens the work, and sets the persons before our eyes" (GM 23: Nov. 1753, 512; also, GM 25: Feb. 1755, 94; and 36: Nov. 1766, 542). In a letter on Sir Charles Grandison, Richardson is also commended for his extensive view of life which includes even his attention to "curious particulars in geography" (GM 23: Nov. 1753, 512). The work, it says,

resembles a great drama, unconfined to the narrow limits (unities as they are called) of time, place, and action, wherein a larger portion and more extensive view of real life is exhibited than in the small one . . .

This vividness leads to the most important quality of nature in art, according to the reviewers, which gives it the power
to instruct. The final comparison between the French novel Marianne ("a chronicle") and Clarissa ("a history") discloses that while "Marianne amuses, Clarissa not only amuses, but instructs; and the more effectually, as the writer paints nature, and nature alone" (GM 19: June 1749, 246).

The distinction between natural and heroic characters was earlier illustrated by the reviewer in a portrayal of Clarissa's private life in contrast to the usual French emphasis on the qualities of the hero. The "representation of the minutiae of Virtue," including the heroine's behavior towards her daily companions which is founded on the recognition of her duties toward God and her fellow human beings of various levels of society, distinguishes this author and displays his "great knowledge of mankind" (GM 19: June 1749, 246). Richardson was able to pierce through artistic and educational barriers in order to reveal the very heart of naturalness in his characters.

The reader is influenced by such writing, according to this correspondent, through his association with someone who suffers with constancy through adversities like his own (what we have come to call empathy). The hero of a romance has misfortunes so much greater than those of his readers that they "cannot but know it to be a fable, and the necessary effect of this knowledge is insensibility" (GM 19: Aug. 1749, 346-47; cf. also GM 35: Mar. 1765, 127). The illusion of reality, i.e., of personal experience and of the
commonplace, is the thrust which makes a book instructive rather than simply entertaining because it engages a reader more strongly and affects his character by gripping his emotions.

**Sentiment.** One more criterion, sentiment, can be used to help us understand how the Gentleman's reviewers saw art, and particularly the novel, as a means of influencing an audience.

As commonly understood today, the word "sentiment" applied chiefly to the ideational content of a passage, or, as Johnson put it in his dictionary: "The sense considered distinctly from the language or things." That was the purest meaning of the term and the sense in which many Gentleman's writers used it in the reviews of the forties and fifties. However, the term gradually took on a secondary meaning during the period under study and it is the evolution of that meaning we are tracing through the reviews in this and in subsequent chapters.

The term "sentiment" came to include a thought or reflection colored by or proceeding from emotion (OED) or, more to the point, as the feeling intended to be conveyed by a passage or revealed by a character's words. In the reviews we will see this association of sentiment with emotion rather than intellection illustrated by the gradual increase in frequency with which portions of a play are
described in emotional terms such as "distress'd," "tender,"
and "affecting." The final extension of this meaning of
sentiment is expressed in Sterne's "sentimental" which means
reflective of refined and elevated feeling. However, this
word does not appear on the pages of the Gentleman's
Magazine between 1740 and 1767.

The term "sentiment" appears most frequently in the
Gentleman's with adjectives such as "noble," "generous and
worthy," "virtuous and noble," "pious," "often just," and
"chaste and elegant." The use of the term "sentiment" to
refer to the content of a passage continues to be in use,
as witness the following:

There is not one elegant expression, or moral sentiment
in the dialogue; nor indeed one character in the drama,
from which either could be expected.

(GM 21: Feb. 1751, 77)

A cunning speech by a vicious character "contains sentiments
which no person, who has the . . . least sense of decency
or virtue, can hear without horror" (GM 18: Nov. 1748, 505);
or the heroine using an indelicate phrase "utters sentiments
not very consistent with the dignity of her character"

Therefore, passages from reviews using the word
"sentiment" are not the only ones relevant to a discussion
on the changing meanings of this term. Any references to
the growing interest in emotional response will help to
fill out our understanding of the prevailing attitudes which
prompted the shift.
Here the reviewer refers to the content of the dialogue but, what the character says is thought to reveal the state of his moral nature. That is to say, it is supposed to reveal how he thinks.

A meaning of "sentiment" associated with emotion first appears in 1750 in an article on "Mixt Drama." This kind of drama is described as producing a kind of tenderness, which is not always the same with compassion, and which arises from the contemplation of private virtue in all its charms, and from affecting sentiments happily expressed.

38 The context of Hawkins' examples are as follows: "But, to give us a juster idea of this gentleman's character, and to shew that his vicious inclinations were not owing merely to the force of temptation, but that his behaviour was founded on principle, we find him . . . degrading the condition of man below the level of beasts, and determining to make their example the rule of his conduct;

'Who'd be that sordid foolish thing call'd man,
To cringe thus, fawn, and flatter for a pleasure
Which beasts enjoy so very much above him?
The lusty bull ranges thro' all the field,
And from the herd singles his female out,
Enjoys her, and abandons her at will.
It shall be so, I'll yet possess my Love,
Wait on, and watch her loose unguarded hours; . . .'

I shall observe no further on this speech than that it contains sentiments which no person, who has the least sense of decency or virtue, can hear without horror" (p. 505).

The second illustration Hawkins simply alluded to as "the expression she [Monimia] uses to Castalio, the morning after their marriage." That offending passage is apparently this: "Mon. . . . Now I may hope y'are satisfy'd--

[Looking languishingly on him.]

39 There is even a difference between this usage and the earlier similar phrase used in the 1947 review of the Suspicious Husband:
Two years later, the difference is even more pronounced:

In the foregoing speeches the sentiments are so delicate and the language so expressive, that I am persuaded all who have tender hearts, and who have ever felt the pleasing anxieties of love, will read them with attention, and think on them with delight.

... Imoinda's speech on her unexpected prosperity, and Oroonoko's answer are both very natural and full of the tenderest sentiments. (GM 22: Apr. 1752, 164)

These illustrate the term used with emphasis on the emotional reaction--of characters and audience--to the characters' ideas.

Also in the fifties, there is a turn by the reviewers towards emulating heroic and public-minded virtue with a few traces of the pathetic being felt when Agis, a tragedy, is applauded for abounding "with warm and generous sentiments of liberty and publick spirit" (GM 28: Mar. 1758, 120). The hero of this play is represented as a man whose doubts of his immortality lead him to act as if he were immortal in order to act nobly, which response "reaches at once the understanding and the heart, and was applauded with a zeal..." (p. 121). The virtue displayed in this reasonably popular play is in a heroic mold which was more properly

"The wit here lies more in things than words, and is therefore perceived by almost every capacity, and admired by the many who cannot taste a fine sentiment wittily express'd; but those who can, will not miss of a suitable entertainment." (GM 17: Mar. 1747, 139)

"Sentiment" is used here as a product of the mind rather than of the heart.
admired even two decades earlier but now appeals, not simply to moral righteousness, but to the pathetic emotions, too. 40

40. This interest in the pathetic, in the fifties, is borne out by the relative number of tragedies epitomized in the Gentleman's in comparison with other types and with the other two decades. Of the twenty-seven plays summarized during these ten years (which does not include brief summaries given in the book lists, most frequently, in the sixties), seventeen were tragedies, two were "dramatic poems" based on the ancient Greek drama, and one a "dramatic story" adapted from Voltaire (who also authored two of the tragedies). Of the remaining seven, four were farces, and the three comedies were by Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and Edward Moore. What is interesting here is that very few of these epitomes include critical comment. The stories are told, act by act, with a great deal of detail and generally sprinkled with poetic and affective passages so that the spirit and tone of the story itself is conveyed. There seems to be little question that the Gentleman's writers, at least, preferred the luxury of grief over the aridity of critical comment and that most of their source material during this decade was selected for the degree to which it appealed to reader sympathy.

Beginning with 1760, the tide turned abruptly. Of the seventeen plays and entertainments summarized by 1767, eleven were comedies (the majority being originals), one a fairy tale (termed a "dramatic entertainment"), one a musical entertainment, one a musical comedy, and one a ballad opera. There was but one tragedy, and one "dramatic poem." The references to sentiment in the evaluations likewise shifted. As suggested even by the breakdown in generic designations in the above list, emphasis turned on structure. Reviewers coped with the notion that a whole play could be carried by sentiments and passion with only the simplest of structures and the minimum of incidents. Their opinions were varied:

"The author [of the Desert Island] acknowledges, in the preface, that this story is deficient in what is commonly called business; but he was, notwithstanding, determined to try what would be the effect of a simple fable, with but few incidents, supported entirely [sic] by the spirit of poetry, sentiment, and passion. As the experiment has been now made, much to his advantage, all farther remarks seem to be precluded."

(GM 30: Jan. 1760, 5)

"... the principal fault is its want of incidents, and the frequent deviation of the dialogue into sentiment
As they moved into the sixties, the Gentleman's reviewers described the contents of both plays and novels with greater attention to their emotional details, and less frequently did they adjoin the word "sentiment." For instance, in the review of Memoirs of a Magdalen, the author uses the word "distress" as the term which carries the affective meaning of the novel. It is described as "exquisite and tender" and as reflecting "considerable knowledge both of life and nature" on the part of the author.

The reviewers and the rules

So far in this examination of the Gentleman's Magazine I have used two approaches to come to an understanding of how its writers viewed the early novel. After the magazine itself was examined with an eye to its purpose and to its readership, I looked to the reviews to see to what extent their writers viewed the novel as an instrument of instruction, then, how they perceived its emotional appeal to audiences. Finally, I shall try to determine the theoretical basis for their discussions and conclusions.

and dissertation, which do not at all conduce to carry on the action." (GM 36: Jan. 1766, 22)

One reviewer even slips into the spirit of emotional sentiment when he decides:
"The piece has great merit, at least in the opinion of the writer of this account, who speaks from his feelings, for when he read it alone in his study, having never seen the exhibition, it made him both laugh and cry." (GM 35: Feb. 1765, 78)
The unities. Sir John Hawkins began his critique of *The Orphan* by saying "the considerations of the unities of time, place, &c will be left to such as imagine these laws of the Drama to be of first impor[t]ance" and he directed his attention to "the Fable, the Manners, and the Sentiments of this admired Tragedy" (GM 18: Nov. 1748, 502). Apparently, most of his fellow critics on the Gentleman's held the same disregard for the unities as standards of judgment because when the unities are mentioned, which is seldom, they are treated lightly and with dispatch. One of the unities, however, the unity of action, is a matter of interest in most reviews of this period. In drama, this led to discussions on sub-plots and the necessity of five acts for plays. Novel reviewers touched on the value of digressive material and the interplay of character and action. Common to both genres were considerations of uniform design, integrity of plot, simplicity versus complexity, and the pace of events.41

During the fifties, concern for unity in a drama had focussed on the question of the suitability of sub-plots, particularly the comic underplot in a tragedy. Reactions

41It should be made clear that the frequency with which any of these is mentioned does not give us enough data for hard and fast conclusions about what the critics agreed upon. What we can report, however, are any disagreements published on these subjects and what seems to be a consensus, given the smattering of evidence.
were uncommonly vehement.

Of all the inventions that ever came into a poet's teeming brain, the tragi-comedy may justly be deemed the most absurd and most unnatural. (GM 22: Apr. 1752, 163)

The author seems to have been somewhat embarrassed by the underplot . . . tho' the expectation of an English audience would scarce have been gratified without it. (GM 23: Dec. 1753, 578)

. . . an underplot is added for the sake of multiplying incidents, which the simplicity of the principal event rendered absolutely necessary. (GM 35: Jan. 1765, 48)

The essay, quoted earlier (p. 48), on "serio-Comic or Mixt Drama" translated from the French of M. Maillet du Boulley (GM 20: Jan. 1750, 31-33) listed several arguments in favor of this third type of drama on the basis of necessity and utility. The virtues proper to mixed drama are "those of the affections, and are not adapted to excite either terror or admiration, which is the design of Tragedy; nor laughter, which is the principal intention of Comedy; but an interested tenderness, approbation, and esteem," and the vices of the "Mixt Comedy" are those of "the middle kind, the common faults and frailties of human nature" (p. 32). Although "mixed drama" is not a term adopted by any of the Gentleman's reviewers, it does represent an attempt by playwrights to combine genres for a complementary effect, particularly for pathos. Du Boulley presents his argument for mixed drama as an idea whose time has come:

42 The French author cites The Misanthrope as an example of this type of drama; the Gentleman's editor, Steele's Conscious Lovers.
Its necessity and utility being thus established, its right to contribute to the entertainment of those who are capable of perceiving its beauty and excellence can no longer be disputed. (p. 33)

Granted, the appeal is slightly snobbish, but the point du Boulley is making in his article is that dramatic structure can accommodate more complexity than either comedy or tragedy alone can supply. New forms in turn create more subtlety of portrayal.

There was some discussion of the ideal number of acts in a drama. Murmurs against the rigid five-act play became sufficiently strong, so that by 1760, two- and three-act plays no longer evoked comment. The principal objection to five acts had been to the stretching out of a thin plot by needlessly adding incidents or trivial dialogue--or an unnecessary underplot--and thereby losing emotional impact. It is interesting to observe that the arguments for both mixed plot and three-act dramas were based on the emotional effects these changes would bring about.

Remarks made on the fable in the novel seem to show concern that the characters justify their separate adventures so as to work out a happy ending. The achievement reflects the ingenuity of the author:

The author [Fielding] has employ'd no less skill about his other characters, in assigning to everyone his station and business, so that, among so great a number, they all, except one, appear necessary to the action. (GM 20: Mar. 1750, 117)

All the dramatic characters [in Memoirs of a Magdalen] however, are brought together in the last act, and
appear to have connections wholly unsuspected, which
required considerable contrivance and invention.
(GM 36: Nov. 1766, 542)

There seems to have been considerable delight taken in watch-
ing what appears to be a loosely connected series of events
take shape through the instrumentality of diverse characters
who eventually interconnect the diverse elements, even if,
by our standards today, the situations were highly contrived,
delightful as they may be. *Tom Jones* was a perfect example:

The public has not for a long time been entertain'd with
a piece where the principal persons are more engaging or
more interesting, the episodes better connected with the
principal action, the characters more equally sustained,
the incidents more artfully prepared, or more naturally
arising one out of another. (GM 20: Mar. 1750, 117)

Even digressions had their merits and were not only
more tolerable in novels than in plays, but in English
novels more than in French:

On this consideration, if Mr. Fielding had written for
the French, he would probably have suppressed a multi-
tude of passages, excellent indeed in themselves, but
which would appear to a Frenchman, unseasonable or
misplaced. When he has once warmed his imagination with
the interesting result of an intrigue highly pathetic,
and artfully laid, he becomes impatient under all sorts
of digressions, dissertations, or moral touches, and
regards all such ornaments, however fine, as obstacles
to the pleasure which he is in haste to enjoy.
(GM 20: Mar. 1750, 117-18)

Critics concluded that the English novel-reading
audience was also eager to move forward quickly with the
action. However, Richardson's novels had shown his readers
the delight of smaller-scaled action than that of the French
romances. They learned to linger appreciatively over
detailed descriptions of simple events and to find adventure even in these.

The narrative [of Sir Charles Gradison] is judiciously conducted; if the events and adventures be fewer than in other works of this nature, the interesting scenes, the affecting and moving situations are much more numerous, the heart is more frequently and more deeply touched, our curiosity is continually kept up, and continually gratified. (GM 23: Nov. 1753, 511)

The interesting descriptions are much more frequent [in Clarissa] than in Pamela; here they succeed each other in an almost uninterrupted series. The reader is allowed no interval of rest; but urged on from one event to another, his curiosity is perpetually both excited and gratified. (GM 19: June 1749, 245)

The wave of expectation and gratification described in both of these passages emphasizes the awareness at least these two reviewers had of some kind of interplay between audience and writer. It further suggests that they saw an interaction between plot and emotion, and between plot and intellectual stimulation as represented by "curiosity."

There seem to have been two schools of thought regarding what constituted the best balance of plot and incidents for engaging the interest of the audience, either intellectually or emotionally. However, those who supported complexity and intricacy generally argued on behalf of curiosity or intellectual stimulation:

... the tragedy of Philoclea abounds with events, which perhaps may be considered as at once an atonement and apology for the neglect of a scrupulous conformity to dramatic rules; for such conformity is always difficult, in proportion as the events are numerous and when they rise in a rapid succession, they necessarily please, as well those who discern the irregularities
Of course, the sentiments of a suppressor...
be detached, nor can it be abridged without great injury to the original" (GM 20: Dec. 1750, 575). He apparently saw a continuity between these separate love affairs and saw it as desirable, but does not satisfy our curiosity about what this principle of unity might be.

Even those who favor elaborate and intriguing plots and counterplots talk about "very spirited and useful satire, very properly directed" (GM 30: July 1760, 325) or devalue a play because of "trifling incidents not essentially dependent upon the principal design; and . . . encumbered with several characters of no use but to produce those incidents" (GM 37: Dec. 1767, 599-600).

And so we return, not to the Unities, but to unity. There has been an alteration. The limitations imposed on the art have been raised beyond the temporalities designated by time, place, and action. They reside in the imagination of the writer and the curiosity and the emotional receptivity of the audience. The reviewer assesses the effects and therefore the value of drama and fiction, in the absence of more concrete standards, on more individualized criteria such as "common sense" (GM 22: Apr. 1752, 164; see also GM 22: Jan. 1752, 29) or taste. The reviewer of the last volume of Tristram Shandy points out the dilemma to his readers, though we are somehow certain he has resolved the issue unfavorably for Sterne:
In questions of taste, however, every one must determine for himself; and what is humour is as much a question of taste, as what is beauty. It is probable that the greatest part of those who have lavishly praised this work, spoke from their feeling; their praise, therefore, being only in proportion to their pleasure, was, with respect to them, just; but it has been censured rather from judgment than feeling, and as its bad is an object of judgment, though its good is an object of taste, it may certainly be determined how far this censure has been just.

Language and dialogue. One subject treated regularly in the Gentleman's Magazine is language. The remarks are usually brief, consistent, and non-technical. In several cases, the reviewer even presents a lesson in recognizing good writing where he singles out exemplary passages and describes their worth (GM 22: Apr. 1752, 163-67) or, as in the case of Brooke's Earl of Essex, labels a particular poet as exceptionally good (GM 31: Jan. 1761, 45), or blights a critic for his poor grammar (GM 22: May 1752, 243; 28: Mar. 1758, 134).

Language, in accordance with the most frequently mentioned criteria, should be copious, clear, poetic without affectation, and expressive of sentiments. This latter was particularly a qualification of the poetry in tragedy. Verse, being "a deviation from nature," as one reviewer put it (GM 24: Feb. 1754, 84), must compensate by revealing both

43 The term "diction" seldom appears in the Gentleman's reviews. When it does, it can be used interchangeably with "language."
the strength and softness of the hero in moving and delicate language. Poetry, the superior form of language, was recom-
mended when it "abounds with poetical images" (i.e., copiousness), when the cadence of English verse is preserved, or, the dialect of life and nature is not deviated from, and metaphors are consistent. While there was no crusade against the use of verse in tragedy, the stress on natural-
ess in dialogue discouraged the use of it in comedies.  

Abusive language was criticized because it "has a very ill Influence on the Dialect of the Age" (GM 13: July 1743, 375) and because it is offensive. On another level, Hawkesworth censured the language of an Eastern tale for being wholly destitute of the metaphorical sublimity which distinguishes the eastern languages--and indeed every language that was formed before life was polished, and has not been gradually enlarged by the constructing or borrowing of new words as ideas multiplied with arti-
ficial wants, refinements in manners, and discoveries in science.  

(GM 37: July 1767, 365-66)

44 Most of the tragedies written and reviewed in the fifties were written in some form of verse; the comedies were not. One tragedy not following this pattern was commended, in general, but with the following words: "This is the dramatic action or plot of the Gamester, which, if it is not worked up with the pomp, the force, and the elegance of poetry is yet heighten'd with many tender incidents, and, as the dialect is perfectly colloquial, it probably produced a greater effect upon the majority of the audience than if it had been decorated with beauties which they cannot miss, at the expence of that plainness without which they cannot understand."  

(GM 23: Feb. 1753, 61)
All of these are examples of the insensitive and inappropriate use of language which tested the patience of the Gentleman's reviewers. To use language cleverly in order to merely delight was no longer commended; but to use language to bring about appropriate sentiments while being accurate, grammatically and historically, was to recognize its true function.

Dialogue in drama should be subordinate to the action, that is, the dramatist should seek to move passions and appeal to the mind more "by things than words" (GM 17: Mar. 1747, 139; 22: May 1752, 224; 24: Apr. 1754, 181). Comic action was preferred over comic dialogue, especially over the type reminiscent of Restoration comedy with its double entendres and facile wit. The earliest dramatic review commended dialogue that was "no more than what persons, under the same circumstances, speak everyday" (GM 17: Feb. 1747, 80).

The move towards particularization characteristic of domestic comedies and unsophisticated dialogue was carried further in fiction where critics expected the characters to be enough distinguished by their speech that the labels "he said" and "she said" could be eliminated from lengthy conversations. Reference has already been made to the epistolary style in Clarissa which was favored because of the sense of immediacy that it produced. Likewise, in drama, dialogue which was "lively" and "spirited" was endorsed over
that which deviated into "sentiment and dissertation." The chief objection to the latter was that it did not forward the action. The degree of activity desired in the novel was subordinate to the method of its recounting. Seldom do the Gentleman's reviewers decry the dearth of action as they elaborate on the performance of the novelist. On the stage, dialogue was functional in carrying out the action or satire (GM 30: July 1760, 325); in fiction, it elaborated the character and his sentiments.

The Gentleman's reviewer was not primarily interested in criticizing the author and perfecting the art, nor even in upholding certain rules. He was involved in transcribing the merits and demerits of a piece, judged so by his own literary and personal experience, into semi-entertaining writing. The tone of the reviews in the Gentleman's is quite different from that of the few serious letters of literary research submitted by correspondents on such subjects as Milton and textual interpretations of Shakespeare. Reviewing for a popular publication put severe restrictions on the extent to which any reviewer could insist on the purity of an art.

Summary

The Gentleman's Magazine of the mid-1700's represents a cross-section of middle-class reading interests, due chiefly to the keen business sense of its founder and
publisher, Edward Cave. Within the range of topics treated regularly, articles of a literary nature are incidental both as to emphasis and frequency. Poetry was printed monthly, but fiction hardly at all, and neither drew readers towards a finer aesthetic taste. Consequently, it was left to the reviewers of plays and books to inform as well as to educate the growing reading public, a function they assumed more or less responsibly over the twenty-eight years under study.

A system of reviewing plays developed first with simple plot summaries, then with attempts to place the dramas in their proper historical settings when this was appropriate, and finally, with critical remarks on morality, plot, sentiments, language, and selected dramatic rules. Parallel to this development, but also appearing erratically, were the brief annotations of plays and novels in the publication lists.

Although a distinction between the psychological and didactic methods of artistic persuasion was made by John Hawkins in 1748, most subsequent reviewers used only a statement of the moral design to describe the content of a work. This statement, usually used in the shorter reviews but not uncommon in longer ones, avoided an evaluation of the literary merit of a piece and seems to have been an outgrowth of journalistic expediency.

The eight substantial essays on novels treat specific problems so they do not usually contain summaries as do the
articles on plays which appear in greater quantity. For both genres, but more so for the novel, where there was critical annotation, the assessment of the morality (i.e., the balance of virtue and vice) of the work was a primary consideration in the forties and early fifties, and, after this, though never absent in some form in the reviews, morality became subservient to the affective sentiment in a piece.

The assumptions of the early years, that art teaches mainly through plot and that exposure to vice causes immoral behavior, yielded later to criticism which eventually destroyed the concept of poetic justice as an effective teaching device. The recognition that there are subtle influences at play on the audience which are not always apparent at the time of the performance or during the first reading, is revealed through these reviewers' comments on probability, nature, and sentiment.

A survey of the use of the term "probability" and an allied concept "adherence to nature" shows that the Gentleman's reviewers generally shifted from a concern for the minutiae of plot to a greater tolerance for irregularities in view of the total action or spirit of a drama and the entertainment of the audience. Some sought out improbabilities as a means of the beauties/faults method of criticism, but later reviewers tended to be less reflective and detailed about the dramas and stressed their entertaining or moral qualities.
The reviews of novels, particularly of Richardson's, stressed and recounted the details which gave the novel reader the illusion of reality. Attention to detail, in a novel, the reviewers said, gave the work a vividness which led to instruction because of the reader's identification with a character, particularly one who suffers under adversities which could be the reader's own. In general, as long as descriptions were lifelike and showed knowledge of human nature, novels did not need to justify their circumstances on the basis of probability. Furthermore, there was some recognition given by the Gentleman's reviewers to the notion that an element of form such as the use of the present tense (most popularly, in the epistolary style), and the selection of characters who seem familiar to the reader can influence his or her receptivity in a positive way.

The term "sentiment" develops a secondary meaning during the three decades. Originally, when used in conjunction with adjectives such as "noble" and "just," it could give an idea of the moral quality of an entire work, or, when referring to a specific character, "just" sentiments meant the conformity or appropriateness of his speech with his level of nobility, his moral integrity, or his level of thought or feeling. By the fifties, the term had taken on an emotional connotation which eventually not only described the effect of a character's expression on the audience but, by association, became a word which described the original
feelings and emotions of the character, even apart from their thought. Passages of this nature generally prefixed emotive terms such as "affecting" and "tender" to "sentiment." "Sentimental" is not a word used by Gentleman's reviewers during the 27-year period of this study.

With the return of historical tragedy in the fifties, Gentleman's reviewers began admiring the public virtue of heroes who displayed themselves as men with human weaknesses. The sentiments again are "noble" and "generous" and are even regarded for their ability to reach the audience. Comedies, mixed dramas, and musical entertainments take up the bulk of offerings in the sixties and spur debate on the structures ideal for presenting emotional drama. By the end of this period, emotion, especially distress, is becoming a recommending factor in its own right, but reviewers, even Hawkesworth who leaned towards sentimentalism, found it necessary to justify it morally.

Probably the only subject discussed frequently enough by the Gentleman's reviewers to allow us to draw a generalization is the plot--both in drama and fiction. They seem to agree that the plot should be unified, which generally means that all the elements, including incidents, characters, and sentiments, work toward a single effect. A play or novel is particularly admired if it keeps the reader's interest and emotion moving forward with a certain swiftness.
The potential of mixed drama for eliciting a pathetic response was presented by one proponent. As the reviews moved closer to the sixties, more arguments for adaptations to time-honored structures centered around the emotional impact made possible by the proposed alterations. It is noteworthy that both opinions about complexity versus simplicity in the incidents of drama and fiction used the same justification. By the end of the period, personal criteria such as taste and common sense were called on with some frequency in matters of judgment.

In general, a piece would be commended if it used language which was not limited by "groveling expressions, or forced conceit" (GM 20: Feb. 1750, 57) and which as nearly as possible corresponded to the individual sentiments of each of the characters. If a play or novel was rejected by a reviewer, the reason was often assigned to deficiencies in plot or characterization, but the coup de grace consisted of derogatory comments on the language. On the other hand, if a piece had nothing else to recommend it but fine poetry, the reviewer would praise it on grounds of strong or natural sentiments "delicately expressed."

The Gentleman's reviewers were selective in the novels they annotated and, unlike the London Magazine, or especially the two Review magazines, did not attempt to list every novel as it came off the press. However, when compared with the tedious and highly informative reviews given the
foreign books or books on science and medicine, reviews on
plays and novels appeared to be addressed only to a story-
reading public.

As treated by the Gentleman's Magazine, the novel
was just below the surface of public interest with occasional
sprouts of attention for the benefit of the fashion-
conscious. It was treated with much the same impartiality
which characterized the reporting of domestic occurrences,
and in some cases, with more condescension than the drama
was treated. The neglect, most often merited, did allow the
novel growing space--room for experimentation, success, and
failure, and for the growth of its own reading public.
Samuel Johnson still thought it necessary in 1739 to defend the Gentleman's Magazine against the attacks and competition of the London Magazine which had begun publication in May 1732. In a front page article entitled "An Appeal to the Publick," Johnson accuses the London booksellers who, he says, in one of their attempts to curtail or to take advantage of the popularity of the Gentleman's, combined to seize our whole Plan; and, without the least Attempt to vary or improve it, began with the utmost Vigour to print and circulate the London Magazine, with such Success, that in a few Years, while we were printing the fifth Edition of some of our earliest Numbers, they had SEVENTY THOUSAND of their Books returned unsold upon their Hands. (GM 9: Mar. 1739, [111])

Judging by figures now available from Charles Ackers' ledger, Johnson grossly miscalculated the size of the London edition which in March 1739 was 7,000 copies, a number quite steadily

---

1 Hereafter also referred to as the London or simply LM, the latter to be found in references within the text. The first issue reported April's publications and was dated Apr. 1732, but was published in early May--just before the Gentleman's Magazine's April issue.

2 Johnson's authorship of this unsigned article is assigned by Boswell 1: 322.
maintained each month for over two years. Unfortunately, no such accurate record of the Gentleman's circulation exists. One estimate is that the London had 75 percent of the Gentleman's circulation.

But the primary accusation, that the booksellers seized "our whole Plan . . . without the least Attempt to vary or improve it" remains valid. Similar to the title and motto of the Gentleman's, namely, the Gentleman's Magazine, or, the Monthly Intelligencer and "E Pluribus Unum," the booksellers chose the London Magazine: or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer and "Multum in Parvo." In the preface of the first volume they promised variety and comprehensiveness--Edward Cave especially stressed the former quality for the Gentleman's.

By comparing the format of the first issue of the London to the issue of the Gentleman's immediately preceding, one sees the resemblances. (See table on following page.) This leaves little doubt as to the intentions of the owners.

---

3 McKenzie and Ross, Ledger of Charles Ackers, p. 11.
4 Ibid., pp. 11-12.
5 From 1736 to 1746, the London's title was altered to the London Magazine and Monthly Chronologer, but in 1747 the original title was resumed.
6 Ownership and responsibility for the operation of the London was a complex matter: the collective title page for the first volume shows C. Ackers as printer, "for J. Wilford, . . . T. Cox . . . J. Clarke . . . T. Astley." But the 1733 and 1734 volumes give Wilford's name only, and the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gentleman's Magazine</th>
<th>London Magazine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 1732</td>
<td>April 1732*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table of Contents | 2 pages |
A View of the Weekly Essays and Disputes in this Month | 30 |
A View of the Weekly Essays and Disputes in this Month | 32 pages |
Poetical Essays | 4 |
Poetical Essays | 3 |
Monthly Intelligencer (Domestic Occurrences) | 8 |
The Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer | 8 |
Foreign Advices | 1 |
Foreign Advices | 1 |
Prices of Goods, etc. | 1 |
Prices of Goods, etc. | 1 |
Books publish'd in March 1732 | 2 |
The Monthly Catalogue for April 1732 | 5 |

Total 48 pages Total 50 pages

*"Contents [of the London] were listed, as on Cave's title page, but the title page itself was not included in the pagination of the magazine." Carlson, The First Magazine, p. 65. The 1732 volume of the London which I have been using, from the Newberry Library, is without title pages.

printing bills are debited against "Mr. Wilford and Company" which indicates he handled accounts for his partners. After Wilford went bankrupt in 1735, the accounts were in the name of "Mr. Cox and Company" and the collective title pages listed all four partners until 1738 when Astley's name begins to appear alone until 1745, with the one exception of being preceded by Cox's in 1742. It was Astley who was called in with Cave to appear before the House of Commons in April 1747 for publishing speeches from Lord Lovat's trial, and though Astley was acquitted, his name no longer appeared on any of the London's title pages. This was probably to protect any promise he had made to refrain from such disclosures in the future and to protect the magazine when the accounts of the Parliamentary proceedings were resumed. Richard Baldwin, Jr.'s name first appears on the title page
of the London who had formerly owned the Monthly Chronicle which Cave's Gentleman's had put out of business. The remarkable feature of the competition is that there was a large enough audience for this kind of journalism to keep both magazines operating profitably for years beyond the life expectancy of any publication of that time. This

for Nov. 1746 ("Printed for T. Astley, Sold by R. Baldwin") and on Aug. 20, 1759, two months after Acker's death which had been preceded by Clarke's in 1746, Cox's in 1754, Anne Clarke's (who had taken over her husband's payments) in 1755, and Astley in Feb. 1759. The London Magazine for May, June, and July was entered at Stationers' Hall to R. Baldwin and partners, who were not identified in the entry. After his death in Jan. 1770, control of the magazine probably passed into the hands of his cousin, Robert Baldwin. See McKenzie and Ross, Ledger of Charles Ackers, "Introduction."

The Chronicle was designed to be a chronological record of public events, domestic and foreign, and a sellers list of recent publications. A Quarterly appendix contained important Parliamentary news and speeches. The whole publication was only 27 pages each month, but it was well-set in large, readable type and had the unprecedented feature of elaborate indexes which carried out its intended function as a reference guide. It was not unusual for publications of this time to summarize the news--Cave's undertaking of printing abridgments of the newspaper summaries was only a new approach, strenuously objected to by owners of the newspapers he copied from, of course--but the careful organization by dates, and foreign countries by alphabet, was an innovation at first imitated by Cave and maintained to some extent by both magazines in the "Monthly Chronologer" section, but abandoned as an overall organizational pattern in favor of a topical format.

Another device of the Monthly Chronicle picked up by the Gentleman's and its imitators was the listing of books published by the sponsoring booksellers, separately from the monthly catalogue. Indexes were included in each supplement of the annual volumes of both the Gentleman's and the London as well as late December news--the inclusion of late news being another feature which the Chronicle promised, but never produced.

The London Magazine ceased publication in 1783.
feature alone provides a substantial reason for examining the contents of the London in order to discover the tastes and the critical attitudes of those who wrote for it and, by extension, of those who bought it.

In this study of the London Magazine, it is necessary first to become acquainted with its editors, with its methods of reviewing, with its assessment of various audiences, and with its views of morality; for these limit and describe it as an organ of communication. Then, a specific analysis of its evaluative criteria for drama and the novel, which will include the unities, poetic justice, probability, sentiment, and language, can be profitably made.

The Reverend Isaac Kimber, a dissenting minister who had lost two pastorates \(^9\) and turned to journalism, compiled the London until his death in January 1755. Formerly, he had worked as a corrector for the press under John Darby, and, probably, for the Weekly News and Register under Charles Ackers while he maintained an assistantship with his friend Dr. John Kinch in Old Artillery Lane. Next, he edited the Monthly Chronicle which lasted from January 1728 to May 1732 and which then became the London Magazine.

Kimber's own writings betray little of the more lively middle-class spirit of the London. According to his

\(^9\) The first was at Paul's Alley Baptist Church, Barbican, London; the second at the Baptist Church in Nantwich in Cheshire.
son Edward's notebook, his writings outside the London included:

1. The Life of Oliver Cromwell 8vo
2. Hist. of Eng. 4 Vol's. 8vo Vols. 3 & 4
3. Life of Bp Beveridge
4. Reign of Geo. 2 at end of Howell
5. Hist. of Eng. 1 Vol. 8vo
6. Monthly Chronicle

His contributions to the London suggest a man with strong personal attachments to family, friends, country, and religion. Two elegies--one on the death of a friend (LM 15: Aug. 1746, 419), the other on the death of his son Richard (LM 17: Mar. 1748, 135)--while not showing exceptional poetical talent, display an affectionate nature controlled by religious belief and scholarly discipline. The same qualities appear in a letter to his son Edward before he went abroad, which contains admonitions urging a continual belief in Divine Providence regardless of the "different Parties" of religion. His quatrains on each of the rulers of England from William I to George II reflect the method by which his (Isaac's) father had taught him major historical events and their chronology (LM 15: Aug. 1746, 415-16; Oct. 1746, 515-17). One gets the impression that Isaac Kimber was a self-effacing and industrious worker who preferred family and religion to a career in writing or in editing.

---

copy for serial publications.

Following his father's death, Edward Kimber began to compile the London Magazine on February 5, 1755, and continued to do so until his death in 1769. The London may have published more fiction and fiction reviews than the Gentleman's because Edward wrote novels, although none of them was reviewed in this magazine.

The Life and Adventures of Joe Thompson (1750), his first and best novel, shows the influence of Tom Jones in content as well as in title. In all of his novels Kimber

11 From Edward Kimber's notebook:
"Feb. 5, 1755, began to compile ye Lond. Mag. which did to Mar. 17, 1757 at 2 l pr month, when had 2.10.6 to July 1760 & from thence to now 3 1. 5.50 for 1761 . . . correcting Corrected from Feb. 5 1755, for M. Ackers to . . . . at ten Shillings per week, & thence to his death at 12s."

Ibid., p. 92. These entries suggest that the printer had something to do with the selection of material for the London as he did for other material he printed, but it could also mean that the Kimbers went over the first printed sheets and selected the copy.

12 Others are The History and the Life and Adventures of Mr. Anderson, 1754; The Life and Adventures of James Ramble, Esq., 1755 (reviewed, Dec. 1754); The Juvenile Adventures of David Ranger, Esq. (reviewed Nov. and Dec. 1756); The Life and Extraordinary Adventures of Capt. Neville Frowde of Cork, written by Himself, [1758]; The Happy Orphans; an Authentic History of Persons in High Life, 1759 (reviewed in 1758); Maria: the Genuine Memoirs of an Admired Lady of Rank and Fortune and Some of her Friends, 1764; The Generous Briton; or, the Authentic Memoirs of William Goldsmith, Esq., 1765. This list is from Frank Gees Black, "Edward Kimber: Anonymous Novelist of the Mid-Eighteenth Century," Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature 17 (1935): 28-29. Black's check list is based upon Kimber's notebook which was published in part by S. A. Kimber
attempts to authenticate the story—whether or not these are serious attempts to convince his readers is difficult to tell, for most of the plots mingle the picaresque and the romantic and, therefore, require a stretch of the imagination to justify them as truth. His elaborate prefaces tended to irritate reviewers (see Chapter III, p. 151), but the high moral intent in his stories was generally praised.

Like his father, Edward Kimber contributed non-fictional articles to the London Magazine. Under the pseudonyms of "Americus," "Cynicus," "Cimber," and "Historicus," he published accounts of his travels to America, and, under other signatures, he printed poetry, acrostics, and letters. He compiled the General Index of the first twenty-seven volumes (1760). Although he used fewer references to religion than his father did, his material still reflects familial interest.

After Edward took over the compilation, there was no striking change of format or content in the London. It remained an imitator of the Gentleman's with a few noteworthy exceptions, the first being that it always exceeded the

(above), pp. 90-94. Black earlier remarks that "these eight pieces were of sufficient popular interest to warrant a total of about 37 editions, several of them in French or German, between 1750 and 1808." (pp. 27-28)

13 For the most complete listing to date of E. Kimber's contributions to the London, see S. A. Kimber, pp. 88-89.
Gentleman's in number of pages, in maps, and in other fold-out material.

Edward Cave had attempted to preserve the illusion that the Gentleman's was a journal for educated gentlemen, but the editors of the London solicited the support of the women and of those attracted more to society than to political news. Novels, considered women's fare, were reviewed in greater quantity—if not in greater depth—than in the Gentleman's, especially after 1751. Before then, only three novels and two plays had extensive coverage in the London compared with fourteen plays and four novels in the Gentleman's from 1740. The London averaged a major review of a play each year, and gave a substantial article on the novel only once every four years; but it reviewed a significantly larger number of farces, of Harlequin pantomimes, and of other entertainments than did the Gentleman's. This variety and superficiality are two indications that the London was publishing for a less sophisticated audience than the Gentleman's.

The London's reviewing procedure resembled the Gentleman's:

14 In the Mar. 1732 issue outlined above (p. 71), the front page table of contents in the Gentleman's differs slightly from the actual sequence of sections. It is interesting to note that this table of contents lists political essays as second to essays about miscellaneous items but the politics are the first in actual order. The London, on the other hand, opens its first issue with a story from the Universal Spectator celebrating fidelity in love.
A Reviewer . . . who would either do justice to the world, or to a performance he has under consideration, ought to give a short and judicious abridgment and analysis of it, setting forth, in as few words as possible, the plan and intention of the author, and at the same time select such specimens as may best illustrate his stile and composition.

(LM 36: June 1767, 309)

A review in the London used these very principles from "The Sale of Authors a Dialogue, in Imitation of Lucian's Sale of Philosophers" to condemn the book itself. Such prankishness was not below the level of many London reviewers and, in some cases of inferior performances, it was even well-directed. Although they are here used in a facetious manner, the principles quoted above outline a fairly standard form for all the London reviews of any comprehensiveness.

The "short and judicious abridgment" is usually designated in a review as "An Account of . . . ." It is followed by the title, the author's name, and, if it were a current play, the location of the theater. Occasionally, if the audience response had been favorable, this too is mentioned in the heading.

The play's or novel's summary sometimes reads like a page out of history (see especially the review of the opera

15 We have even less information about contributors to the London than we had for the Gentleman's, so the term "reviewers" is used under the assumption that there were more than one or two during the 28-year period. Also, following the procedure set up in Chapter I, opinions from correspondence and reprints are included as part of the critical material when it is consistent with prevailing opinion. Otherwise, it is particularly identified.
Pharnaces (LM 34: Feb. 1765, 61-63), but more often, the reviewer tells the story with as much verve and immediacy as a piece of fiction in its own right. A few of the reviews insert critical comments within the story line, but the reviewers generally place the "analysis" in the concluding paragraphs.

They often obtain the "plan and intention of the author" from the prologue or epilogue if the piece is a play. In the case of novels, they take this material from the writer's own statements in his introductory pages. They consistently attempt to ascertain the author's purpose. In this regard, the London reviewers show greater interest in the author's unique contributions than is apparent in the Gentleman's reviews. When the review is in the brief form found in book lists, at least one of the author's former works, if any, is mentioned with an opinion as to the relative merits of the two pieces. One of the reviewers even decided that an author's second attempt revealed that his first had failed for want of experience or for lack of genius (LM 27: Mar. 1758, 156).

The "specimens as may best illustrate his stile and composition" were usually poetic passages from tragedies. Occasionally some dialogue was inserted, but usually comic incidents and tragic narratives were told in the reviewer's
Although both magazines follow the same general procedure of reviewing, the London has a more distinctive tone of address to its readers. This quality involves a slight variation in format and content.

To begin with, the London reviewers address their readers in the captions of their longer articles. But they maintain a certain detachment by keeping this reference in the third person:

Our Readers will, no doubt, expect some Account of a Performance [Rasselas] which is so much admired, and we shall endeavour to gratify their Expectations.

(\textit{LM 28: May 1759, 258})

As in many of these introductions, the reviewer poses as one gratifying certain expectations of his reading audience.

(See also \textit{LM 29: Feb. 1760, 93.}) He also tries to amuse:

But in this [\textit{History of the Marchioness de Pompadour}] we have a strange hash of stories and anecdotes without order, connection, or correctness of language; nor can we select one shining extract to amuse our readers throughout the whole performance.

(\textit{LM 29: Feb. 1760, 111})

and to educate:

That our country readers who have neither seen nor read this curious piece [\textit{Britannia, a Masque}] may be able to form some notion of it, we here present them with a brief account of it.

(\textit{LM 14: May 1755, 239})

Once the article has begun, the reviewer takes on one of two roles or, occasionally, both: the social

\footnote{16 An assessment of the London's preferences in language and diction will be given later.}
reporter or authority. Many examples of the first appear in reviews of plays which were playing at the time the review was issued. Besides evaluating the performance, the writer remarks on the audience's reception of the play:

There were, both the first and second nights, a number of persons in the house who seemed inclined to condemn it [The Cunning Man, a "Musical Entertainment"], from party, and were ready with their whistles and catcalls before they could possibly know that it would deserve either; but the generosity of the major part, with their usual good nature, opposed them. Thus the piece, which might have been generally disapproved had not party interfered, has been in some measure preserved by an injudicious opposition: so that this anglicised French froth at present holds its ground; in which the music is the sole part which merits any attention. (LM 35: Nov. 1766, 594; see also, LM 35: Dec. 1766, 625; 36: Nov. 1767, 574)

The role here represented underscores the social function of the magazine and, again, implies a readership more interested in gossip than in the merits of drama.

The second role shows the reviewer taking his responsibility quite seriously, though not without some condescension towards his readers. For example, in a reprint of a review of Samuel Foote's comedy Taste, the subject of a literary elite is raised:

It requires true taste to see into the follies, as well as the villainies of the characters exposed; and they are not of the number of those that appear universally. Dupes, novices, and puffs, are only to be found in auction-rooms, and there are so well disguised, that it is not for the vulgar eye to distinguish them from men of true taste and real knowledge.

To this too general unacquaintance with the characters we are to add, that the piece is not of the nature of what people usually see, and what, tho' I do not know with how much reason, they expect to see in farce: They there look for extravagancies, not characters within the
bounds of nature; and are too much used to a Mock Doctor to receive favourably in this form any thing below its absurdities.

The piece, which is the subject of these observations, is indeed rather comedy than farce. . . .

(LM 21: Jan. 1752, 34. See also, LM 36: July 1767, 325)

To catch such subtleties of characterization, a reviewer holding this point of view would say, requires experience in life, a discriminating eye, and a certain manner of savoring which is lost by those, for instance, who gulp their fare. Here we see an example of how far from discriminating many London viewers saw the readers of novels:

As to the characters, plot, or sentiment, this performance [The Country Cousins, a novel published by Noble] is rather superior to many lately exhibited; and the glaring absurdities, trespass upon probability, and very lame catastrophe, will not be noticed by the class of beings for whom no doubt the author intended his labours, who read too rapidly to notice such trifling defects. 17

(LM 36: Apr. 1767, 206)

There is a proportionately greater number of negative, even insulting, reviews in the London's book lists than were seen in the Gentleman's. In several cases, the reviewers stand as defenders of the delicate, impressionable mind (LM 32: Aug. 1763, 436); or appeal to the "benevolent reader" (LM 36: June 1767, 310); or even, as in one case, suggest the type of audience to which a certain translation would appeal and be of service (LM 30: Feb. 1761, 112). In all of these cases, there is an air of assumed superiority, slightly offensive, probably, to the authors of the works,

17 See also, review of Women of Fashion, LM 36: May 1767, 262.
but sufficiently authoritarian to persuade the dependent reader.

The London writers were, in general, anti-pedantic but respectful towards serious criticism. As a sophisticated joke, they reprinted the long "Canons or Rules of Criticism, extracted out of Rev. Mr. Warburton's Notes on Shakespear," which satirizes the pedantry of textual criticism (LM 19: May 1750, 224-25). They also printed a statement by one of their correspondents which elevated the role of the critic to one of the highest services to humanity:

True criticism is of real use to mankind; by it the judgment is corrected and improved; error and absurdity detected and exposed; a refined and just taste attained to; and men are taught to think and write with propriety, and form adequate notions of things: Yet it is ever accompanied with candour, its noblest characteristic, which stamps an intrinsick and lasting value on it, and makes it current thro' ages; but when prostituted to indulge a partial resentment, or prompted by narrow and unworthy views, when truth and candour are sacrificed to ill nature, it loses its excellence, sinks into contempt, and defeats itself.

(LM 23: Sept. 1754, 407-8)

However, judging from their subject matter and the way they addressed their readers, the London reviewers appear to have had a low estimate of their audience's literary taste. Accordingly, the degree of serious study and technical craft behind their critiques is quite limited, and accounts in part for the sharp contrast between their reviews and the more polished and professional ones in the Review magazines. Furthermore, because they assumed that the novel-reading audience consisted chiefly of women who read only for
amusement and for vicarious romance, their evaluations of fiction became stereotyped and were even less precise in critical diction than the drama reviews.

One further indication of both their attitude towards their readers, whom they saw to be also the chief readers of novels, and their attitude towards the novel, is the London reviewers' comments on morality. This is by far the most frequently raised subject in the reviews and an examination of the reviewers' treatment of it will shed further light on the London Magazine as an organ of communication.

An overview, such as this, of any one magazine's particular slant on a subject is perilous, to say the least. One danger is the temptation to generalize on the basis of sheer quantity without attention to surrounding circumstances. This situation exists with the rise of criticism of novels in the London during the sixties. The number of novel reviews exceeds the number on drama (which is consistent with the figures in other magazines during the same years) and suggests a growing reader interest in the genre. But the general tenor of the reviews is difficult to portray to someone who has not read through all the attempts to describe and evaluate, to discredit and commend, to correct and to stigmatize the increasing number of novels flooding the booksellers' stalls.

The Gentleman's Magazine simply did not attempt to
list all of these books. The *Monthly Review*, pledged to "characterize" every book published, offset its growing tendency toward malicious reviewing by reporting on the minor attributes of these novels, particularly, their occasional successes in stimulating emotions. The *Critical Review* early established a fairly clear theory of the novel by which a novel was compared. But the *London* reviewers showed none of these tendencies. What they did was to judge the novel by the same standard as the romance, which was by this time thoroughly discredited by persons of taste because of its improbable plots, fanciful characters, and frequent immoral situations. They even interchanged the terms "romance" and "novel" more than any of the other three publications. Consequently, when a novel departed from the conventions of the romance, it was recommended. The area most frequently commented on was its moral or instructive value for (especially) women who wasted their time reading the frothy literature.

The problem here is that we might attend to the sheer bulk of such remarks and discount as an anomaly an occasional voice crying in the wilderness. One example is the *London*'s treatment of *Tristram Shandy*. From the publication of the first two volumes to the ninth, the *London* praised this book in reviews (see Table 2 in Appendix A), included long selections from it for entertainment, and zealously defended it against imitators (see especially LM 29: Sept. 1760, 496)
and from the other monthly reviewers. The chief interest in this book was the amusement it offered. "Oh rare Tristram Shandy! . . . what shall we call thee? . . . Thou has afforded us so much real pleasure in perusing thy life . . . as demands our gratitude for the entertainment" (LM 29: Feb. 1760, 111). Caught up with the delight of this piece, the reviewer does not concern himself with the instructive and moral restraints imposed upon other novels of lesser interest.

We will not risk our credit upon any conjecture as to who thou art? What was thy design? Where aims thy satire? &c. &c.--Mum for that! Let some other hand venture first to attempt the gordian knot; and develop thy intentions. (LM 19: Feb. 1760, 111)18

Instead, he predicts only that it will be "profitable and pleasant" even if fifty volumes like these first two appear and that they will "be read and admir'd,--admir'd! by whom? Why, Sir, by the best, if not the most numerous class of mankind" (p. 111).

But when confronted with an imitation of Sterne's work, the reviewer turns to the criterion which he has become accustomed to use on second class (and lower) novels: "But where is that satirical vein of humour, those latent lessons of virtue and morality, to be found in the original Shandy . . .?" (LM 19: Sept. 1760, 406). The satiric humor is characteristic of Tristram Shandy, but nowhere else do

18Sterne's identity as the author was not generally known yet at this printing.
the London reviewers talk about the morality or immorality of the genuine volumes, a topic which becomes the foremost issue (next to "dullness") in the other periodicals.

The London's resorting to the criterion of morality for the common run of novels does not mean we should discount it as a standard of criticism accepted by London readers and reviewers. On the contrary, the frequency with which it is used shows us how acceptable a part of criticism it had actually become. What we need to notice, however, are the variations in the use of it: whether it is used at all, whether the focus is on the instructive merits, on the virtues or the moral design, or simply on the obscenity of a piece. These will tell us something of the expectations London reviewers had of art and, particularly, of the novel.

When the ends of tragedy are discussed in the London Magazine, "instruction" is foremost: "... the great end of all dramatick compositions ought to be a rational entertainment, not an idle amusement," writes the correspondent on the tragedy of the Brothers (LM 22: June 1753, 255). The term "rational entertainment" is also applied early to the novel as a justification for its existence (LM 12: Jan. 1743, 33). Reviews of both genres show that virtue is at once the subject and object of instruction. However, these reviewers seem to confine the novel to its instructive role more than they confine the drama.

That drama was seen as a mode of instruction or at
least as a means of reinforcing virtue is suggested by a letter written to M. D'Alembert of Paris by J. J. Rousseau which was printed, in part, in the London. In this essay, Rousseau presents the thesis that the stage only follows or heightens the expectations of audiences which are already modified by "religion, government, law, customs, prejudices, and climates" (LM 28: Jan. 1759, 39). He states that the general aim of a play is to "heighten the national character, to strengthen the natural inclinations, and to give a new vigour to the passions" (p. 40). He continues by saying that a successful playwright is so because he honors this tradition; the author whose plays do not respect the existing tastes and opinions, although he may be recognized by future generations, is destined to present-day oblivion.

It would be difficult to disagree with M. Rousseau after examining the London's dramatic reviews for moral criticism. Playwrights whose works were praised upheld Mosaic principles (LM 22: Mar. 1753, [99]), or political virtue (LM 27: Mar. 1758, 156), or principles of justice (LM 35: Dec. 1765, 640) and provided warnings against the evils of extravagance, vanity (LM 28: Nov. 1759, 631), and indiscretion (LM 33: Jan. 1764, 36). When there was no discernible moral, or "design," to a play, reviewers often rejected it as frivolous; if the design was based on a too highly particularized situation, the moral was sometimes stretched to its absurdity so that the entire play was
either totally rejected or, at most, recommended with severe qualifications (LM 22: June 1753, 255; 32: Apr. 1763, 200-1).

A specific aspect of immorality on the stage is obscenity. The London reviewers make no allowance for ribaldry in the name of "nature" or of authentic characterization. Despite the French belief that the English followed no rules of decency in their comedy (LM 14: Sept. 1745, 436), a number of reviews cite the presence or absence of scurrilous wit as the basis of their opinion of plays. One reviewer hoped to "banish the original" Oroonoko by Thomas Southerne in view of the more acceptable revision which had deleted the "ribald mirth" (LM 28: Dec. 1759, 688), and another pointed out that the original version of Wycherley's The Plain Dealer had been excluded from the theatre "to the honour of the present age" because it was "immoral and indecent" (LM 35: Jan. 1766, 49-50). An Account of the English Merchant had little else to offer than its "mixture of true humour" and its being "devoid of the least tincture of obscenity or immorality" (LM 36: Mar. 1767, 142).

Over the three decades, the larger part of the London review of plays were written about performances rather than from the published scripts. Consequently, the critics tended to comment more on dialogue, characterization, and immediate audience reaction than on more abstract considerations such as structure or even the facts behind historical plays. The Gentleman's reviewers had generally assumed a reflective
character and rationalized their observations in the form of statements about the "moral design" of plays. But the London writers reported the immediate responses of the audience and, more than the other three periodicals, described the effects in terms of emotions rather than in speculations about how edifying these plays were and how they would affect the virtue of those attending.

Almost the reverse is true in the London's treatment of the novel. A high proportion of references to fiction, through the three decades, warn of the "pernicious effects of modern novels and romances" (LM 29: Dec. 1760, 672), or the particular methods of glorifying vice or undermining virtue which are likely to influence readers, especially young women. Only once is a book condemned for its obscenity. It was entitled The Life and Adventures of an Animal (LM 29: Dec. 1760, 672).

The prevailing attitude of the London towards the novel was expressed in terms of its instructive potential, or its waste of that opportunity. The reviewer of Amelia objects to its anachronisms, saying: "A novel, like an epick poem, should at least have the appearance of truth" (LM 20: Appendix 1751, 596). A correspondent who remarks on a recent book on commerce says:

... it gives me a most contemptible opinion of our present generation, that a gentleman who writes anything really serious, useful and instructive, should be obliged to publish it as a translation from the French, in order to recommend it to the perusal of people of
fashion in this country, at a time when silly novels and romances are read with avidity, not by little masters and misses, and have so much ingrossed the conversation in every polite assembly, that I have heard some ladies of good sense excuse their reading them by saying, lord! If one had not read such a thing, one should have nothing to say in company. (LM 23: June 1754, 259)

The catalogue announcement of *The History of Some of the Patients in the Magdalen-House*, as supposed to be written by themselves, says in part:

The design of these volumes appears to be so kind and so compassionate, and the work so well executed, that we wish, with the author, that those who seldom read anything of greater importance than novels, "may thereby be warned against giving way to the emotions of vanity; indulging the first step of indiscretion; or suffering their good principles to be erased by the dissolute or careless practices of others." (LM 28: Nov. 1759, 632)

Of *Polly Honeycombe*, a novel turned into a one-act "Dramatic Novel," a reviewer summarizes:

A successful attempt to display the pernicious effects produced by novels and romances, so readily supplied by the circulating libraries, on female minds.

(IM 29: Dec. 1760, 672)

Some of these passages illustrate how the reviewers showed their general distaste for the novel by associating it with the romance. Yet, presumed in all of these charges is the understanding that such reading can be either a beneficial or a harmful influence on the impressionable reader. What amounts to the London's general belief about this influence is exceptionally well-stated by "Publicus,"\(^{19}\) in 1743:

---

\(^{19}\)This passage appears within an article entitled "Some General Advice for the Advantage of the Fair Sex" which urges a literary education for women. Novels and
Novels are either exceedingly useful or dangerous, according to the Nature of their Composition: For the Reader, under the Notion of Entertainment, comes open and unguarded to them; our good Humour disposes us to be affected; and Love and Pity, the tenderest of all the Passions, being the only ones that are generally addressed to in these Performances, the Impression strikes deeply and has a lasting good or bad Influence upon the Mind and Temper, in Proportion as the Images are more or less pure and just. So obvious a Consideration as this is, should, I think, have deterr'd these Writers from varying the least Degree from Probability, human Nature, and moral Tendency, the Standard they ought to propose to themselves; but, so far from this, we find them, on the contrary, abound with the Marvel­lous and Incredible, which can yield no Benefit at all to the Mind, unless they will prove, that to be amaz'd and shock'd is beneficial; with false Conceptions and loose Images, that are fit for nothing but to pervert the Judgment and inflame the Passions: Vice is too often extenuated in them, nay, some Instances of it, particularly an unlawful Commerce between the Sexes, recommended and rewarded: Real Virtue is pass'd by unconsider'd, and a mere Phantom of the Imagination, that has no Foundation, no Rule, nor is in the least Degree adapted to common Practice, substituted in its Place. I hope the Ladies, the young ones especially, will shun them, as they wou'd a more dangerous and destructive Sort of Poison. A Man who has a good Heart, and perfectly understands human Nature; who knows how to touch the tender Passions, and to moderate our whole System to a proper Pitch of Harmony and moral Temper, is alone capable of this Species of Writing; and methinks, the Consideration of the great Usefulness it may be of, should put every one who has a Turn this Way upon exerting his Abilities with all the Warmth and Benevolence, so important an End, as the Good of Man­kind, requires. Mr. Marivaux has, in my Opinion, succeeded the best of any Author of the Kind: His Life of Marianne is an exact Copy of human Nature; the Sentiments and Reflexions of it, all which are noble and excellent, proceed directly from the Heart; every Foible that can be suppos'd to take Place in the Mind of a Woman who has Youth, Beauty, Wit and Merit, are clearly

poetry are a part of the "Amusement" part of education for which the author gives a list of serious supplementary reading such as Lord Roscommon's translation of Horace's Art of Poetry and Pope's Essay on Criticism.
trac'd to the minute Springs and Causes of them, and properly ridicul'd and censur'd; and above all, the Honour of the Fair Sex, a nice and tender Point, is strictly preserv'd in the Character of his Heroine, in Spite of all Difficulties and artful Attacks. In short, the Whole is so subservient to Virtue, and such a just Delicacy and Refinement prevails in it, that it must furnish the Ladies both with a Lesson of extensive Usefulness, and a Subject of rational Entertainment.  

For the London reviewers, the "usefulness" of the novel is not as apparent as its danger. However, several books are praised for their instructive quality. *Tom Jones* is recommended because it sets "several kinds of vice in their most deformed and shocking light" (LM 18: Feb. 1749, 51), and *Rasselas* contains "The most important Truths and Instructions, told in an agreeable and enchanting manner" (IM 28: May 1759, 258). In more sentimental terms, *The History of Indiana Danby* is favored because "Virtuous sentiments are inspired, the folly and absurdity of vice displayed, and affectation and hypocrisy unmasked and ridiculed" (LM 36: Apr. 1767, 206); and *The Letters of Juliet Lady Gatesby* are recommended by the reviewers because "We believe the reader's time will not be thrown away in the perusal of them; they may improve a good mind, and soften, to politeness and virtue, the rugged and vicious" (LM 29: Apr. 1760, 224).

It is noticeable that all of these comments are

---

20 More will be said about this long article under the individual rules.
stated in very broad terms. Seldom does a review contain a statement of the moral purpose or design of one book which is so prominent on the Gentleman's pages. The bland allusions to morality and instruction (which could be interchanged among the novels) once again point out the imprecision of the London writers as literary reviewers. The contrast with the remarks of Publicus makes their amateur standing as critics all the more apparent. The "analysis" of "Publicus" stands as the highest treatment afforded the novel during this period in the London Magazine. It presents the novel as a vehicle--valuable when used with sensitivity and knowledge--for the transmission of moral truths and an incentive to virtuous behavior.

The reviewers and the rules

There is one long essay which touches--however lightly--on nearly every point we have come to recognize as a guide, even a rule, for judging the merits of a play. The essay is in the form of an impromptu letter from a "Gentleman in the Country to his Friend in London":

Agreeable to your request, I shall give you my opinion concerning the two plays you were so kind to send me, viz. The Earl of Essex and The Brothers. I pretend not to examine by the rules of criticism. The judgment I pretend to in dramatrick performances arises from this, viz. how far they please me. When a person of a tolerable natural capacity, without prejudice, does not like a play, tho' he cannot directly determine from what source that dislike arises, yet you may venture to affirm it has its defects.--Such is my case with regard to The Brothers. I was far from being charmed with it; but that I might not barely tell you,
I did not like it, without assigning any reasons, I considered it more attentively, to discover, if possible, why it affected me so very little.—The reasons I take to be these.

In the first place, I cannot apprehend any moral can be drawn from it, either directly, or by just inference. It must be owned, that this is an objection that may be charged upon many of our plays; but still I take it to be a capital error. Dr. Young, especially as a clergyman, should have been sensible, that the great end of all dramatick compositions ought to be a rational entertainment, not an idle amusement. The *dramatis personae* are few; and yet made fewer by two, who are merely shadows, contributing nothing to the action of the play, viz. Antigonus and Delia: And much the same may be said of Pericles. They barely prevent soliloquies. Surprising and affecting incidents are so thinly sown thro' the play, that in my opinion, it is thereby rendered very languid.—There does not appear to me a perfect consistent character, excepting that of Perseus, which is that of a finished villain.—That display of Athenian eloquence in the third Act I look upon as a tedious suspension of the action. The spectators did not want to be informed; and it gives one an abhorrence to see guilt plead in its defence with more success than innocence.—But what surprised me the most of all was to find so strange a catastrophe. However it may happen in the world, I cannot but think poetical justice (as far at least as relates to the punishment of guilt) absolutely necessary. When vice comes off with impunity, we rise up greatly dissatisfied. It raises pity to see innocence suffer, but indignation to see vice triumph. The poet makes but poor amends, by telling us in the epilogue what ought to have been in the play. I own I should have been much more pleased if (like Shakespear) he had transgressed the unity of time, and shewed us Perseus a captive in the triumphal entry of Aemilius.—The conclusion is so abrupt, that we are left in the utmost anxiety. The king, I think, at last departs from his character, he sees his son die, and closes with a calmness I did not look upon as natural. Besides, we ought to be a little more cautious of exhibiting scenes of suicide upon our stage.—The language is nervous and laboured; but it seems to me to want that genteel, easy and flowing elegance which we find in Essex. But perhaps most of these objections proceed from chagrin, rather than cool judgment, as I expected from so celebrated a character as Dr. Young something extraordinary, and beyond the reach of common dramatick writers.

(IM 22: June 1753, 255-56)
Despite his protestations about not examining works by the rules of criticism, the gentleman writer shares several ideas or terms with "Publicus," the commentator on the novel. Both refer to certain facets of poetic justice, probability, and nature, and to the affective qualities of a piece. In addition, the gentleman correspondent comments on the use of language in The Brothers. Both writers' remarks on each of these topics provide a convenient framework for a discussion of the rules regulating the novel and the drama as perceived by the other reviewers.

**Poetic justice.**

**Publicus:** "every Foible . . . [is] ridicul'd and censur'd; and above all, the Honour of the Fair Sex . . . is strictly preserv'd. . . ."

**Gentleman:** "I cannot but think poetical justice (as far at least as relates to the punishment of guilt) absolutely necessary. . . . It raises pity to see innocence suffer, but indignation to see vice triumph."

The reviewer of the same play, The Brothers, three months earlier, also commented on the same issue. Before summarizing the story he explained that

The Tragedy of The Brothers is founded upon a Grecian plan, and its moral inculcates the Mosaical principle of Punishment from Heaven entailed upon Children for the Crimes of a Parent. (LM 22: Mar. 1753, 99)

The only comments following the summary are these:

Some people might be of opinion, that Perseus is not brought to poetical justice; but for my part, I was very well satisfied with the reflexion of his defeat by Emilius, his mean condition behind the triumphal car of his victor, and his death in slavery; which terminated
the line and reign of the Macedonian monarchs, the descendants of that hero who conquered the universe. (p. 101)

This writer is speaking out of a lively imagination, for no such scene is presented in the play and what was described in the epilogue was the sequel of Perseus' life told in a highly sympathetic manner:

Vengeance so great, that when his tale is told, With pity some, even Perseus may behold.21

The disagreement between these two writers serves to point out the emphasis on only one side of poetic justice, the punitive, in the London. There is no mention of the unjust deaths of the victims of Perseus in this play (except "we ought to be a little more cautious of exhibiting scenes of suicide upon our stage"—p. 256) nor of the innocent sufferers in the other two tragedies where poetic justice (or Divine Justice, as it is called in one case) is a point of discussion (LM 22: Feb. 1753, 53; 25: Mar. 1756, [99]). Even the summary of one comedy, The Perplexities, ends with the moral:

. . . . and Henriquez acknowledges his hopeless love for Felicia, and owns he justly loses her, as a punishment for the violence of his temper.

(LM 36: Feb. 1767, 74)

21 Dr. [Edward] Young, "The Brothers," The New English Theatre (London: Printed for I. Rivington et al., 1777), 12: 67. According to Biographia Dramatica, or, a Companion to the Playhouse by David Erskine Baker (London: Longman, Hurst et al., 1812), 2: 70, the epilogue was never used but was replaced by a humorous one on the fact that Young donated all the proceeds of the performances to "the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts."
We can partially explain the emphasis on vengeance as the outrage born of involvement in a play where injustice occurs despite the spectators' emotional but futile efforts to prevent the course of events. That they must witness undeserved suffering turns them away from the victims towards the oppressor on whom they vent their spleen—or, in literary terms, call down poetic justice. The first emotion, pity, is swallowed by the second, anger, and both are channeled into revenge which, on occasion, sides with Divine retribution. The reaction, as seen in just the few references to poetic justice in the *London*, is one based more on instinct than the Gentleman's writers were likely to produce. There is no care given to rationally and reflectively justifying the indictments made in its name: poetic justice is a handy and swift weapon.

Publicus' remark, to be sure, is about poetic justice stretched to its ultimate meanings. The passage shows both sides of this convention probably as much because of Publicus' commitment to a balanced sentence as because of his commitment to the idea. There is only one other reference to the distribution of justice in novels reviewed by the *London*. The plot summary of *Tom Jones* concludes:

Thus ends this pretty novel, with a most just distribution of rewards and punishments, according to the merits of all the persons that had any considerable share in it; . . .  

(LM 18: Feb. 1749, 55)

Both passages stress the impartiality of rather than the
vengeance wreaked by poetic justice. Because we have so few data from reviews of both genres, no theory of the use of poetic justice can be formulated. It is of interest to observe, however, that in these few examples where it is applied to the drama there seems to be a higher emotive quality associated with it than when the reviewer speaks of "distribution of rewards and punishments" in the novel.

**Probability.**

Publicus: "... the Impression strikes deeply ... in Proportion as the Images are more or less pure and just. So obvious a Consideration as this is, should, I think, have deterr'd these Writers from varying the least Degree from Probability, human Nature, and moral Tendency ... but, so far from this, we find them, on the contrary, abound with the Marvellous and Incredible. ..."

Gentleman: "I own I should have been much more pleased if (like Shakespear) he had transgressed the unity of time. ..."

When compared with the romance and its improprieties and marvellous happenings, the probability operating within a good, instructive novel arises from the consistent development of character and plot. A probable story avoids surprise and shock, which fill the mind with ideas unrelated to reality and which confuse the judgment, according to Publicus. Probability is a sort of prudential norm which defines anything outside itself as an absurdity (see LM 36: Apr. 1767, 206). For one novel, Eliza, the reviewer uses two turns of phrase traditionally connected with probability as
he summarizes the plot:

By a strange unexpected turn of fortune, for which the author does not satisfactorily account . . .

(IM 36: Jan. 1767, 12)

Here we think the author has fallen into some impropriety, especially when we reflect on lady Harley's cautious, cunning character.

(p. 13)

In the first case, the incident is inconsistent with the plot; in the second, the event is inconsistent with the character.

It is not difficult to recognize the resemblance between these uses of probability and what is understood by the unities. They both have credibility as their aim. They both look to a cause/effect development of plot. However, the gentleman writer is willing to suspend the unity of time for the purpose of another kind of satisfaction from the story. A possible explanation for this apparent departure from the objectives of dramatic unity is found in another reference to the unities contained in the epilogue of The Orphan of China:

Thro' five long acts I've wore my sighing face,
Confin'd by critic laws, to time and place;
Yet that once done I ramble as I please,
Cry London Hoy! and whisk o'er land and seas--
--Ladies, excuse my dress--'tis true Chinese--
Thus, quit of husband, death, and tragick strain,
Let us enjoy our dear small talk again.

(IM 28: May 1759, 269)

The epilogue here explicitly describes the function of its own form, i.e., a transition from the illusion of the stage to reality. It also implies that the meaning of the unities
was commonly understood and accepted as part of the pictorial representation of drama. The gentleman critic was asking for the satisfaction of seeing the natural outcome of the evil forces depicted on the stage. This was more important to him than that an artificial stage convention be observed.

There are only five other references to the unities in the London for the twenty-eight years. Four use the rules to bolster other reasons for endorsing plays (LM 23: Sept. 1754, 409; 24: Mar. 1755, 122; 29: Mar. 1760, 167; 30: Dec. 1761, 665), and only one is a reproach: for disregarding the unity of place (LM 22: Mar. 1753, 122). Judging by the relatively few allusions to this formerly rigid set of rules—and these are found in the London only between 1753 and 1761—the unities appear to be of no particular significance in the determination of good drama. Even if we include the questions of mixed and 3-act versus 5-act drama under the unity of action, we see the issues are not major. There was some objection to the insertion of pathetic scenes into comedy, and this procedure was also occasionally reversed for tragedy, to keep within the tradition of the ancients (e.g., LM 28: Dec. 1759, 688). But according to the reviewer of Barbarossa, the ideal play should be like Venice Preserved "which opens with the deepest distress, and alarms us for the consequences" (LM 24: Mar. 1755, 122) instead of so many modern plays which imitate the ancient prologue and fill in the first act with uninteresting background information so
that the action does not begin until the second act. Likewise it happens, as he demonstrates in Barbarossa, that the final act is simply a protraction of the catastrophe which becomes just as tedious as the first act. He generalizes the problem as it became manifest in other modern plays:

This much is certain, that the difficulty of inventing or planning a story, which should furnish sufficient matter for the variety of incidents requisite in a well formed plot, has induced our poets to give into the absurd contrivance of an under-plot, and to spin out their number of lines with empty declamation, rant, simile, or the like. (p. 121)

Not until five years later, with the performance of The Desert Island, "A Dramatic Poem, in Three Acts. By Mr. Murphy," at Drury Lane was the question of the three-act tragedy raised:

Sir,

As a species of the drama, almost unknown before to the English stage, (I mean a tragedy, or play of the serious kind, consisting only of three acts,) has been introduced, this season, at Drury-Lane theatre, I should be glad to see the opinions of ingenious and learned critics, on this subject, in your next Magazine; whether, and how far, it is proper to deviate from the established rule (laid down by Aristotle and Horace) of making every piece to consist of five acts. I put comedy out of the question, as the experiment has been tried with success both in our own and foreign theatres. (LM 29: Jan. 1760, 36)

There is no direct reply to this letter in succeeding issues, and the account of this play in the same issue avoids taking sides:

The Desart Island [sic] is composed of three acts, the first whereof consists entirely of the exordium, or opening of the story; the second contains the denouement, or unfolding of circumstance, and the third winds up the catastrophe. (LM 29: Jan. 1760, 42)
After another four years, the argument reappears and is still consistent. In a review of *No One's Enemy but his Own*, the writer regrets the expansion of the one-act play by Voltaire into three acts, "... as the present author hath added very little incident to what he found in Voltaire, it became rather insipid in three" (IM 33: Jan. 1764, 38). The objection is not to an unorthodox number of acts but to the reduction of action by the wider spacing of incidents, which is the determining argument in all of these questions of the "unities."

Likewise, the references to probability and nature are surprisingly few in the *London* and most usages are in vague, undefinable contexts such as "an improbable and life-less play" (IM 32: Oct. 1763, 516), or, "all that a dramatic writer has to do is to give an interesting story, and to support it with an appearance of probability" (IM 35: Dec. 1766, 640). The impression we receive from reading these allusions is that the *London* reviewers invoked "probability" as a familiar but imprecise term to describe any disharmony which drew attention to itself and failed to contribute to the forward action of the whole piece.

**Sentiment and sensibility.**

*Publicus:* "... the Sentiments and Reflexions of it, all which are noble and excellent, proceed directly from the Heart; ..."

"... our good Humour disposes us to be affected; and Love and Pity, the tenderest
of all the Passions, being the only ones that are generally addressed to in these Performances, the Impression strikes deeply. . ."

Gentleman: "The judgment I pretend to in dramatick performances arises from this, viz. how far they please me. When a person of a tolerable natural capacity, without prejudice, does not like a play, tho' he cannot directly determine from what source that dislike arises, yet you may venture to affirm it has its defects."

"Surpring and affecting incidents are so thinly sown thro' the play, that in my opinion, it is thereby rendered very languid."

All but the notion expressed by the third statement above may be found under various thin disguises throughout the pages of the London. The use of the word "sentiment" in the first passage corresponds with the prevalent meaning, i.e., a thought, an idea, or a mental attitude. The reference to "the Heart" here does not connote emotion but human nature. Thus the sentiments, as described here, are expressive of the best and most virtuous of mankind.

The review of the tragedy Agis demonstrates the use of this meaning in the fifties, when "sentiment" was applied chiefly to lofty ideals of religion and patriotism:

But it also seems, that the author of Agis had endeavoured to vie with the author of Cato in the sentiments, and has boldly entered the lists with him, in what is reckoned the most shining part of the latter piece; namely, the soliloquy on the immortality of the soul. (LM 27: Mar. 1758, 159)

The concentration here is on the thought itself and how it may be most poetically expressed. An essay written in 1754 called "Vindication of the new Tragedy of Herminius and
Espasia," was submitted by a correspondent in answer to a pamphlet condemning the play because of its language and, in particular, certain sentiments. The vindicator takes over a half-page (about 500 words) to justify the sentiment contained in the lines:

Friendship, Ardelia, is the wine of life,
That mingled with the gall of harsh affliction,
Sweetens the nauseous draught, and wins the wretched,
To bear his lot of sufferance here below--

According to the writer, these lines were attacked, not only for being unoriginal, but because of their "indelicacy and impropriety." After justifying the metaphor relating wine to friendship, he goes to some length to correct the assertion that it is improper, or a proof of intemperance, for a woman to take wine. This was the part of the sentiment in question (LM 23: Sept. 1754, 408-9). The linking of sentiment with manners, and by extension, morality, or virtue, is clear here, as it is in most of the references in the fifties, whether the allusions are to public virtues or to the appropriateness of an individual's behavior. 22

But in the sixties, the meaning which implied emotion and which was used by some Gentleman's writers ten years earlier began to appear in the London. Sentiments were recommended because they were "tender" in addition to being

---

22 I found only one mention beyond the example above where sentiments are mentioned explicitly in relation to the consistency of the behavior or status of a character. The Gentleman's writers made this a much stronger standard.
"exalted" or "sublime" (LM 29: Mar. 1760, 167). Passages two and four present the emotional quality of plays and novels to which terms such as "sentimental" and "sensible" became affixed.

---

23 I found but one statement where sentiments were specifically described as "affecting," which often occurs in the Gentleman's. However, the ideas are not far apart, as illustrated in the remark "... the incidents of which [i.e., the last volume of the Memoirs of Miss Sidney Biddulph] cannot fail of inspiring the most generous, noble and humane Sentiments, of affecting the sympathetic Heart, and exposing and rendering Vice extremely Odious" (LM 36: Mar. 1767, 150).

24 These two terms are practically non-existent in the Gentleman's up to 1767. In the London, the term "sentimental" has two meanings. The first is a derivation from the earlier use of "sentiment," and refers to the proper content of speeches or other dialogue. For example, the reviewer of The English Merchant says:

"How far this piece may bear the test of severe criticism, we pretend not to determine, but must say, that if sentimental speeches together with a mixture of true humour, devoid of the least tincture of obscenity or immorality, can please an audience, this cannot fail of having a happy effect." (LM 36: Mar. 1767, 142-43)

The second contains a note of derision and is associated with the cloying emotion-laden effects of romances:

"... but the manner of his expressing his love to her not being adequate to the high ideas of sentimental love which she had imbibed from romances &c. (which she had made her chief study) ... she was continually reproaching him with want of love ..." (LM 34: Jan. 1765, 5)

In the one use of the term to describe fiction, the first meaning seems applicable. A book list review for Letters between Emilia and Harriet reads:

"Very agreeable and sentimental, proper for the perusal of the ladies, especially the giddy part of the sex, who may hence learn what the follies and dissipations that too generally ingross their attention, can never instruct them in." (LM 31: Feb. 1762, 112)

The association of "sentimental" with instruction in this example which is particularly about moral behavior, excludes the possibility of the use of the term in a primarily emotional sense.
Publicus is here describing a kind of vulnerability on the part of the audience which is necessary for its receptivity to the particular emotions of love and pity. He describes the novel as both stimulating the receptive condition and filling the void. These notions are conveyed by later reviewers with the word "sensible." It is first used in a review of the revival of the tragedy of *Philaster* by Beaumont and Fletcher in 1763: "... he kept up every passion of the mind, and plucked up tears by the very roots from the least sensible of his audience ..." (LM 32: Oct. 1763, 516). *Tristram Shandy* is addressed "Thou very sensible --humorous--pathetick--humane--unaccountable!" (LM 29: Feb. 1760, 111), and the *Vicar of Wakefield* is described as "this sensible novel" (LM 35: Apr. 1766, 198). In all of these cases (which exhausts the employment of this term in reviews), "sensible" refers to sensitivity to delicate emotions; it means capable of being moved, and, by association, it describes a writing that causes a pathetic response.

The gentleman from the country expresses an intuitive response to literature which was only beginning to take on importance among critics and philosophers outside the realms of journalistic reviewing. While there is some echo of the "man of taste" who recognizes fine art by a certain educated instinct, the emphasis this gentleman puts on his emotional reactions suggests an appreciation more aptly investigated as psychological than purely aesthetic. What is most
remarkable about the passage is his utter confidence in the correctness of his initial response and his assurance that it can be justified by rational analysis. He is the only writer in the London who reviews explicitly by this authority. The artlessness of his whole approach, which includes his "analysis" and style, contrasts the dictatorial position taken on by most of the other reviewers. For the most part, they belittle emotional entertainment though they tolerate a vast amount of it in consideration of their readership comprised of female readers of novels and zestful play goers. There is still the underlying fear of excessive emotion, and this always requires them to pass judgment on the moral value of a play or novel which, in their opinion, is likely to affect the feeling and sensitivities of any reader.

Language.

Gentleman: "The language is nervous and laboured; but it seems to me to want that genteel, easy and flowing elegance which we find in Essex."

There are three attitudes towards language distinguishable in the London's reviews. The first is that language is an ornament, delightful in itself, and a type of clothing showing sentiments of events to their best advantage. The common metaphor of this attitude was dress. Of Tom Jones the reviewer laments he has not room in the paper to mention many of the incidents, "or for giving any of them in their beautiful dress" (LM 18: Feb. 1749, 55), and a tale, Solyman
and Almena, which was "told in the eastern manner" had "many valuable truths . . . prettily enough expressed" (LM 31: Feb. 1762, 112). There are only a few such statements among all the reviews, but we can identify this attitude with the technical approach to language which occurs more frequently before 1760 than afterwards, and which may be illustrated by the following passage from the review of Agis:

With respect to the diction of Agis, it may be said, that in many places it wants even the harmony of prose; in others it has not the variety, that a judicious ear always expects in verse composition; and tho' the expression is in general neither too turgid, nor the numbers affectedly polished, yet does he not seem to have hit upon that just mediocrity, which is agreeable to the simplicity of truth and nature, and which is generally to be met with in Shakespear and other ancient writers of tragedies. (LM 27: Mar. 1758, 159)

Towards the end of this attempt to describe the verse in auditory terms, this writer touches on the second attitude discernible among London Magazine writings, which is that language reflects a man's nature and that dramatic dialogue should be true to life. Actually, this attitude deals more directly with the content of the language than the other two for it reflects an evaluation of the language of art in terms of its consistency with reality as well as its potential for persuasion. When diction is described as "natural" the writer apparently means that it does not interfere with the progress of the action by drawing attention to itself, but rather augments the flow of ideas and emotion.

The vindicator of Herminius and Espasia, quoted
above, responds to the accusation of the language being "flowing fustian" by saying that it is rather easy and natural, and however it is by the critick termed fustian, it will be found, by a dispassionate reader, to be the language of nature, that can melt the heart, and produce grief, terror and pity, effects never yet produced by fustian or bombast.

(LM 23: Sept. 1754, 409)

In this strain, dialogue should be distinctive from character to character, and none should "put on the tragick pomp in telling his story" (LM 24: Apr. 1755, 170). Likewise, speech characteristics which interrupt the flow of action or the delineation of character should be avoided (LM 26: Mar. 1757, 127). The frequent exhortations to throw the subject "into action" shows the same preference that the Gentleman's writers had for action over dialogue, and especially over lengthy speeches and soliloquies (LM 19: Mar. 1750, 101; 24: Mar. 1755, 122). One writer complained of an entire act of a play as being rather "a Richardsonian narration than part of a dramatic action" (LM 32: Feb. 1763, 94).

These first two concepts of the function of language describe what it is and what it should do, but the third attitude takes the point of view of the spectator and describes what it has done. The gentleman critic speaks to this end several years before most London reviewers do. This qualitative evaluation is based mainly on the emotional response which, ideally, aspires to be unruffled pleasure and satisfaction. Thus the language of a play is described
as "far from harmonious" (LM 29: Jan. 1760, 56), or "very poetical and moving" (LM 29: Feb. 1760, 93), "beautiful" (LM 29: Mar. 1760, 167), "easy, elegant, and unaffected" (LM 32: Feb. 1763, 94), "polite and elegant" (LM 35: Jan. 1766, 30), and "remarkably pure, easy, and elegant" (LM 35: Feb. 1766, 64). Dialogue in one play was termed "remarkably coarse and inelegant" (LM 32: Dec. 1763, 657), and in another, "easy and flowing, and not void of wit and pleasantry" (LM 33: Jan. 1764, 38). A slight variation, in vocabulary only, appears in the account of the tragedy, the Earl of Warwick, where the "DICTION" is called "chaste, nervous, and characteristic" (LM 35: Dec. 1766, 640), and the book The Farmer's Daughter of Essex has "stile neither characteristic nor elegant" and "truths which are much too boldly expressed to be entertaining" (LM 36: June 1767, 310). The last evaluation of language or style returns to "elegant" to describe the style of the novel The History of Indiana Danby (LM 36: Apr. 1767, 206). But it is significant that very few novels are judged in terms of language; in fact, I find only eight references to language or style in fiction (four of which have been cited and represent each of the three categories described), whereas very few plays with critical comments lack a remark or two in this area.
Summary

In competition with the Gentleman's Magazine which they imitated, the writers for the London directed their magazine to a slightly less sophisticated audience, which they alternately entertained and sermonized. They used their reviews of fiction and drama primarily to entertain their readers. The summaries of the stories took by far the largest portion of their articles and were usually given in spirited, detailed prose. The evaluations were generally limited to one or two paragraphs at the end of each lengthy review.

The London had fewer substantial articles on literature than the Gentleman's, but included a significantly larger number of novels in the book lists, particularly in the sixties, to which they affixed brief annotations. If we are to judge by the large numbers of references to morality in these "reviews," the novel had one clear value for the London: to be a proponent of virtue. However, we must also consider that the large proportion of these novels were artistically inferior and that when a superior novel, Tristram Shandy, was praised by the London, little stress was put on its value as instruction or on its morality, but it was praised solely for its entertaining qualities.

The concluding, evaluative paragraphs in the reviews utilized critical terms but generally in a non-technical way. "Probability" and "sentiments" were terms which retained the
same meanings and emphasis when applied to plays or novels. A play, or a story, or a scene was "improbable" if it could not be explained as consistent with plot or character, or as a natural phenomenon, or if one element drew disproportionate attention to itself. For the most part, "probability" was a term hurt by overuse. "Sentiment" shared the same fate. Having "just" or "moral" sentiments recommended a piece; being "affecting" or "tender" was prized only if these emotions were well-directed to a virtuous end.

There is no emphasis on the unities for drama nor on unity in fiction. Likewise, the questions about three-act plays and sub-plots receive little attention. The ideal of poetic justice is mentioned twice with reference to novels, both in the early fifties and both stressing rewards as well as punishment. But in the drama, it is always invoked as a justification for the punishment of evil. The small number of occurrences of this term does not justify any strong conclusions, but the emotional overtones connected with deserved reward and punishment are more apparent in the reviews of drama than when the issues are discussed for the novel.

By far, the most significant difference between the treatment of the two literary genres is in the area of language. The numerous references to this element in play reviews and the resulting evolution of descriptive methods contrasts sharply with the dearth of comment in reviews of
fiction. To evaluate the language of a piece requires not only reflection and a certain seriousness but some standard or notion of how style should function or what it can effect. It is also, more than the other standards of discussion, most closely linked with the substance of literary art. Unlike the Gentleman's writers who considered elements such as the epistolary style, individuated dialogue, and detailed descriptions in novels, the London reviewers are, at most, perfunctory on the subject. The only conclusion which seems consistent with the condescension with which they treated fiction-reading audiences is that the London reviewers did not consider the novel as a proper literary entity. This is not to blame them for lack of perceptiveness or foresight, but to emphasize what is already established: that the concern of the London writers was the immediate gratification of a relatively unsophisticated audience in order to maintain some gravity in the turbulent competition with the Gentleman's, and later, the Review magazines. With its ear to immediate popular opinion, the London Magazine is at once a valuable index of popular taste and a poor quarry for critical theory current among the better educated.
CHAPTER III

THE MONTHLY REVIEW: 1749 TO 1767

Ralph Griffiths' purpose for founding the *Monthly Review* was to create a reader's index for literature in all fields. As he put it in an "advertisement" at the end of the first issue, May, 1749:

Undertakings that, in their execution, carry the designation of their use, need very little preface, and the present one perhaps the least. When the abuse of title-pages is obviously come to such a pass, that few readers care to take in a book, any more than a servant, without a recommendation; to acquaint the public that a summary review of the productions of the press, as they occur to notice, was perhaps never more necessary than now, would be superfluous and vain.

The cure then for this general complaint is evidently, and only, to be found in a periodical work, whose sole object should be to give a compendious account of those productions of the press, as they come out, that are worth notice; an account, in short, which should, in virtue of its candour, and justness of distinction, obtain authority enough for its representations to be serviceable to such as would choose to have some idea of a book before they lay out their money or time on it. This is the view and aim of the present undertaking; and as it must necessarily stand or fall by the merit of the execution, on that we rest the issue, without offering to prepossess the public in its favour.

While the form and content of the publication are self-explanatory, Griffiths only hinted at the means by

---

1Hereafter referred to as the *Monthly* or *MR*, the latter being used mainly in documentation in the text.
which he aspired to attain the high quality that would assure the usefulness of this organ. The relatively recent examination of Griffiths' personal set of the *Monthly*, wherein he initialed the names of his otherwise anonymous writers, has revealed a remarkable directory of eminent scholars in science, medicine, religion, and politics, as well as in academia and the arts. By maintaining the anonymity of his reviewers—even until their deaths Griffiths was able to procure specialists who would otherwise demur from writing for periodical publications, even on an occasional basis, for fear of jeopardizing their professional standings or associations. Their expertise provided the "justness of distinction" which he had hoped would characterize the accounts in his review.

---


3 In a letter to Mr. Urban, printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 66: Jan. 1796, i, 5-6, Griffiths, in correcting a false statement appearing in that magazine (Oct. 1795, p. 804), gives the names of three early reviewers for the Monthly. In a postscript he remarks: "Although I may, occasionally, think myself at liberty to mention a deceased Reviewer, it is a rule with me never to acknowledge an existing connexion of this kind."
Griffiths' secrecy also encouraged candor and impartiality. As much as possible, the reviewers were not even informed of the authors of the books they reviewed, nor of each other, and never was an author apprised of his reviewer's identity. Writers never reviewed their own works, nor were voluntary reviews accepted, as a rule, because of the biases usually promoting them. Griffiths personally corresponded with the reviewers and frequently offered his own criticism, which kept the operation under his control. He maintained his editorship full-time after he retired from his publishing firm in 1762 until his death in 1803.

Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that the list of writers on drama and fiction in the Monthly is lengthy and impressive. Between 1749 and 1767 it includes: John Cleland (author of Fanny Hill), John Hill (editor of The Inspector), William Rose (close friend and co-founder of the Monthly with Griffiths), Tobias Smollett, Theophilus Cibber, James Grainger, M.D. (physician and poet), Oliver Goldsmith, Owen Ruffhead, William Kenrick (a quarrelsome writer with some little talent), John Langhorne, David Garrick, George Colman, and Griffiths himself, who wrote a large percentage of the reviews of fiction, particularly the shorter evaluations found in the monthly catalogues.  

4 Other occasional reviewers of drama or fiction assigned by Nangle are John Ward (vice-president of the Royal Society in 1752, and of the Society of Antiquaries in 1753, and a trustee of the British Museum in 1753); Abraham
On political and religious topics, Griffiths was a Whig and a Dissenter, but he was fair-minded and secured critiques from men of opposing persuasions. Johnson observed the impartiality of both the Monthly and Critical reviews, but suggested what may very well be a key to the differences between them. He said to Arthur Murphy: "The Monthly Reviewers ... are not Deists; but they are Christians with as little Christianity as may be; and are pulling down all establishments. The Critical Reviewers are for supporting the constitution, both in church and state."^5

This does not mean that Griffiths sacrificed thoroughness or consistency to impartiality. On the contrary, he stressed close continuity, especially when several publications appeared on the same controversial subject. In such cases, Griffiths, who personally supervised everything which went into the Monthly Review,^6 would assign one reviewer to Dawson (a Presbyterian minister who published Biblical scholarship); Sir Tanfield Leman, L., T.L., S.T.L.; Robert Lloyd (in charge of the poetical department of the Library under Andrew Kippis); Cuthbert Shaw (tutor to the future Lord Chesterfield from 1766) and William Bewley; but there is reason to dispute some of the particular assignations by Nangle.

^5 Boswell, 3:32.

^6 This is probably the reason for the success of the Monthly Review. In a letter to Gilbert Stuart, advising him against establishing a rival review in Edinburgh, John Murray, publisher of the Critical Review, indicated that the Critical was able "barely to pay expenses," and that "a new Review will have to compete with the Monthly, a publication which is conducted with the greatest care and attention by
all of them so that the reviewer would have the advantage of knowing the background and, being informed, would present a consistent viewpoint.\(^7\) In other cases of sequential reviewing, where different writers reviewed different editions, translations, or successive volumes of the same work, it is evident that Griffiths required them to read the earlier reviews and to provide some connecting links.

Griffiths was generous in his allotment of space for the major reviews in each issue, permitting some articles to run over twenty, even thirty pages of the eighty-page monthly.\(^8\) Besides this, at least one review was usually carried over into a second or third issue, although few articles of this dimension were reviews of novels or plays. Shorter reviews were gathered under the "Monthly Catalogue" which was introduced in December 1750. At first this listing of annotated entries averaged only five pages, but

---

\(^7\) When the viewpoint did shift, as it did in the case of Samuel Badcock's recognizing the author of the Ossian poems, 1781ff., it was generally due to the reviewer's intimate knowledge of the argument. See Norman E. Oakes, "Ralph Griffiths and the Monthly Review" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1961), p. 175.

\(^8\) After the Critical Review began in 1756, sixteen more pages were added to the Monthly.
it grew to exceed twenty pages of very fine print in some issues by 1767. Even with this expansion, lack of space was a constant problem to Griffiths who would frequently apologize for not including more extracts or a longer analysis.

At least thirty works were covered in each issue either extensively or with simple summaries in the catalogue. During the period under discussion, the Monthly reviewed 325 novels and 120 plays. From 1749 to 1759 it reviewed 173 novels, 34 tragedies, and 23 comedies. In the shorter period of eight years between 1760 and 1767, it covered 152 novels, 23 tragedies, and 40 comedies.9 These figures are more indicative of a growth in the total production of novels than of a sudden growth of interest in the genre by Monthly reviewers because every book list contains contemptuous one-line comments accompanied with reminders about how fortunate the readers of the Monthly were to have "tasters to the public" who must palate "many an unsavory, many a nauseous mess" for them (MR 13: Nov. 1755, 399).

The pattern of reviewing is similar to that found in the magazines except that in the longer articles, the Monthly

9Each review for a successive volume, edition, or translation counts as an entry. Books of tales, not included in this total, show an even pace of publication throughout the two periods. Dramatic entertainments (operas, etc.), farces, and four historical plays are not included in the above total number of plays although any material in these reviews expressive of the attitudes we are searching for is utilized. The same may be said for reviews of essays and other publications dealing with the theory or philosophy of the arts.
reviewer usually began with establishing a general context for the discussion to follow. Here he would give a theoretical or historical background of the subject covered by the book, cite pertinent publications or articles, or summarize earlier works of the author. Often, as in the case of "histories" and "memoirs," the reviewer here explored the authenticity of the work and tried to determine whether or not, or how much of a book was fiction. This was done primarily to prevent the potential buyer from being misled by the title into thinking he was getting a history. It was not done to establish a standard of judgment, for the Monthly reviewers did not evaluate a book on the basis of whether it was truth or fiction, unless it contained historical inaccuracies. These sometimes exceedingly long introductions furnish much of our information on the attitudes and theories of literature held by the Monthly critics.

The next section of a review characterized the work. Here the writer summarized its contents leaning heavily on long excerpted passages to exemplify language, style, or sentiments. This was a straightforward summary and seldom included anything of a critical nature.

Finally, if there was still room, the reviewer weighed the merits and demerits of the author's achievement. The comments for literary works usually centered on the style, the issues raised by the piece, and its probable reception by the public. Not infrequently, this section lent
itself to general comments about the novel or certain types of drama which again opens to us some thinking about the novel as a literary genre.

The first and last of the many instances where the novel is designated as a genre neatly illustrate the changing conceptual emphases that took place in the *Monthly Review* over the two-decade period.

... it does not appear to us that this performance [*Fanny Hill*] ... has anything in it more offensive to decency, or delicacy of sentiment and expression, than our novels and books of entertainment in general have: For, in truth, they are most of them (especially our comedies, and not a few of our tragedies) but too faulty in this report. (MR 2: Mar. 1750, 432)

Variety is the soul of literary amusement, and novels are the most commodious vehicles of variety. At present they have assumed a kind of tragi-comic form, and adopted a strange mixture of the ridiculous and the pathetic. (MR 37: Appendix 1767, 521)

Both writers treat the novel as primarily entertainment which, as we have seen, was not the case in the early reviews of the *Gentleman's* and *London* magazines. Both allude to the drama. But whereas the reviewer of the first (Griffiths) is intent upon defending one novel from accusations of immorality and therefore, later in the review, attempts to make a case for the novel as an instructive device, the second reviewer (Langhorne) is more interested

---

10 Beginning with Volume 8, an appendix which increased from thirty to eighty pages by 1767 was added to each volume. This means that the equivalent of one month's material was added every six months.
in classifying the genre in terms of its aesthetic potential to expand beyond the limitations of the other arts. He sees the novel as capable of absorbing the forms of drama and of evoking strong emotional responses as part of its function. These points of view represent a field of assumptions and attitudes about the novel which the Monthly reviewers seldom dealt with directly. The two most comprehensive attitudes are those which constitute the general profile of the rest of this chapter. Formulated as questions they are: 1) To what extent is the novel to be instructive, especially of morals? 2) What may be expected of a novel as entertainment? A third area, the question of aesthetics, overlaps both of these to the extent that treating it separately would result only in redundancy. Therefore, it will be included when pertinent to each section.

The novel as instruction

In keeping with their intentions to "characterize" more than to criticize publications, the Monthly reviewers dealt with the novel as an aesthetic device for moral instruction more directly than did either the Gentleman's or London reviewers. The Gentleman's writers had relied heavily on the moral precept or prudential maxim to inform their public of the ethical direction of the plot without elaborating on the aesthetic variations which can determine the manner and the degree of influence a work has on a
reader. The London writers demanded a high degree of moral instruction from the novel, especially in the sixties, but in trying to be reflective of changing popular taste, they seldom justified their judgments with specific norms. Indecency and obscenity were consistently ruled out by all three periodicals, but the Monthly reviewers made a greater attempt to educate their readers to see the value of presenting vice in literature than either of the two earlier publications. Witness the lines following those quoted above (p. 122) from Griffiths' review of Fanny Hill:

The author of Fanny Hill does not seem to have expressed anything with a view to countenance the practice of any immoralities, but merely to exhibit truth and nature to the world, and to lay open those mysteries of iniquity that, in our opinion, need only to be exposed to view, in order to their being abhorred and shunned by those who might otherwise unwarily fall into them. The stile has a peculiar neatness, and the characters are naturally drawn. Vice has indeed fair quarter allowed it; and after painting whatever charms it may pretend to boast, with the fairest impartiality, the supposed female writer concludes with a lively declaration in favor of sobriety, temperance and virtue, on even the mere considerations of a life of true taste, and happiness in this world; considerations which are often more impartially attended to (especially by our modern free-thinkers) than the more solemn declamations of a sermon; and which are, in truth, no improper groundwork for a reformation, and considerations of a more weighty and serious nature.

(MR 2: Mar. 1750, 432)

Simply by including a brief comment about the style and natural characterization, Griffiths raises the entire context of the discussion to an aesthetic plane. Then, by slurring the "modern free-thinkers" and associating his ideas with moral reformation, he equates the instructive
value of the novel with the values of a sermon, thereby adding a religious connotation. In this way he was able to elevate considerations of pornography to considerations of instructive art.

A year and a half later, in his review of *Amelia*, John Cleland further examined a novel's instructive merits:

> . . . the author imitates nature in enforcing its capital laws; by the attractions of pleasure he puts Morality into action; it is alive, and insinuates its greatest truths into the mind, under the colours of amusement and fiction. Readers are, by the magic of this association, made to retain what has at once instructed and diverted them, when they would be apt to forget what has perhaps no more than wearied, or dulled them. The chief and capital purport of this work is to inculcate the superiority of virtuous conjugal love to all other joys; to prove that virtue chastens our pleasures, only to augment them; and to exemplify, that the paths of vice, are always those of misery, and that virtue even in distress, is still a happier bargain to its votaries, than vice, attended with all the splendor of fortune. So just, so refined a morality, would alone, with a candid and ingenuous reader, compensate for almost any imperfections in the execution of this work, some parts whereof will doubtless appear, amidst its beauties, to stand in need of an apology.

*(MR 5: Dec. 1751, 512)*

This passage begins and ends with a consideration of the work itself as the vehicle for moral truth. The elaboration of the Horatian principle (truth under color of fiction) is blended with the psychological ("it is alive, and insinuates") and the non-rational (the "magic") to explain the method of transference to the reader. Following a tidy summary of the traditional moral objectives of literature, adapted vaguely to the story of *Amelia*, which touches on the moral design, poetic justice, and the problem of the
existence of evil ("virtue even in distress . . . a happier bargain"), Cleland prepares for a presentation of specific flaws and beauties in the narrative. The juxtaposition of attitudes is striking: morality as pleasure "insinuates"; the purpose of the work is to "inculcate." The form modifies the principle as the sugar coats the pill. But Cleland and a number of other Monthly reviewers find their forte in analyzing the sugar and its effects ("insinuates . . . truths"), so to speak, and they approach the medicine with the stereotyped vocabulary of a well-trained but disinterested preacher ("inculcates the superiority of virtuous conjugal love"). There are fewer long digressions on morality in the Monthly than in the magazines, but there is more discussion of literature as a vehicle for morality, which is consistent with the priority that description had

---

Later, Berkenhout used this metaphor to express the same concept:
"Nothing can be more certain, than that a nation absorbed in luxury will pay very little regard to sermons, or professed treaties of morality, and that the most probable means for a moral writer to catch the attention of those who are in most want of his instruction, is to mix up the medicine with some pleasant vehicle, so that the patient may imbibe the salutary parts without disgust, and enjoy their effect without perceiving their operation." (MR 24: Apr. 1761, 260*)

*Note on pagination of MR 24: The Feb. 1761 issue ends with p. 168, but the March 1761 issue begins with p. 109 and pagination continues from this number to the end of the volume (through June 17, 1761). Therefore page numbers 109 to 168 are duplicated. An asterisk by the page number will identify quotations from pp. 109-168 beginning in March 1761 as in this instance.
over prescription in the Monthly's objectives.

The large majority of Monthly reviewers of the novel professed belief in its instructive potential. Only the focus and the extent of this belief shifted from time to time. In the fifties, the fear underlying reviewers' (and readers') objections to the portrayal of aberrant and immoral behavior was early articulated by the reviewer of Eleanora, or a Tragical but True Case of Incest in Great Britain:

... the knowledge of such unnatural, and (happily) uncommon crimes, cannot possibly be attended with any good consequences: as examples, they will probably never deter others, but may inspire people with thoughts of such practices as otherwise might never have entered their imaginations. (MR 5: Sept. 1751, 317)

This underscores the notion that literature operates through the imagination. Griffiths put the idea in terms of social responsibility:

This writer [of Memoirs of a Man of Pleasure; or the Adventures of Versorand] has, indeed, gone to very unpardonable lengths in his description of the consummation of two or three amorous intrigues; which he has painted more loosely than is consistent with that decency, both of language and sentiment, which every one ought inviolably to observe, who undertakes either the instruction or entertainment of the publick.12 (MR 5: June 1751, 43)

Griffiths' early reviews show that he does not object to the

12 "Sentiment," as used here, meant an opinion about moral behavior. The word appears three times more often in the fifties than in the sixties, but not until Kenrick uses the term "moral sentiments" in 1759 does it take on the highly emotive meaning defined by Adam Smith in his The Theory of Moral Sentiments published in the same year.
portrayal of evil or low action if it is written with style and restraint and is directed to a moral end. One way of demonstrating this moral turn would be to show the repentance of the chief offender and his or her intent to continue in virtue, as was the case in Fanny Hill, which Griffiths defended both in court and in his Review for his friend John Cleland. 13

But Griffiths saw novels also as presenting models for the young. 14 He calls The History of Jack Connor "a truly moral tale" and cites the true merit of the piece as resting in those parts where the author digresses into useful lessons of morality, and where he introduces certain conversation-pieces; from whence his younger readers may draw proper hints for their improvement in politeness, humanity—in fine, in the art of meriting and acquiring the respect, and the love of mankind.

(MR 6: June 1752, 448)

Structurally, therefore, he thinks the piece need not follow a continuous action as long as it entertains and instructs

---

13 A later review, whose authorship is not indicated in Griffiths' issues so it could very well have been written by him, discredits soundly a "biography" which might have the same basic story as Fanny Hill's but whose protagonist maintained a revengeful attitude towards those responsible for her fall from virtue. (MR 16: Feb. 1767, 178-79)

the reader at the same time. He speaks of "instruction and profitable entertainment" being blended, and he excuses faults such as "levities and inaccuracies" as probably having been "thrown out only to engage, or rather to entrap, the generality of readers, into the more useful and moral parts of the work" (p. 448). He also does not limit instruction to morality but commends the author for listing "some admirable rules for the education of youth, especially young gentlemen" and for making "some agreeable excursions into the political province, where he takes frequent occasion of shewing his attachment to the present government" (p. 448).

Another reviewer in the fifties, Berkenhout, writes at length on this subject of the instructive potential in the novel for young people. But in his review of Emily, or the History of a Natural Daughter, he takes the position that the instilling of morality is a more subtle process than simply listing guidelines or giving exempla. Although he does not use the word "insinuate," there are several synonyms in the opening paragraph.

We are far from joining in opinion with those who condemn all kinds of Romances, as frivolous, insignificant, un instructive books: on the contrary, we are convinced, that this imaginary biography, is not only capable of exercising the finest genius, in the writer, but, also, of sowing the seeds of goodness in the heart, and of conveying the most important instruction to the mind, of the reader. But were there even something faulty in the very nature of novels, yet from their almost universal circulation, a strong argument may be drawn to induce men of virtue and understanding to employ their pens in that kind of writing. The juvenile part of mankind are too apt to neglect religious and
moral instruction, if it does not appear before them in the alluring garb of amusement; whence we see so many excellent systems of morality lie unregarded, whilst novels of the most despicable kind, are eagerly called for. Since then mankind happen to be thus disposed, they must be documented in their own way: no matter how they are made virtuous, provided virtue be the result of our labour. Certain it is, that the generality of our young ladies, in particular, in their hours of retirement, amuse themselves chiefly, if not entirely, by reading of Lives, Histories, Memoirs, Adventures, &c. These are almost the only titles which will introduce a book into their closets. These are the authors who, being admitted at an age when their fair readers are most susceptible of good or bad impressions are principally concerned in the formation of their minds: from this consideration it is, that we have so frequently expressed our concern to find a branch of writing, that requires so many united talents, usurped, of late, by the most illiterate and worthless scribblers.

(MR 14: Apr. 1756, 289)

It appears that this passage was written to defend the Monthly Review which had been giving numerous low ratings to the ill-written novels glutting the market. Berkenhout points out both pragmatic and artistic values in the novel form. He suggests no techniques for writing but seems to assume that a talented, wordly-wise author with noble intentions would supply the necessary "alluring garb of amusement" that would "sow . . . the seeds of goodness in the Heart" and "convey . . . the most important instruction to the mind." He further informs us of the wide readership

15In a later review, Berkenhout gives Richardson's works the laurels for constituting "the best and most applicable system of morality, for young people, that ever appeared in any language." He also makes it quite clear that, as in Clarissa, a character should pay for her indiscretion by suffering as part of the means "calculated to encourage and promote Virtue" (MR 24: Apr. 1761, 260).
among young people, especially "young ladies," and of his strong belief in their susceptibility to new ideas.

The only other writer in the fifties to criticize a work at any length on the grounds of instruction through imperceptible influence is Ruffhead in his review of Johnson's *Rasselas*. His theory of fiction and morality is quite clearly set out at the beginning:

The method of conveying instruction under the mask of fiction or romance, has been justly considered as the most effectual way of rendering the grave dictates of morality agreeable to mankind in general. The diversity of characters, and variety of incidents, in a romance, keeps attention alive; and moral sentiments find access to the mind imperceptibly, when led by amusement: whereas dry, didactic precepts, delivered under a sameness of character, soon grow tiresome to the generality of readers. (MR 20: May 1759, 428)

Into this last category he places *The Prince of Abissinia*, because of Johnson's style ("tale-telling is evidently not his talent"). He discerns Johnson's moral to be not what Johnson intended, i.e., "to prove that discontent prevails among men of all ranks and conditions," but what Johnson implied, i.e., "that felicity is a thing ever in prospect, but never attainable." Ruffhead's reaction is vehement:

This conclusion, instead of exciting men to laudable pursuits, which should be the aim of every moral publication, tends to discourage them from all pursuits whatever; and to confirm them in that supine indolence, which is the parent of vice and folly: and which, we dare say, it is not the worthy author's design to encourage. (MR 20: May 1759, 429)

Therefore, the book is that much more subversive in that the moral it intends is negated by the moral it implies. The
weight of this discrepancy does not fall upon Johnson's manner of writing but on his selection of character and plot to which Ruffhead seems to object more on a philosophical than an artistic basis. Thus he makes the instructive element (which was, of course, the intended strength) the focus of the book's demerit. 16

Other minor allusions to didacticism in the novel in the fifties echo the sentiments illustrated above: that because of its large youthful readership, its flexibility of form, and its pattern of discourse which permits us to see the outcome as well as the everyday life of the chief characters, the novel can be a substantial influence in propagating correct moral and social behavior. Likewise, these reviewers seem to say, if a novel is filled with unsavory scenes and language, or exonerates evil, it can propagate immorality for the same reasons.

Much less is said of the instructive merits of the theatre during this decade. The few remarks show concern for indecency on the stage or for lack of a moral which, Goldsmith maintained, "should be the ground-work of every

---

16 Ruffhead is consistent in his views of the instructive potential of the romance by persuasion through the imagination (cf. MR 24: June 1761, 415-35), but his other reviews show he is primarily the moralist and almost always a debunker (see his treatment of Tristram Shandy, MR 24: Feb. 1761, 101-16). His analyses of style are shrewd and as thorough as any in the MR, however, and when a book or play combines "elegant" style with a commendable design, as he judged Almoran and Hamet, he is enthusiastic in his praise.
fable" (MR 16: May 1757, 428).

One departure from this general silence is found in Kenrick's review of the play Caractacus, which was based on the Greek dramatic form.

Further, with respect to the conveyance of moral sentiments to the audience; it should be remembered, that it is the more peculiar province of dramatic poesy, to instruct rather by example than precept; to animate to virtue, rather by exciting the passions than informing the judgment. So that we might as well find fault with a play, because it is not a sermon, as to censure the omission of the chorus, in modern tragedies, merely on this account.

... there is something more necessary to constitute a poem truly dramatic, than barely putting a number of fine speeches into the mouths of persons distinguished only by different names. A great sensibility of heart, a nice discernment in the working of the passions, and a power of strongly painting and preserving the peculiarity of characters, are qualifications essentially necessary to the dramatic poet.

(MR 20: June 1759, 508-12)

Kenrick is here trying to dissuade the author from attempting another play with the same non-dramatic potential. He suggests that fine poetry alone does not make fine drama. Mason's play was not, according to Kenrick, "adapted to the present taste, and the customs of the English stage." The parallels are clear. Except for the stress on distinctive characterization, not yet found in criticism of the novel, these remarks might have been directed to a novelist. Authors must speak in the language which is pleasant to their audiences if they hope to instruct as well as to entertain. And the instruction must be disguised insofar as it is a part of an emotional experience. Such is the oft-repeated
message of the *Monthly* reviewers in the fifties, as they theorize—but not necessarily as they analyze.

In nearly every analysis of a novel or a play during the two decades, mention is made of the "moral design," a short formula made up by the reviewer to designate the author's moral intention. The design—also identified as the tendency, the moral, the principle, the moral tendency, and the moral purport (and basically equivalent to the prudential maxim of the *Gentleman's*)—was to inculcate, inspire, ridicule, enforce, expose, "severely" expose, animate, censure, or "to shew," as the majority of reviewers phrased their statements. The objects of these forceful verbs ranged over the whole gamut of moral exhortations, from inspiring the readers "with an abhorrence of excessive gaming" (MR 8: Feb. 1753, 146) to animating "the sons of Britannia to vindicate their country's rights, and avenge her wrongs" (MR 12: May 1755, 383).

Beginning in the late fifties, the reviewers shift their emphasis from defining the design to evaluating it as useful or not. Compact phrases such as "poverty of writing, insipidity of narrative, and inutility of design" (MR 14: May 1756, 453) make their way into the longer reviews of novels as well as into the monthly catalogue citations. In his review of Johnson's *Rasselas*, Ruffhead expands an early

---

17Ruffhead possibly did not know the identity of the author when he wrote this review. He writes near the end of
statement: "... we cannot discover ... utility in the design" by saying that the work has no "great tendency to the good of society" (MR 20: May 1759, 428-29). The majority of reviews of both drama and fiction after 1759 contained judgments on the utility of the designs with no specifications as to what the designs were. The judgment was usually presented in combination with other elements having to do with the quality of writing or the degree of invention (for example: "The incidents, however, if not true, are not unnaturally imagined, neither is the manner of relating them inelegant, nor the tendency of the fable immoral"--MR 36: Feb. 1767, 172). The design became increasingly associated with the plot and the reviewers' remarks on it were directed outwards towards the prospective reader as a type of censorship rating. They included comments on the design as an assessment of the probable effect of the plot on the reader, whereas in other areas ("incidents ... are not unnaturally imagined ... nor the manner of relating them inelegant") they readily assessed the artistic quality the review: "Whoever he is, he is a man of genius and great abilities; but he has evidently misapplied his talents" (p. 437).

18 This book being, of course, more of a philosophical treatise than a novel, it lends itself to a closer scrutiny of the design than would an ordinary novel, and Ruffhead writes at length on the feasibility of Johnson's conclusions, concluding himself that "it would have been prudent in the author to have said nothing" (p. 437).
of the performance. These reviewers saw the story as the author's primary means of moral exhortation. Only secondarily came other potentially instructive agents such as individual sentiments and characterization.

In this association of plot with moral, the Monthly reviewers are not much different from their counterparts in the magazines. Furthermore, they are not entirely consistent with their own theories of subtle infiltration. Even the term "tendency" loses its qualitative and expansive connotation when it is lined up with a row of specifics.

And finally by determining the utility of the design without describing it, the Monthly reviewers are judging rather than "characterizing" these performances.

The reviewers of the sixties became more demanding and explicit as to how morality was conveyed, apart from their statements relating to the moral design which by this time was more of a convention of reviewing than a genuine assessment. In 1761, Berkenhout recommended the novel as the most probable means for the moral writer to catch the attention of those in most want of instruction (as mixing "medicine with a pleasant vehicle"). One reason for which Kenrick lauded the early volumes of Tristram Shandy is the insertion of Yorick's "excellent moral sermon . . . by which expedient, it will probably be read by many who would peruse a sermon in no other form" (MR 21: Appendix 1759, 568). Even the righteous Ruffhead sees the undertaking as
insidious: "... the majority must be entertained with novelty, humoured with fiction, and, as it were, cheated into instruction" (MR 24: June 1761, 415).

Negatively, the reviewers are continually striking at low and profligate novels, citing the waste of readers' time as their chief objection. However, with increasing regularity they refer to a common notion that the great majority of novels are immoral or indecent. Such remarks even filter into reviews where they are uncalled for, such as in the review of the generally recommended novel The Nunnery:

... we must observe ... that neither have we discovered anything immoral or indecent in this performance: which has, at least, the merit of being chaste and innocent. We wish we could say as much of all the novels and romances which spring up so plenteously, every winter, from the literary hot-beds of circulating libraries. (MR 36: Feb. 1767, 171)

Although sentimentality plays a role of growing importance in the popularity of the novel, the reason for this growth assigned by these reviewers seems to be the entertainment value of its emotional response rather than its power of moral persuasion. However, one favorite virtue of emotionalism, benevolence, was the single striking reason for the reviewer's endorsement of The Vicar of Wakefield:

\[19\] For further references to the winter onslaught of questionable quality and other such remarks on the general immorality of novels, see MR 34: Jan. 1766, 82; 11: Nov. 1754, 466-67; 24: June 1761, 415.
In brief, with all its faults, there is much rational entertainment to be met with in this very singular tale: but it deserves our warmer approbation, for its moral tendency; particularly for the exemplary manner in which it recommends and enforces the great obligations of universal BENEVOLENCE: the most amiable quality that can possibly distinguish and adorn the WORTHY MAN and the GOOD CHRISTIAN! (MR 34: May 1766, 407)

Considering that this passage is preceded by remarks questioning Goldsmith's knowledge of "men, manners, and characters, as they really appear in the living world," this is a strange approbation indeed, for the reviewer has thus separated the need for knowledge of the true nature of man from the qualifications for an instructor in morals. It is, perhaps, surprising that this is the only mention of the inculcation of benevolence as an inducement for reading a novel in the pages of the Monthly Review.

Amidst all of the analysis which somehow assumes that literature can influence moral behavior, two reviewers question this assumption. Speaking of the desired qualities of a superior novelist (like Richardson, presented as the ideal), the first reviewer also touches on the nature of influence:

Man is so strange a compound of reason and passion, of sense and sensibility, that the description of a scene, or the relation of a tale, which is intended to improve the heart by affecting the mind with resentment or honour, proves often disgusting only to readers of refined taste; while there are others gross enough to

20 Unfortunately, both writers are still unidentified, so in fact may be one and the same although there is a three year space between writings.
find it seductive. It requires the greatest art, and the nicest pencil, to delineate the vices of mankind, and paint them in their true colours, without exciting the passions or the curiosity of the unexperienced, to know more than they ought. . . . Hence it is that we find persons, well acquainted with the world, and shrewd observers of the effects of opinions on manners, so doubtful of the utility of this kind of writing. That our young people, and particularly the female part, are rendered much wiser by them, is not to be doubted; but that they are improved, or that our daughters are in general more chaste and virtuous, or make better wives than their grandmothers did, is to be questioned.

(MR 31: Appendix 1764, 516)

The distinction between information and motivation is apparently the issue here (i.e., does learning about something necessarily result in one's wishing to perform it?), but the reviewer quickly drops the matter, identifying it as "somewhat problematical." He does, however, underscore the instructive merit of The History of the Marquis de Roselle before ending his article. The second reviewer questions whether the catastrophes designed to draw so many tears from the readers of The Memoirs of Miss Sydney Bidulph, "however justly they may be copied from nature, are well adapted to serve the course of virtue" (MR 37: Sept. 1767, 238). Again, the writer refused to pursue the matter, leaving it "to the sagacity of our Readers."

At first reading, these two expressions of doubt may seem to admit to the possibility that literature cannot really modify behavior. However, what is primarily at stake in these questions is the same issue that had been troubling the moralists of the London Magazine and the censors of the stage since Jeremy Collier. When the first author argues
about "exciting the passions or the curiosity of the inexperienced, to know more than they ought" he is speaking of the immediate— not the long term—effects of reading fiction (or impassioned scenes from reality). Despite the heavy emphasis on aesthetic balance and social responsibility, the real issue of morality continues to be, for some at least, whether young readers should be exposed to the (deceit of) heightened reality which fiction provides. Are young people any better for having experienced vicariously the pleasures of vice even if they are never tempted to indulge in it themselves? Of what pragmatic value then is their exposure to such behavior?

The few remarks about morality in drama during the sixties reflect the same attitudes. Three of the eight passages are references to the grossness of the plays in the past century

21 (MR 29: Oct. 1763, 320; MR 34: Jan. 1766, 78) and to the removal of gross passages in the published editions (MR 29: Dec. 1763, 464). Others, like the novel reviews, describe the "tale" or plot as "decent and moral" and do not elaborate. One reviewer, however, while

21 It has been pointed out by historians that to damn the moral looseness of the Restoration Court was a device for abusing the Stuarts and justifying the deposing of James II. Likewise, to reflect credit on the House of Hanover, plays produced during the reigns of the Georges were commended for their morality. See George Winchester Stone, Jr., The London Stage 1747-1776: A Critical Introduction (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1968), pp. xxi-xxiii.
explaining the objectives and merits of farce, distinguishes between the "morality of design" (which can be overlooked in light of farce's aim to "exercise the risible faculties") and the "tendency" which may not be overlooked if it is "immoral" (MR 35: Dec. 1766, 483). The interpretation of tendency here must be taken to be the apparent objective of the satire, i.e., if it seems to condone immoral behavior. The design here refers to incidents in the plot. 22

Only one writer on the drama, George Colman, designated the specific moral of a play and evaluated its means of implementation. The plot of Cymon, he agrees, is soundly moral, but the motivation of one of the characters hinders the optimal portrayal of virtue (MR 36: Jan. 1767, 71). This insight into the subtle misuse of motivation is consistent with the early emphasis on individualized characters in the drama, but is almost unique in the analyses of both fiction and drama in the Monthly Review.

One device originating in dramatic criticism and particularly illustrative of the differences in the Monthly's critical attitudes between the fifties and sixties is poetic justice. Though it is mentioned in this periodical only three times in the fifties and scarcely twice that often in the sixties, the contexts are considerably different. In

---

22 I suggest that most writers of this period use these terms interchangeably.
keeping with the emphasis on aesthetics in the fifties, two of the three references relate poetic justice to balanced characterization. One of these is for a novel with theatrical leanings (The Cry: "A new dramatic fable"--MR 10: Apr. 1754, 282) and the other for a comedy (The Father of a Family by Goldoni--MR 17: July 1757, 48). Both of these point out how two contrasting characters are consistently drawn to offset one another; then the reviewers turn immediately to the end to show where each character receives his or her just deserts. The third is ambiguously phrased but seems to be more of a comment on the style of writing than on strict poetic justice: the extravagance of one of the two major characters in a novel is "... too sarcastically exposed, for good nature not to complain, however poetical justice may smile at the execution" (MR 4: Mar. 1751, 361).

In the sixties, most of the reviewers linked poetic justice with the moral quality of the total novel rather than with its impact on aesthetic balance. There are some variations within even this concept. The typical reference decreed that a work is "of a moral cast, that [i.e., because] villainy is not crowned with success, but, on the contrary, meets with the deserved punishment" (MR 32: Jan. 1765, 76-77 --emphasis mine) or that it is "defective in respect of the moral; for every thing turns out unfortunately for the best and most amiable personages of the story" (MR 34: Feb. 1766,
One critic, writing slightly earlier in the sixties, branded a work deficient in morality because the hero (of *The Amours and Adventures of Charles Careless, Esq.*) had received happiness that he had not merited. But he goes on to say that the

Author shews himself not unacquainted with the world; so that if he has not represented all things as they ought to be, he has shewn many things as they are: and it must be allowed, that his performance may tolerably answer the purpose of amusement, if not of instruction. (MR 30: Apr. 1764, 329)

This reviewer reflects the understanding of many of the Monthly reviewers: that the contrivance of poetic justice is an instructional measure. But some would say, as he does, that its omission does not necessarily lessen the worth of a novel or play. He upholds the Addisonian view that in the accurate reproduction of nature, which is instructional in its own right, poetic justice is not always observable.

On the other hand, a later critic upheld Dennis' concept of the instructive mandate of poetic justice but in opposition to the sentimentalists:

... we cannot say that we were either edified or pleased with the Heroine's [of *The History of Miss Indiana Danby*] unfortunate and unmerited catastrophe. The punishment of virtue, however countenanced by the practice of our tragic writers, is an unhappy reverse of that moral tendency of which our novelists ought never to lose sight; viz. the just discouragement and exemplary chastisement of vice. (MR 32: June 1765, 481)

---

23 See also MR 34: Mar. 1766, 219.
In this example, we see a reaction to the sentimental novelists who entice their audiences by sympathy for suffering virtue: the amount of sympathy expended being proportionate to the innocence of the stricken. While no reviewer openly condones such treatment, there is evidence that some reviewers entangle the instructive capacities of poetic justice with strong emotional reactions to characters and to an ideal moral balance that should exist in life.

But (to the great satisfaction of the Reader, who, if he has any sensibility must feel himself interested in the fates of the worthy and amiable characters here introduced) every thing ends well at last,--true Love reigns triumphant over all opposition, and Virtue is rewarded, as we could always wish her to be, not only in imaginary scenes, drawn for example and imitation, but in every real scene in which she has any part to act in the great drama of human life. (MR 37: Dec. 1767, 469-70)

To summarize the Monthly's views of the novel as instruction, we must first distinguish the period 1749 to early 1759 from later 1759 to 1767, here designated, respectively, as the fifties and the sixties. In the first decade, the reviewers held closely to their intention to describe the contents of books and, in presenting theory, to point out the aesthetic and natural qualities of good instructive material. Thus with religious optimism, they stressed literature as a vehicle for controlling private and public morality. The moral design of either a novel or a play could carry more power than that of an impassioned sermon, they thought, if it were written by one who knew human nature, and had a talent for evoking an emotional response
from his readers. Even poetic justice could be justified on aesthetic grounds in addition to its obvious and traditional respectability.

But as novels of inferior substance multiplied, reviewers' optimism faded into exasperation. The resolution to "characterize" each novel became impossible, according to Kenrick, "since we might say of them, as Pope, with less justice, says of the ladies, most novels have no character at all" (MR 20: Mar. 1759, 275-76). It became easier to pose as censors and to submit a brief judgment on each piece than to detail its artistic or its moral qualities. For this reason, theories of the instructive merits of the novel were written almost like sermons wherein the reviewers presented their objections to the quality of contemporary writing and their fears for impressionable youth. The moral design, once a descriptive tag, now deteriorated into a perfunctory allusion to the capacity of a mature audience to respond appropriately to the plot. Only the few references to poetic justice seemed to point in the direction of a morality being replaced by a kind of propriety. The endorsement of suffering innocence presented a new rationale for rewarding virtue if not for punishing vice. More generally, however, the outlook of the Monthly reviewers on the instructive potential of the novel seems to have narrowed to a neutral position where they expressed pleasure if the novel did not offend decency and was "chaste and innocent."
The novel as entertainment

If the concentration on the morality of novels became less obsessive towards the end of the sixties, the attention to their capacity to entertain did not. The early tendency of Monthly reviewers to exonerate normally unacceptable behavior in the name of art may have contributed to the unlimited license taken by the authors of the large majority of novels published in the fifties. The increased licentiousness of novels, in turn, was countered by the publication of reactionary tales which were highly moralistic and instructive but also boring. The reaction of the reviewers to both of these situations was to condemn mediocre and trivial fiction. Eventually they began to search for more widely based merit. The process was slow, beginning slightly in 1754 when they used the back-handed compliment to sort out inoffensive, if not recommending, qualities: "Less tedious than . . ."; "contains improbabilities but not absurdities of usual . . ." and "read . . . with some pleasure" are typical remarks. Even Sir Charles Grandison, by the popular Richardson, was greeted with marked restraint:

. . . we have read Sir Charles Grandison with alternate pleasure and disgust. With pleasure, from the great good sense of the author, his many excellent sentiments, judicious observations, and moral reflections. With disgust, from the absurdity of a scheme, that supposes a set of people devoting almost their whole time to letter-scribbling, and the publishing family transactions;--from the author's continued trifling with the patience of his readers, by his extreme verbosity throughout the whole work;--from the studied formality in his method,
the frequent affectation in his language, and the in­
consistency both of character and conduct in some of the
persons in his drama. (MR 10: Jan. 1754, 71)24

Nearly all of the 1755 reviews are in the catalogues,
where both novels and plays are dismissed peremptorily.
Again, in 1756, the reviews reflect earnest efforts to find
redeeming qualities (language is "very passable," "not ill-
written," and "not out of nature"). Goldsmith's introduc-
tion to his review of Douglas in 1757 warns the public about
overpraising new pieces because they compare them with
inferior quality of the novels preceding them and not with
ideals of excellence. There is a brief renaissance this
year when reviewers sometimes explain their bases for judg-
ment, begin to express preferences for the extravagance and
color of the romances over dull moralizing, and respond
positively to some innovations in the genres such as showing
virtue in comedy and ending a novel tragically. The follow-
ning year's fourteen novels and nine plays receive undistin-
guished treatment, but in 1759, when Kenrick begins with his
philosophical, prolix compositions, the reviewing vocabulary
doubles. After this, with the exception of very lean
commentaries in 1762, 1763, and--apart from a highly

24 The reviewer adds that he is only delivering an
opinion "be the truth ever so disagreeable: and an unpleas-
ning task it is to us, to say ought that may be construed as
a mark of disrespect to a writer, whose character, as a man,
we sincerely esteem, and whose endeavours to entertain the
public are undoubtedly meant for its service, by espousing
the cause of religion and virtue."

(p. 71)
imaginative review of volumes seven and eight of *Tristram Shandy*--1765, the major reviews are increasingly discursive, informative, and specific.

The drama seems to dominate in space or concern in the years 1760, 1761, 1763, and 1767, even when (as in 1760 and 1767) there were more than twice the number of novels as plays reviewed. In 1760, Ruffhead covered two books on ancient theatre in which he defended such modern innovations as the monologue and soliloquy and the departure from pursuing one passion through five acts. By way of illustration, he designates *The Conscious Lovers* as sensible, genteel comedy in contrast to the *Suspicious Husband* whose design is, to him, reprehensible. Near the beginning of 1767, David Garrick and George Colman reviewed a total of five plays. Their theatrical viewpoint injects a new life into dramatic criticism and they particularly concentrate on characterization.

These nineteen years of reviewing reveal a series of uneven efforts caused by a periodic dearth of congenial

---

25 Reviews of novels outnumbered reviews of plays roughly two to one in the *Monthly* throughout this entire period. Only in 1752 and 1756 were they equal. But it was not unusual for tragedies and comedies to be reviewed on the main pages and for the novels to be stacked up in the catalogue section with only three or four lines of criticism each.

26 "A Dissertation on ancient Tragedy. By the Rev. Mr. Franklin, trans. of Sophocles" and "Mrs. Lennox's Translation of the Greek Theatre of Father Bruney."
publications and of able reviewers. However, we may now better evaluate the data produced under those conditions.

We will consider the material under seven topics which represent the chief components of fiction. Listed with adaptations peculiar to this period, they are as follows: (1) the treatment of fact (the blend of history and fiction), (2) the use of imagination (the romance and probability), (3) the relation of art to life (the author's knowledge of the world and of human nature), (4) the desired response of audiences; and such technical concerns as (5) characterization, (6) narrative, and (7) language and style. A description of the Monthly reviewers' preferences and expectations in these areas constitutes the remainder of this chapter.

History and fiction. From the beginning, the reviewers made plain their skepticism about the authenticity of the facts which writers of pseudo-biographies put before them. The "genuine memoirs" of ladies of quality and "true" stories of criminals were not difficult to verify as fiction, but there were many plausible "biographies" on the market which had highly moralistic resolutions and which were not so obviously invented. If the reviewers responded only to the apparent truth of such works, regardless of the excellence of the moral, they might seem to be minimizing the

27 See Appendix B: Table 1. Monthly Review: 1749 to 1767, Number of Novels and Plays Reviewed Per Year.
work's value as instruction. So, in such borderline cases, they generally did not make an issue of its status as fiction or non-fiction. Only when the writers were especially brazen did they react with statements like: "... a history which we are glad to say, for the honour of human nature, cannot be true" (MR 34: Mar. 1766, 240).

The case is different for the drama, especially for historical tragedies. Because these plays were usually based on well-known historical events, the reviewers compared the facts with the dramatic plot and exactly noted additions, subtractions (especially if an earlier literary work was involved), and time changes. This operation was performed seriously and it was not done to force the playwright to keep to history. On the contrary, those who artfully introduced fictitious characters and events into well-known histories were quite genuinely judged on the total effect that was created. Such a statement for poetic license was articulated in 1765 as follows:

The Author [of The Siege of Calais, a tragedy (a French version)] hath taken the liberty, indeed, to introduce an episode, not immediately connected with the main subject of the piece. This is very allowable, however, in poets, whom we do not expect to be strictly bound down to historical truth. Not that the events of this episode are imaginary, altho' they did not happen exactly in the same relations of time and place; the poet piquing himself on deducing all his facts from history, in order that he might not be charged with imputing imaginary virtues and fictitious exploits to
his countrymen, in a work undertaken with a view to the support of their national honour.  
(MR 32: Appendix 1765, 549)

Consistently, the reviewers kept the matter of fact and fiction separate from other considerations of the drama, and they never rejected a tragedy for its lack of authenticity alone. Novels, on the other hand, were occasionally dismissed with a single objection: "[This novel affords] very little evidence of its being founded on real facts" (MR 25: Appendix 1761, 503). This objection was usually directed against an author's spiritless writing. The reviews of novels by Edward Kimber who took excessive pains in his introductions to establish the authenticity of his stories illustrate this point. Griffiths was irritated enough by what he recognized as Kimber's exaggerated protestations, that he opened his review of The Adventures of Joe Thompson with this attack:

In the title-page to this performance, we are assured that it is a narrative founded on facts. That this assertion may be fact, is the less improbable, as, in truth, the work is not stamped with the least mark of imagination, or invention, or any of those fanciful embellishments with which Cervantes, Fielding, Marivaux, and some other authors of fictitious and romantic books, have so stuffed and fabulized their writings, that 'tis no wonder the said authors never had the assurance to

---

28 The suggestion here that dramas, being written for public performance, had certain responsibilities as representatives of public, even political, values, is not to be disregarded. During this period of reviewing, many attempts to formulate a national character of English tastes were made. Unfortunately, the attempts were usually more anti-French than constructive.
think of imposing their work upon the world, as matters of fact. Mr. Thompson's history is a plain, sober, serious, well-meaning book, and we are very sorry that we have not the leisure or patience requisite to read it quite through. (MR 3: Sept. 1750, 366)

Another reviewer on the same subject from Kimber's *The Life and Adventures of James Ramble* adds: "Of these grave assurances of historical veracity we should, however, have taken no notice, had they been less solemnly urged" (MR 12: Feb. 1755, 144). And Kimber's last novel, *Maria: The Genuine Memoirs of an Admired Lady of Rank and Fortune*, while endorsed in a year of tolerant book-reviewing because it was "pretty" and "decent," was discounted as non-factual because of "the many surprising adventures contained in the book" (MR 30: Mar. 1764, 243). This was the ultimate test of the historical veracity of the author: if a book contained any of the characteristics of the old romances such as improbable events or unnatural characters, while the author even suggested that it was founded on fact, his credibility was lost. He needed to have considerable compensatory talents --and especially an operative moral--to re-establish the value of his book.

One redeeming feature was good writing. Such was the issue raised in a review of George Wolloston's *The Life and History of a Pilgrim*, "a narrative founded on facts":

His account of the kingdom of Spain is, however, very erroneous in many respects; a strong indication of fiction in this part of the work, whatever may be said of the author's adherence to facts in other parts: but this is among the smallest of his defects; had he
supplied what was wanting in its pretended real foundation, by the genuine ornaments of good writing; mistakes in description, and blunders in geography, might have been pardoned for the sake of a lively imagination, or ingenious invention, and an elegant and entertaining manner; in all which the author is very deficient.

(MR 9: Aug. 1753, 226; see also MR 27: Nov. 1762, 386)

This appears to be typical of the attitudes of the *Monthly* reviewers. If the writing was spirited and, basically, entertaining, justification for misplaced facts was less necessary.

There are only two passages--both written near the middle of this time period--to suggest why any emphasis at all should be put on historical accuracy, or at least on maintaining the appearances of authenticity. Berkenhout, the reviewer who most touched psychological motives, applauded the honesty of the author who inserted "supposed" on his title page (*The Histories of Some of the Penitents in the Magdalen House, "as supposed to be related by themselves") but shortly admitted that

when we are positively told, before we begin a story, that it is an entire fiction, it naturally, though perhaps unaccountably, becomes less interesting. To increase our entertainment, we wish to be deceived, and are therefore easily persuaded.

(MR 21: Nov. 1759, 450)

Objecting to the excessive foreign element in a novel called *Memoirs of the Life and Adventures of Tsonnnonehouan, a King of the Indian Nation Called Roundheads*, Kenrick decides that

a professed novel, or humorous romance, like that before us, should be founded at least on known circumstances,
and familiar truths. Without this, there is no entering into the humour of the characters, or the spirit of the piece.  

(MR 28: June 1763, 492)

Both of these reviewers consider the entertainment value rather than any intrinsic merit the novel may gain from historical accuracy. They seem to suggest that the appeal of fiction is stronger when it is imbedded in the familiar because it requires a kind of trust in the author who assures us by showing us his stronger grasp of reality. The subject is a tantalizing one, but there is no further discussion of it in the Monthly's reviews.

It is clear that the novel did not have a reputation for depicting true history, as historical tragedy did. Therefore, inquiries by reviewers into the novel on this basis were considered merely conventional. Exceptions to this attitude appeared when writers, incompetent in other respects, tried to hide their deficiencies behind "factual" fabrications. To them as much as to writers of obscenity—but with a little more courtesy—the editors showed their evident disgust.

**Romance, probability, and invention.** The distinction between the old romance and the novel (frequently called the "new romance") centered on the extravagancies of the former and the humor and the—at least alleged—truth of the latter. The old romance was characterized as frivolous and calculated to "elevate and surprise" by means of the
marvellous; but it was also burdened with clichés in character-
ization, description, and plot. In the language of the
reviewers, these notions were all subsumed under the
term "improbabilities" with a few helps from "absurdities" and
"impossibilities." "Imagination" and "invention" were
sometimes used pejoratively to express these excesses, but
normally, they denoted more acceptable degrees of creativity
in fiction-writing.

The rejection of the old romance is more responsible
for the inclusion of "probability" as a standard of evalua-
tion than any attempt to apply Aristotelian poetics to

29 Goldsmith described the title bearers of the book
The History of Two Persons of Quality as typical:
"The hero, like most other heroes of romance, is wholly
employed in making love; the heroine, in returning his
addresses with equal ardour; the hero kills his man; the
heroine, too, in her way, dispatched every swain that
meets her eyes: the hero has a certain nobleness in his
manner; the heroine, a peculiar delicacy in her's:--what
pity so much excellence has not found a better histo-
rian!"
(MR 16: May 1757, 452)

30 Of Almira: or the History of a French Lady of
Distinction it was written:
"A parcel of French bombast, and amorous extravaganza,
conceived in the true spirit of the romantic novels of
the last age; and abounding with flames, darts, light-
ning, stars, moonshine, Cupid, Venus, rocks, groves, and
purling streams;--rhiming, sighing, whining, fighting,
dying, and a long Etcetera, of such like love dainties,
with a sober desert of matrimony at the end of all:
according to the laudable custom of novellists and Play-
wrights." (MR 18: May 1758, 492)

Note that modern novels and plays were dispatched with the
same breath.
fiction. Indeed, the contexts in which the term is found indicate little understanding of Aristotle's lesson of inner coherence and structure, and, instead, show that most of the reviewers believed that "probability" meant verisimilitude (a term used only once: in a 1754 drama review) to "real life" or nature. "... there is hardly a case occurs in these pieces, in which nature and probability have been consulted" (MR 4: Mar. 1751, 357) is a typical passage found throughout these nineteen years of reviews. And on one occasion, taking what he probably thought was a tolerant view for his Anglican readers, a reviewer of a translated French novel suggested that the improbable circumstances of that story could be accepted only in a Catholic country (MR 35: July 1766, 30). The writers with this view of probability (who seem to include Griffiths) made no attempt to justify the credibility of a plot if some of its incidents were not found in "real life." Their judgment was based on concern for the effect that these aberrations, as they saw them, had on the readers. As pointed out earlier, books claiming to relate true happenings should not present the supernatural or even the highly uncommon as "natural," according to these critics, because they "transport the reader unprofitably."

Drama reviewers supported this interpretation of the probable in addition to a stricter adaptation for the
stage.31 An improbability in a play was an absurdity in staging or an inconsistency of plot or incident. An example of one such transgression occurs in a scene in the tragedy Barbarossa where a character puts in an unlikely appearance and imparts some information to the audience. The critics (Cibber and Griffiths) ask, "Could the author find no way to inform us, more natural and probable than this?" (MR 12: Jan. 1755, 44-45).

Only one reviewer, Berkenhout, seems to comprehend Aristotle's meaning of probability. In a review of The Orphan of China, a tragedy translated from the French, he counters Voltaire's conception of Aristotle's unity of time (restricted to events of twenty-four hours) with his idea that time should be integrated with other parts of the work itself:

By their own Aristotle's rules, neither the epic nor dramatic poet are confined to historical truth. They are at liberty to select any part or parts of history, and to unite events which really happened at distant periods of times; provided they be so united as to preserve probability. (MR 13: Appendix 1755, 495)

Time is a key factor in the understanding of the difference between probability for the stage and for the novel. A sub-plot in a comedy must conform to the dramatic pace of the main thread besides being credible on its own.

31 George Colman once assessed material as "too wild and too improbable for a play and too dull for a pantomime" (MR 36: Feb. 1767, 164).
This is not necessarily true for novels, which can encompass several time tables without confusion or the sacrifice of credibility. Consequently, probability for the novel is less a question of timing than of conformity with actual circumstances. The tight sequence of the drama, on the other hand, requires that each event emerge causally from others. It is here that probability was under the most strain. For a brief while, in the fifties, some novels were judged by this standard, i.e., whether the incidents flowed from one another, but this requirement of continuity was abandoned after Tristram Shandy in favor of the verisimilitude of each incident or event.

Invention, a term only three times equated with contrivance ("... little more than mere invention"), appeared regularly in the reviews as an assessment of the writer's skill and degree of imagination in drawing his story together. To be inventive was a mark of genius and few writers of this period were accused of that. One reviewer displayed a little (contrived) invention of his own when reviewing the novel The History of Sir Charles Beaufort:

... we must observe, to the honour of the lady writers, that the best of our late productions in this way, are said to be the fruits of their intimacies with the gods of INVENTION and INTRIGUE. (MR 34: Mar. 1766, 240n.)

This light-hearted bouquet-throwing to women novelists should not disguise the fact that the novel would have been dismissed as old romance and thus harmful in the fifties,
but here is applauded for its "copious" invention and striking and new characters, despite the adventures which were "to the highest degree wild and improbable: insomuch that the author has hardly kept within the boundaries of possibility" (p. 240). The growing appetite for novelty allowed for the insertion of a few "improbabilities," provided that other qualities of good writing were present. Goldsmith, much earlier, had pointed out the merits of the old romances so much overlooked by the truth-seekers and moralizers. He described The History of Cleanthes . . . and Celemene as an harmless tale, loaded with uninteresting episodes, and professedly wrote in the manner and stile of the old Romances; equally improbable indeed with the wildest of them, but falling far short of their glowing imagery, and strong colouring, which often captivate the fancy, of young Readers especially, and please in spite of sense and reason. (MR 16: May 1757, 566-[67])

The spirit and color and the ability of these stories to excite and hold the attention of the reader became the ideal for the new romance, even if, eventually, this meant the occasional intrusion of immoderation.

The author and the world. If there is any area of total agreement among the reviewers writing on Fielding, Richardson and Sterne, it is that these authors showed great knowledge of the way of the world and especially of human nature. Richardson, particularly, was singled out for his knowledge of human passions, not only for his ability to describe them through his characters but also for his ability
to draw an emotional response from his readers. He also combined depth of perception with a high moral purpose so that those reviewers who yawned over his epistolary exchanges had to commend Richardson for his ultimate concerns. With very few exceptions, the virtues of writing recognized in Richardson's novels were the criteria for good writing during this period.

According to the earliest reviewers, the author's knowledge of the world was to be directed towards exposing iniquity (MR 2: Mar. 1750, 432) and presenting a picture of true life with an air of familiarity which would convince the reader of the truth of what he read (MR 5: June 1751, 14). Writers were especially commended for good sense, which was just a step from good morals.

Soon more was demanded of authors. Ruffhead took on Grecian ideals when he allowed the writer to "adorn the Probable . . . with every incident to make it agreeable, and to charm and surprise the Reader." His principle was:

We must copy Nature, it is true; but Nature in the most perfect and elegant form in which conception can paint her (MR 24: June 1761, 415).

A few writers touch on this subject and they seem to be agreeing with Aristotle that when things and characters are presented as they ought to be, the work is instructive; when they are presented as they are, it is entertaining.

In either case, much emphasis was put on the descriptive abilities of the novelist. In the early sixties,
Kenrick's only commendation of *Eloisa* was that Rousseau has displayed great knowledge of mankind, and treated a variety of interesting subjects in an entertaining and instructive manner. There prevails, also, an air of truth and nature in the conduct of the work, which insensibly engages the attention, and interests the heart, of the reader. . . . Indeed the descriptive parts, in general, of this performance, whether representing the tranquil views of nature and still life, or the more bustling and pathetic scenes of art and passion, display the happiest touches of a pencil directed by the hand of a master.  

(MR 25: Oct. 1761, 260)

Although the reviewers preferred that descriptions be delightful, there were at least two cases where they endorsed pictures of life which were ugly and repulsive. In the review of one, all the critic could say was that the worthless characters so well portrayed were "as they probably are found in real life" (MR 30: Mar. 1764, 243). An earlier review, of Smollett's *Ferdinand Count Fathom*, ends after passages such as, "... it is not in nature to produce such a master-piece of diabolism," with a serene statement of Smollett's achievement:

... it carries with it strong marks of genius in the author, and demonstrations of his great proficiency in the study of mankind.  

(MR 8: Mar. 1753, 207)

By the end of the period, the importance of the emotional persuasiveness of the writer was pointed out in nearly every review which discussed an author. To give a negative illustration:

A harmless but injudicious performance. . . . Novel writing is by no means his talent. He knows too little of the world, and is in no respect a master of the art of touching the Reader's passions, of engaging his attention by interesting or affecting scenes and
situations, or of diverting his mind by the lively sallies of wit and humour. . . . one of the most insipid, and . . . one of the most absurd romances.

(MR 37: July 1767, 76)

Affirmatively, there is probably no better catalogue of the Monthly's demands of fiction-writers than Griffith's plea to "Mr. Shandy" which ends his dialogue review of volumes seven and eight:

Reviewer. . . . Suppose you were to strike out a new plan? Give us none but amiable or worthy, or exemplary characters; or, if you will, to enliven the drama, throw in the innocently humorous. Desipere in loco. No objection to Trim, any more than to Slop. Paint Nature in her loveliest dress—her native simplicity. Draw natural scenes, and interesting situations—In fine, Mr. Shandy, do, for surely you can, excite our passions to laudable purposes—awake our affections, engage our hearts—arouse, transport, refine, improve us. Let morality, let the cultivation of virtue be your aim—let wit, humour, elegance and pathos be the means; and the grateful applause of mankind will be your reward.

To which he allows the intractable Shandy/Sterne (and through him, probably most authors!) to reply:

Have ye done?—I'm glad on't! Hark ye—Jenny wants me to give her a whirl in the chaise next Sunday—Will you preach for me? you have an admirable knack at exhortation!

(MR 32: Feb. 1765, 138-39)

Audience involvement. To read the Monthly reviewers' remarks about theatregoers and novel readers, one would think they believed none of these people read this publication—unless they read it to be insulted. The reviewers ridiculed audiences for applauding a bad play because of favorable advance notices put out by the author's friends (MR 2: Mar. 1750, 407), and they invited others who had
endorsed a live performance to examine the text critically so that they might change their minds (MR 24: Mar. 1761, 183*). On the subject of opera, they were even more severe, praising a farce which satirized "the blind devotion of IGNORANCE and AFFECTATION" of fashion-conscious opera-goers (MR 26: Mar. 1762, 238), and generally setting these viewers aside, whether justly or not, as tasteless people (MR 28: Mar. 1763, 248; MR 33: Oct. 1765, 326). But towards readers of the new romances, they were merciless. They early blamed "that flood of novels, tales, romances, and other monsters of the imagination" on the "vitiated palate" of the public (MR 4: Mar. 1751, 355); later, they reported that until "our ladies read with a little more taste . . . we cannot hope to be freed from this scandalous inundation" (MR 14: Mar. 1756, 270); and eventually their objections simmered into repetitious phrases such as "hackney Scribblers" encouraged by "our British Ladies" (MR 23: Appendix 1760, 523).

In the midst of all of this criticism, the Monthly reviewers were developing a rather consistent estimation of the proper effect fiction should have on its readers. We have already discussed the instruction expected, but equally important for these professional readers was the kind of entertainment all levels of readers found in their light reading.

*See p. 126.
There are at least three ways in which these reviewers expressed their opinions about the effect a work had on them. The first was to describe probable audience reaction directly, as Theophilus Cibber did for the tragedy Virginia:
"... to keep the mind in a proper fluctuating suspense, and sufficiently alarm us with terror, or excite our pity"
(MR 10: Mar. 1754, 225). Or, reviewers would describe the book in terms of audience reaction. This was done either explicitly as in the following passage:

... it is not easy to discover what class of readers the author intended to please: not the virtuous and delicate, for his book is too licentious for them: not the voluptuary and debauchee, for whom it is, upon the whole, of too moral a cast, as the loose bears no proportion to the sober part of it.
(MR 5: June 1751, 44)

or implicitly, as when they imputed their reactions to the emotive quality of the book. For example, when Griffiths described Marivaux, the author of the French novel Marianne, as "this famous novellist, who has shown so much in the heroic and the tender" (MR 2: Dec. 1749, 91), he used "tender" as an emotive word which conjured "tender" feelings but which avoided being very explicit about the contents of Marivaux's novel. In actuality, he was imputing the supposed (or known) audience reaction to the book itself. With the help of passages representing all three of these methods, we shall now trace the chronological pattern of response induced by the novel as seen by the Monthly reviewers, and compare it with that expected of the drama (see Appendix C).
The few reviews appearing in the *Monthly* for 1749 and 1750 concentrated on an exact description of the works at hand, with little or no reference to likely audiences. The same was virtually true for the drama between 1751 and 1754, but the reviews of novels were as lively as they ever would be. Only two emotive words appear in reviews for both tragedy and the novel during this time: "distress" and "tenderness," the latter also appearing in a review of a comedy. Otherwise, the ponderous "moving passions" and "terror and pity" describing tragedy were transformed to simply "moving" or "striking passions" and "grief and pity" for the novel. "Suspence" became "curiosity" for similar texts, and tragic language such as "expressive of real feelings" now applied to tragedy only.

But the list of terms uniquely describing the effects of the novel during these four years is significant. Words and phrases such as "entertainment," exciting or engaging "attention," "pathetic," "movingly wrought-up," "delicacy," and forms of "please" such as "displeased" and "unpleasing," all appeared in relation to the novel nearly ten years before they were used to describe drama.32 "Impatience [to

---

32 The term "sentimental" appears in 1754 for the first time, but the contexts suggest that it is intended as a derivative of "sentiment" and therefore has a more rational than an emotional connotation. See from the review of *Sir Charles Grandison*:

"Hence, while readers of a quick and lively disposition condemn our author for his prolixity, and cry out for an
know]" was never to be found in a drama review, nor were "interesting," "sympathize," "tedious," or words meaning "disgust." All were repeated several times later in reviews of fiction, but never in connection with the drama.

There was an emotional dry spell between 1755 and 1759. Tragedy seemed to evoke analytical rather than affective response. A comedy based on Pamela was described as "moving the passions of the audience" (MR 17: July 1757, 46*) a phrase formerly applied only to tragedy, but the intellectual appeal of comedy came through once again in the same review with a remark that "the sensation of pleasure" arises from "a view of the truth of characters" and, more especially, from their specific differences. Engaged "attention" and "curiosity" were again the assigned results of novel-reading, but no new or unique expressions for the novel appeared at this time.

Both drama and novel reviews were rejuvenated between 1760 and 1764. As indicated earlier, the reviewers were more discursive and amiable with regard to novels, and the surge of a variety of dramatic entertainments did much to divert their attention towards the stage. Tragedy was still expected to "move the passions" and now, the "emotions."

abridgement of seven tedious volumes; others of a cooler and more sentimental turn, are as loud in his praise."
(MR 10: Jan. 1754, 70)

See also the title: "The Friends. A sentimental history, describing love as a virtue as well as a passion."
(MR 10: Feb. 1754, 144)
Furthermore, now it could provide "entertainment for rational minds." Comedy now entertained "by surprize" and "that variety of business, plot, scenery, character and humour, which are requisite to gratify the taste of an English audience" (MR 26: Feb. 1761, 158). It took a masque, Telemachus, by Rev. George Graham, however, to draw out words clustered around religious emotionalism: "Enthusiasm," "ethereal fire, which . . . makes our hearts burn within us." "Delighted" and "displeased" and "distress" appear in the same review by Langhorne (MR 28: Feb. 1763, 109).

For the novel, the increase in vocabulary for these five years is striking. Repeating no emotive words from drama to describe the effects of fiction, the reviewers open their verbal repertoire with near abandon. "Affecting" is much overused; so is "delicacy." Otherwise, there is a fairly even distribution of "feeling," "sensibility" (only once), "pathetic" (once), "distress," "interesting," "tedious," "to draw tears," "persuasion," "sentimental,"

33The first use of this term in the Monthly to suggest the refined and elevated feeling implied by Sterne in Sentimental Journey appears in this passage from a review of Letters from Juliet Lady Catesby, to her Friend Lady Henrietta Campley:

"To Readers of a delicate, sentimental turn of mind, the perusal of these Letters will be no unprofitable amusement. They are too destitute, however, both of narrative or humour, to be very generally admired."

(MR 22: June 1760, 521)
"captivating," "amusing," and "agreeable." Some compromising phrases as "profitable amusement," "forcible impression on the imagination," and "as beneficial as delectable" remind us that all is not for fun.

Reviews for 1765 are notably lacking in enthusiasm for both genres (one tragedy is called "affecting"), and 1766 and 1767 play reviews show only slightly the advance of sentimental drama, introducing "nervous and high-wrote," "pathetic," and "delicacy," and promising "a work that will open and elevate their minds, without misleading their passions" (MR 36: May 1767, 410). But the last three years reinforce the trend for becoming more explicit in the estimation of novel readers' responses. By now the most fundamental words express the fundamental responses: "laugh," "cry," and "wonder" are introduced with "approbation" and "amiable." These join words first mentioned earlier: "tenderness," "entertainment," "surprise," "attention," "benevolence," "sensibility," "pleasure," "delicacy," and, of course, "affecting."

To summarize, we see that even when the novel was treated with the emotional language traditional for tragedy, there were lighter connotations, but not as light as for comedy. Gradually, the scope of emotional appreciation was pried open, not in the reviews of drama but in the novel reviews. In a turn probably as much stimulated by their desperation to avoid the monotony of their own negative
criticism as by any change of heart towards the mediocre and unevenly written pieces before them, the reviewers began to elaborate on minor achievements, usually with emphasis on the satisfaction these parts brought to the reader. In this way, their detailing of emotions became more refined. Perhaps it is not going too far to suggest that the results were circular: that authors subsequently tried to evoke a larger variety of responses. It is at least slightly indicated by the 1766 and 1767 reviews that several of the same emotive terms which had found favor for fiction were being applied to drama which, for reasons outside the scope of this study, was again taking on a sentimental cast.

Characterization. After enjoying the finely delineated characters in the great novels of the eighteenth century, one is almost shocked to meet the thoughtless jargon treating characterization which is found in its criticism and reviews. If there is any awareness of subtlety in characterization by reviewers in the Monthly, it is found in the reviews of drama. Here, at least, specific characters are singled out for analysis. In the earlier drama reviews, they are contrasted to demonstrate the principles of morality and poetic justice in action. Characterization is seen as portraiture, and clear-cut roles are praised by the critics with terms such as "well-marked," "well-touched," and "exact copies of nature." The portraits were to be exemplary and
representative, not "over-touched" nor drawn from low-life nor inappropriate for the genre; nor should an historical figure be painted in a manner that altered his traditional image.

The novel reviews showed the same general attitudes, but no figures were singled out as examples. Characters were favored if they were "naturally drawn," "well-known ones," and varied enough "to make a perfect harmonious system of many complicated parts" (MR 3: May 1750, 59). Socially lower characters, like vice, were admitted only because it would "be an absurd affectation to omit them, in compliance to false delicacy" (MR 5: Dec. 1751, 511). Besides, lower characters provide opportunities for the more powerful to practice virtue (MR 2: Jan. 1750, 215). Only once, during the fifties, are two characters from a novel contrasted by a reviewer. They are identified only by their professions and discussed with abstract, philosophical rhetoric (MR 4: Mar. 1751, 361). It is clear that the reviewers were not as skilled in analyzing characters from novels as they were of those from the stage.

In the sixties, the picture is only slightly altered. Reviewers such as Ruffhead and Kenrick continue to single out dramatic characters for comment but when reviewing novels, they lump all characters under a generalized statement such as, "striking and singular," "unequally supported," "inconsistent," "properly varied and well supported,"
"ordinary," "amiable," or "highly finished." In addition to the stress on characters "from nature," which is not as noticeable in the fifties, reviewers of both genres in the sixties looked for "new" or "original" characters (even if it meant borrowing from the French stage), and for variety in each play or novel. They also looked for high-spirited figures who could excite "admiration and pity."

In 1761, characterization seemed to be emerging as the focal point in dramatic criticism. Characters were treated individually as their motivation and speech were examined for appropriateness and "delicate touches." Caricature was despised, and tolerated only in farce. But this emphasis proved to be short-lived, sank into obscurity for a time, then re-emerged in 1767 when David Garrick and George Colman reviewed several plays. They stressed individuality, variety, and natural bases for characterization. They expected wit and sentiment to support, not compete with genuine and natural characterization. Both dramatists illustrate (with specific characters) the importance of credible motivation for maintaining audience pleasure (MR 36: Jan. 1767, 71; Mar. 1767, 228).

The reviewers of novels in the sixties also looked for novelty and variety, and in addition sought humor, truth, amiability, and the moral strength necessary to inculcate virtue in the audience. By the end of this period, at least one reviewer acknowledged the inevitability of improbability
and inconsistency in characterization, but saw these as weaknesses excusable in the presence of highly descriptive and interesting scenes (MR 37: Nov. 1767, 394). No examples of particular characters--other than general references to title heroes--are presented for evaluation. In the hierarchy of values, reviewers of the *Monthly* still consider plot and style of uppermost importance.

**Plot.** Tristram Shandy presented to the *Monthly* reviewers the most outrageous organization a reader should ever have to confront. It is likely that its unpredictability and lack of explanatory material was even more offensive to them than the so-called obscene passages. Griffiths rejected the title "British Rabelais" in favor of "Harlequin" for Sterne and called his novels the "PANTOMIME OF LITERATURE." The reason for his irritation is apparent as he continues his review of the last book in the series:

Uncle Toby's amours are proposed as the main subject of this ninth volume; but what is proposed, and what is done, are, with this Author, points as little connected as the south pole is with the North; or the dispute between Hume and Rousseau with the Dissentions among the Genoese and the Corsicans. (MR 36: Feb. 1767, 93)

His further attempts to "make strait this crooked disposition of our Author's materials," by telling the story in chronological and uninterrupted order, end with the acknowledgement that the "thread of his narrative . . . is so perplexingly entangled, by his unlucky transposition of the chapters, that we despair of unravelling it" (p. 97).
The truth is that Sterne's book runs counter to everything the *Monthly* had endorsed about plot, narrative, and catastrophe of both novels and plays since its inception in 1749. Stories should be "well-connected" and rising "in importance" from the beginning to the end so that, in novels, "curiosity" is developed toward "the catastrophe." The events or incidents should be many, varied, entertaining, instructive, and not trivial. Furthermore, these scenes should be novel or uncommon but not improbable or absurd, and they should rise from nature. The most often repeated criteria for narratives during this decade were "interesting," "affecting," and "connected." The presence of the second quality rescued *Tristram Shandy* and a few other novels from obscurity, as far as the *Monthly*’s official position was concerned. The review of the *Vicar of Wakefield* might have been a helpful index to the degree to which probability could be stretched to connect events, but the reviewer was so upset by the poor showing of Goldsmith’s talents that he failed to remark on the structure of the novel or on its dependence upon coincidence.

Drama reviewers employed a few different terms (instead of "curiosity," a play was expected to arouse "suspense" as preparation for the catastrophe), but they still insisted on the natural occurrence of events. As Griffiths once phrased it: "The incidents . . . are simple, natural, and affecting, and arise out of one another with
very little intervention of art in the decorations furnished by the poet" (MR 28: Jan. 1763, 67).

Because a simple plan was often too thinly spread over the traditional five acts, and because there was still a desire to preserve the unities, the reviewers endorsed alterations like Garrick's three-act version of Shakespeare's *A Winter's Tale*, which also eliminated the sixteen-year span of action. The *Monthly* reviewers embraced the conservative management of traditional comedy and tragedy, but acknowledged the highly imaginative character of farce and the masque. And as for the newer form, the novel, logical cause-and-effect and chronological narrative was expected. At the very least, the author should not attempt to continually surprise and puzzle his reader, but should help him to clearly visualize the sequential events by means of spirited and detailed description.

**Language and style.** Ruffhead's severe treatment of Johnson's style in *Rasselas* is both typical and atypical of the *Monthly* reviewers' remarks about language.

He wants that graceful ease, which is the ornament of romance; and he stalk *[sic]* in the solemn buskin, when

---

34 "The Action of this piece as Shakespear left it, comprehends the monstrous space of sixteen years. Mr. Garrick has cleared it of this absurdity; reduced from five, to a more regular piece of three acts; added a pretty song in the festive scene of Sheep-shearing; and to the whole has prefixed a very humorous Prologue."

(MR 26: Feb. 1762, 151)
he ought to tread in the light sock. His stile is so
tumid and pompous, that he sometimes deals in sesqui-
pedalia, such as excogitation, exaggeratory, &c. with
other hard compounds, which it is difficult to pronounce
with composed features—as multifarious, transcendental,
indiscernible, &c. When we meet with instances of this
inflated stile, we can scarce forbear calling upon the
writer, in the words of Martial—

Grande cothurnati pone Maronis opus

This swelling language may shew the writer's learn-
ing, but it is certainly no proof of his elegance. If
indeed he had put it into the mouth of a pedant only,
nothing could be more apt: but unhappily he has so
little conception of the propriety of character that he
makes the princess speak in the same lofty strain with
the philosopher; and the waiting woman harangue with as
much sublimity as her royal mistress.

(MR 20: May 1759, 428)

Ruffhead employs the Monthly's typical vocabulary for
describing what is desirable ("graceful ease," "elegance")
and undesirable ("tumid," "pompous") language. He, like the
other reviewers, lists specific words or passages which were
particularly annoying. Others often objected to useless
repetition of words; to affectation, which included coining
new terms and the overuse of foreign phrases; to non-English
dialects (e.g., "Scoticisms"); to far-fetched metaphors and
similes; and to the insertion of quotations which drew
attention away from the characters to the author.

Ruffhead's statement is not typical of the Monthly's
reviews of novels because he speaks of expecting characters to be distinguished from each other by their language. While this notion appeared in reviews of both tragedy and comedy from the early fifties onwards, this passage is apparently the only allusion to characterization by speech in the novel.36

A chronological comparison of the remarks on language and style expected of the novel and that expected of the drama shows other differences and some similarities between the two genres.

For drama, especially tragedy, the verse (or prose, if the author chose to depart from the usual blank verse) was to have the dignity appropriate to the genre. This eventually led to the approval of a very simple, elegant, and natural pattern of speech and dialogue.

Cleone is, in short, a decent performance. It is equally free from the bombast and rant of a Barbarossa, and from the flowery whine and romantic softness of a Philoclea; but at the same time it wants the majesty of diction, and high reach of thought . . . essential to the dignity of a perfect tragedy. (MR 19: Dec. 1758, 583)

In 1766, the short review of The Progress of Vanity and Virtue, or, the History of Two Sisters reads: "This is one of the many productions with which the public have of late been so pestered, unsupported by novelty of character, propriety of sentiment, or elegance of diction. . . . In short, the language is every where deficient and unequal to the characters the Writer means to represent" (MR 35: Aug. 1766, 146). This statement appears to contradict the above, but I believe the reviewer (Shaw) means to be commenting on the impropriety of language as unbefitting classes of characters. His use of the term "represents" suggests he is not speaking of individual persons.
With regard to language, when we consider that the characters [of The Jealous Wife] are supposed to be drawn from genteel life, it is in general flat, spirit­less, and inelegant. It is true, the stile of comedy should be sermoni proprius; nevertheless it ought not to sink to the coarse dialogue of common life, but to copy the politer conversation, which may be presumed to pass among such as are refined by education. Nay, it may in particular scenes, be allowed to rise higher, on the authority of Horace.--

Interdum tamen et vocem comoedia tollit
(MR 24: Mar. 1761, 188*)

For the novel, the chief standard was correct English. The reviewers objected to English translations which retained some of the idiomatic patterns of the original language. After 1760, they spoke disparagingly of "scotti­cisms," or any foreign dialect "larding" the pages. But most consistently during these nineteen years, they looked no further if a book was written with "inaccuracy of language" or, especially, was "ungrammatical." Vulgarisms and "gross expressions" which might offend "our fair readers" were included with these censures.

While simplicity became the ideal of the stage, copiousness came to reflect the breadth of genius and experience of the writer of novels. This growing contrast was not apparent until the sixties. In the fifties, reviewers of both genres spoke out against verbosity and excesses in figures of speech and in diction. But along with the new tolerance (or nostalgia) for the vivid writing of the old romances came several tolerant remarks for the new romance, such as Langhorne's
... unlike the general run of Novelists, he is possessed of a lively imagination; a competent judgment of human life and manners; and, if not of an elegance, at least of an affluence of language.

(MR 30: May 1764, 355)

Other similar passages indicate that the reviewers are not endorsing the eloquent or grand style but a middle prose "neither laboured nor lofty . . . easy and natural" (MR 26: Feb. 1762, 155). They prefer elegance and polish, especially in the verse of drama, but, deprived of seeing that in most novels, they look for highly descriptive content and a wide variety of incidents told with animation, style, emotion, and--it should not be forgotten--with humor.

The Monthly reviewers, Griffiths in particular, saw humor as a quality related to "pleasantry" in writing.

This [The History of Pudica, a Lady of N-rf-1k] appears to be the secret history of a young lady, in real life, the incidents of which are put together in a loose and rambling manner; but related with a good deal of pleasantry, and some humour. (MR 10: Feb. 1754, 160)

'Tis true, as he [the author of Memoirs of Sir Charles Goodville] is a serious writer, his gravity frequently renders him rather too tedious, and formal; but this is sometimes diversified by an agreeable vein of good humour and pleasantry, without the intermixture of anything loose or immoral. (MR 8: Mar. 1753, 188)

Humor was essential to the novel's style.

Humour, that favourite part, that life and soul of our modern romances, is no where to be found in this [The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless].

(MR 5: Oct. 1751, 393-94)

[The History of Major Bromley and Miss Cliffen:] Differs, somewhat, in character, from the . . . soft and tender love-tale; for here is an attempt at humour. It is, however, but a moderate effort; falling far short of the achievements of a Fielding or a Smollet; of which
their unequal imitators unfortunately remind us, whenever they present to our view their faint copies of such masterly originals. (MR 37: Nov. 1767, 394)

Of course, the Monthly reviewers were only following prescriptions for humor for the new romance set by Fielding himself in his introduction to Joseph Andrews, but it is interesting that none of the other periodicals under study so regularly applied this standard as the Monthly did.

The whole question of the manner of expression or "the execution" was a favorite topic of the chief reviewers of the novel. Whereas they simply expected tragedy to be written with "continued force of expression" and with pathos, they were very resourceful in finding new ways of describing the styles of fiction. It would be too difficult and useless to enumerate them all here, but two examples should indicate, at least, the diversified contexts in which reviewers characterized various styles.

Kenrick attempted to throw some light on why imitations of Tom Jones were receiving more acclaim than the original. As he reviewed The History of Tom Fool, he observed that the plan and conduct of a piece are often overlooked in favor of "beauties of character and stile" which draw more attention and are more easily pointed out for admiration.

... it requires the peculiar abilities of a genius to give proper and consistent sentiments to his characters, and to throw his materials together into a form that may
be admired, for the beauty of its composition, when the characters and incidents have lost their novelty.

(MR 23: Aug. 1760, 163)

He ends the discussion with a rather awkward and impossible challenge, which does point out his concept of the enduring qualities of a masterpiece:

The generality of our modern novel-readers will hardly enter into the spirit of this criticism; the writings even of Mr. Fielding himself, being generally more admired for the beauties of character and stile, than for their plan and conduct. But set character, humour, sentiment, and language out of the question, and see what a difference there is in point of composition, between a Tom Fool and a Tom Jones! (pp. 163-64)

Another area, never subjected to full analysis but referred to with regularity over the entire period, was the style of women writers. For the most part, reviewers made a show of being hesitant to genuinely criticize any book by a woman's hand, citing, for justification, her unequal educational opportunities with men and the fact that most women writers published because they were forced to out of financial necessity rather than because they possessed literary talent. And there are cases where women authors pleaded leniency on just such grounds. As more acknowledged and unacknowledged female-written novels appeared, the reviewers allocated "authoresses" the area of decency, good sense, and high moral standards in which to excel, and were thereby incensed when a young woman disregarded "decency of expression" in her ballad opera (MR 13: Dec. 1755, 467). Up to this point, little was done to characterize the style of any
woman writer, good or bad, beyond some allusion to her "amiable disposition and character" which were apparent in her style. Finally, one reviewer, Seddon, plucked up his courage and gave the following account of The School for Wives, in a Series of Letters:

To treat this little production with any degree of severity would be unpardonable, as it is the performance of a lady; and, if we may be permitted to judge from the prevailing spirit and tendency of the piece, a lady of most amiable disposition and character. A critical reader would perhaps be inclined to censure the style in which the letters are wrote, as formal and stiff; destitute of that ease, which we always expect from a female pen, and especially in composition of this kind; and not sufficiently diversified for the variety of characters that are introduced. The open and unartful manner, in which the fable itself is conducted, will likewise be judged an imperfection. . . . the female reader . . . may hope, if not delighted with the elegancy of her entertainment, to be improved by it.

(MR 28: Apr. 1763, 326)

By the end of the period, a stereotypical style of feminine writing had emerged which, ironically, also defined the masculine style. Both are described in this typical passage:

This pretty fancy-picture is chargeable with defects of this kind [i.e., improbabilities, "and other deviations from nature, and real life"] . . . but then it affords so agreeable a representation of some interesting scenes in the higher walks of life, that those who view them with an inclination to be pleased, rather than with an eye to criticism, will hardly miss their aim. Briefly, there is that peculiarity of spirit, ease, elegance, and vivacity in this history of Miss Faulkland, which plainly marks it a lady's performance; and gives it evident superiority over the heavy productions of those male adventure-makers, who have so greatly multiplied the dull romances of the present age.

(MR 37: Nov. 1767, 394)

In general women were said to be following the style of the old romances. They wrote with an ease and elegance not
found in comparable masculine productions which had lower-life characters and incidents for their subjects. Their style was familiar and comfortable, and it was more unlikely to change than that of their male counterparts who were experimenting with less acceptable material. The Monthly reviewers, who did not easily adapt to new conditions, quite naturally began to idealize the feminine touch because it spoke for the leisure classes of the past as well as combined with the new, delicate morality. It harmonized with the Horatian urbanity and decorum which they propagated indirectly, if not with conscious effort, throughout these nineteen years.

Summary

Even the first volumes of the Monthly Review tell us that its reviewers esteemed the novel more highly than did their counterparts in the magazines. They did not write their reviews for entertainment but for information. Consequently, they tried to give an adequate picture of each publication's contents by describing it, by comparing it with others in its class and tradition, and by giving some estimation of its instructive, literary, and entertainment values.

These writers consistently viewed the novel as a legitimate means of instructing youth and of encouraging the practice of virtue. Though they lamented the fact that this
trust was violated by a great many hack writers, they still did much to encourage talented authors who could write from wide experience.

A gradual change in attitude towards morality in the novel is perceptible over the two decades of the Monthly. Earlier reviews emphasized the aesthetic balance found in contrasting characterization and poetic justice. Later comments on morality disregarded artistic considerations and rated a novel according to its level of decency and its general tendency. Finally, with the advent of so many suffering heroines and the recurrence of romantic excess in the novel, the reviewers called on the limitations of probability and naturalness to supply the restraint necessary for effective instruction.

The primary function of the novel, in their estimation, was to entertain. They yawned over highly moral books written with deadened pens. Their most frequently-mentioned standard of appraisal was the style and language of a novel. These reviewers enjoyed being entertained by a spirited, informative, and highly descriptive style more than any other device the novel had to offer. This is quite different from the elevated dignity and pathos they expected of dramatic styles, at least until 1766, when the sentimental dramas were becoming more numerous.

The entertainment they demanded from the novel was both rational and emotional. The Monthly reviewers expected
language to be regular, precise, and devoid of excessive foreign influences. They preferred facts when they were available, but unless an author overstated the case for authenticating his fiction, these commentators did not discredit a book for lacking a factual foundation. They usually wrote favorably about novels having a variety of interconnected incidents all leading to the catastrophe, although this was most highly prized in tragedy. With the exception of language and style, the *Monthly* reviewers prescribed no other internal literary standards for the novel. The term "novel" itself was interchangeable with "romance" and both words were applied to nearly every kind of fiction. The reviewers had yet to see characterization much beyond stereotypes, still life portraits, or novelties, and they came to ignore improbabilities of plot and incident if the reader's attention was sufficiently diverted.

As reviewers, these writers phrased most of their evaluations in terms of their audience's emotional tastes. They pointed out humor, wit, pathos, and tenderness in the novel, and expanded the limits of reviewing by describing emotional reactions more accurately than had been done for the drama. We see from a comparison of the language used in the reviews of tragedy, comedy, and the novel, that even from the early fifties, the novel was not regarded as an appendage of drama. It had its own script and, maybe, its own audience.
CHAPTER IV

THE CRITICAL REVIEW: 1756 TO 1767

Tobias Smollett seems to have initiated the Critical Review and, until 1763 when he left for Europe to regain his health, he contributed a reasonable number of editorial statements and reviews to its pages, but he never shouldered the ironclad role of overseer undertaken by Ralph Griffiths for the Monthly Review.

The Critical was apparently a part of an earlier plan to establish an academy of belles lettres. Aside from the information we can glean from a satirical attack by Joseph Reed in 1759,¹ we have no further evidence of this

---

¹This minor dramatist included the following passage in his pamphlet entitled A Sop in the Pan for a Physical Critick: in A Letter to Dr. SM*LL*T, occasion'd by a Criticism on a late Mock-Tragedy, call'd Madrigal and Trulletta. By a Halter-Maker (London, 1759): "In the close of the Year 1755, a certain Caledonian Quack, by the Curtesy of England, call'd a Doctor of Physick, whose real, or assum'd Name was FERDINANDO MAC FATHOMLESS, form'd a Project for initiating and perfecting the Male-Inhabitants of this Island, in the Use and Management of the linguary Weapon, by the Erection of a Scolding Amphitheatre. For this purpose, he selected, and engag'd, on weekly Salary, about a Dozen of the most eminent Professors of Vociferation in this Academy: but, after he had been at a considerable Expence, the unfortunate Emperic could not get his Project licenc'd. The Doctor was greatly mortified at his unexpected
project than one letter of Smollett's to Dr. John Moore, written August 3, 1756, six months after the commencement of the Review. This letter, which is the earliest confirmation of Smollett's involvement in the Critical, says in part:

By your asking if I am engaged in any new Performance, and, immediately after, mentioning the Critical Review, I conclude you have been told I am concerned in that work. Your information has been true. It is a small Branch of an extensive Plan which I last year projected for a sort of Academy of the belles Lettres, a Scheme which will one day, I hope, be put in Execution to its utmost Extent. In the meantime the Critical Review is conducted by four Gentlemen of approved abilities, and meets with a very favourable Reception.²

Smollett's associate reviewers have recently been identified by Derek Roper as Dr. John Armstrong, Rev. Thomas Franklin, Patrick Murdoch, and Samuel Derrick.³ Archibald Hamilton, Sr., a printer, is believed by some to be the moving force behind the Critical,⁴ although R. Baldwin is

Disappointment, but being resolved that his own, and the Sisterhood's Talents should not be lost to the World, he set about publishing a periodical Work, called the Hyper-Critical Review."


³"Smollett's 'Four Gentlemen': The First Contributors to the Critical Review," RES n.s. 10 (1959): 38-44. Professor Roper found annotated copies of volumes one and two of the Critical in the library of the University of Oregon. One of these four names, or Smollett's, appears either in full or in abbreviated form at the head of almost every article.

the only name appearing on the title page until 1758 when Hamilton's replaces it. When Smollett left in 1763, it is likely that William Guthrie replaced him as editorial writer and reviewer. Hamilton may then have taken over Smollett's job as solicitor for contributors.\(^5\) Other contributors up to 1768 include such luminaries as Oliver Goldsmith (January 1759 to March 1760), Samuel Johnson (April 1763 to 1764),\(^6\) and David Hume (1759).

From its first issue, the editors of the Critical were embroiled in disputes about quality, content, and personal accusations with their counterparts on the Monthly and other publications.\(^7\) The bait for such disputation was clearly set out in the announcement of the first issue, which appeared on the front page of the December 30, 1755 number of the Public Advertiser. Publicized as The Progress


\(^{6}\)There is some evidence that Johnson was already contributing by 1759, but no articles specifically written by him have been identified. See Jones, pp. 100-1.

or *Annals of Literature and the Liberal Arts* (the title on the first issue was modified to *The Critical Review* or *Annals of Literature*), the new magazine was set up as a direct challenge to the *Monthly Review*:

This Work will not be patched up by obscure Hackney Writers, accidentally enlisted in the Service of an undistinguishing Bookseller, but executed by a Set of Gentlemen whose Characters and Capacities have been universally approved and acknowledged by the Public: Gentlemen, who have long observed with Indignation the Productions of Genius and Dullness; Wit and Impertinence; Learning and Ignorance, confounded in the Chaos of Publication; applauded without Taste, and condemned without Distinction; and who have seen the noble Art of Criticism reduced to a contemptible Manufacture subservient to the most sordid Views of Avarice and Interest, and carried on by wretched Hirelings, without Talent, Candour, Spirit, or Circumspection.

Urged by these considerations, they have resolved to task their Abilities, in reviving the true Spirit of Criticism, and exert their utmost Care in vindicating the Cause of Literature from such a venal and corrupted Jurisdiction.

They pretend to delineate the Plan of every Work with Accuracy and Candour; to point out the Excellencies; hint at the Defects; and whenever they signify their Disapprobation; they promise to illustrate their Censure with proper Quotations, from which the Reader may appeal to his own Understanding.

In these Sentiments they have established a Correspondence with France, Holland, Germany, Italy and Spain; which will enable them to entertain their Readers with the Literary News of those different Countries, and to translate such Productions, as shall seem to bid fairest for succeeding in an English Dress.8

Such inflammatory rhetoric might have been easily justified if the *Critical* had been as specialized in the *belles lettres* as it had promised, but from the first issue the

---

format was basically the same as the Monthly's, though the total number of pages was greater. The major additions were two new sections: foreign literature reviews and notices of painting and sculpture. The Monthly soon added sixteen more pages and a foreign literature report, but never gave Smollett and company the satisfaction of departing from reviews of printed pieces only. The overt competition took the form of written attacks.

To say that Smollett did not assume the same role for the Critical as Griffiths did for the Monthly does not mean that he felt less responsible for its success. Smollett answered (and inaugurated) a number of these disputes himself in addition to writing the annual editorial preface wherein he frequently referred to allegations made by competitors and reaffirmed his own editors' policies:

Howsoever they [i.e., Critical reviewers] may have erred in judgment, they have declared their thoughts without prejudice, fear, or affection; and strove to forget the author's person, while his works fell under their consideration. They have treated simple dulness as the object of mirth or compassion, according to the nature of its appearance: Petulance and self-conceit they have corrected with more severe strictures; and though they have given no quarter to insolence, scurrility, and sedition, they will venture to affirm, that no production of merit has been defrauded of its due share of applause. On the contrary, they have cherished with commendation, the very faintest bloom of genius, even when vapid and unformed, in hopes of its being warmed into flavour, and afterwards producing agreeable fruit by dint of proper care and culture: and never, without
reluctance, disapproved, even of a bad writer, who had the least title to indulgence.\(^9\)

His wholehearted defense of this publication, coupled with the general belief among its readers that he was its primary spokesman, shows Smollett to be more than superficially involved with the destiny of the *Critical Review*.

It was Smollett who felt it his place to write a letter of apology to Samuel Richardson for an uncomplimentary remark appearing in the April 1756 issue.\(^10\) After admitting his concern that he was suspected of writing the insult and assuring Richardson that "it was inserted without my privity or Concurrence," Smollett denied ever speaking of Richardson as a man or writer "without Expressions of admiration and applause . . . due to that amiable Benevolence, sublime morality and surprizing Intimacy with the human Heart, which must ever be the objects of Veneration among People of good Sense and Integrity."\(^11\)

One final and more dramatic proof of Smollett's

---


\(^10\)The offensive passage was actually a digression in Derrick's review of a three-volume novel, *The Supposed Daughter*: "This at least we can say in his favour, that his relations are told with brevity; and had the writer of *Sir Charles Grandison* been to have worked upon his materials, he would easily have swelled them into twenty folio volumes." (CR 1: Apr. 1756, 261)

responsibility towards the contents of the Critical was his behavior during the Knowles case. In the May 1758 issue, Smollett published a scurrilous review of a pamphlet by Admiral Charles Knowles entitled The Conduct of Admiral Knowles on the Late Expedition [i.e., against Rochefort in 1757] Set in a True Light. Knowles sued the printer of the Critical, Archibald Hamilton, for libel. During the two-and-a-half-year period of litigation following, Smollett identified himself as the author of the article in order to release the charges against Hamilton (in accordance with a proposal made by Knowles' Council); wrote a letter asking pardon in the terms requested by the Lord Register of Scotland, Alexander Hume Campbell, a long-time foe of Smollett's and friend of Knowles; and paid a "Considerable Sum" of money to defray costs of the legal action. Despite these efforts, made, very likely, against his own convictions about the justification of his printed remarks, Smollett was convicted, fined £100, sentenced to three months' imprisonment, and obliged to give security of £500 for his good behavior for seven years. From his apartment in King's Bench Prison he must have sent the January 1761 "preface" to his readers:

Five annual revolutions of the sun are now performed since the Critical Review made its first appearance, under such peculiar auspices, that for the greater part of that time it has been exposed to the incessant hostilities of a combination of foes, that can hardly be paralleled in any other period in the annals of literature. . . .
Its supposed authors have been vilified in person, and assassinated in reputation. One gentleman, in particular, whose character stands in some degree of favour with the public, has been singled out as a victim, and galled by all the shafts of malignity. He has not only felt the rod of persecution and prosecution for opinions which he really broached, but he has been insulted in public abuse, and traduced in private calumny, by obscure authors whom he did not know, for criticisms he had not written on performances which he never saw. Peace to all such; they are now at rest, and we have no intention to disturb their ashes. Like the insects of a summer's day they have buzzed, and stung, and stunk, and expired; but like other vermin, the eggs they have deposited, may, by some revolving sun of success, be hatched for the propagation of the species. Be that as it will, such puny stings can have no longer any effect upon the Critical Review, improved and strengthened as it is, in age and constitution, schooled by its sufferings, as well as hardened by the opposition which it has undergone, and now fairly surmounted.

(CR 11: Jan. 1761, B)

Whatever Smollett might have hoped, this was not the end of legal controversies for the Critical, but his own involvement with the "improved and strengthened" review was about to taper off. Circulation numbers are not available but the few hints we have suggest that despite its high quality, the Critical consistently ran a poor second in sales to the Monthly, its predecessor by seven years. Smollett had persisted in keeping it financially alive during its early years and contributed heavily to its pages despite his pressing commitments to his History of England, and to the British Magazine which he started in 1760, not to

12See Knapp, Smollett, pp. 180-81, especially the passage cited from Shebbeare's An Appendix to the Occasional Critic containing a mock proposal for financing the Critical.
mention his plays and novels. In August, 1762, he wrote to Dr. John Moore:

Your Conjecture is right in supposing I still write some articles in the Critical Review. As I am Proprietor of that work, I should be a Fool to give it up at a Time when it begins to indemnify me for all the Vexation and Loss I have sustained by it; but the Laborious Part of Authorship I have long resigned. My Constitution will no longer allow me to toil as formerly.13

The following June he resigned from his connections with the Critical Review and departed for the Continent, a tired and weakened man.

The extent of Smollett's influence upon the Critical's policies and attitudes is as undocumented as his administrative role. From the annotated 1756 volumes we see that he did not limit himself to reviewing belles lettres; his sixty-six letters and reviews also cover history, law, geography, and science. He reviewed no fiction, some poetry, and five dramatic pieces. Derrick14 reviewed eight plays and farces, and ten novels; Francklin15 wrote on two plays


14Samuel Derrick (1724-69) was born in Dublin but came to London about 1751 where he earned a living by miscellaneous writing. Boswell mentions him as his "first tutor in the ways of London . . . both literary and sporting." He is probably the "little irishman" described by Smollett as his "Amanuensis" and "Trash reader for the Critical Review" (Knapp, Letters, p. 57), for his reviews are generally short and of minor works.

15Rev. Thomas Francklin, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College and Professor of Greek at Cambridge. His father had been printer of the Tory journal, The Craftsman. Francklin also dealt with theological works for the Critical. Dr.
and five novels. With very few exceptions, we have no further external data on the authorship of any specific articles in subsequent issues,\textsuperscript{16} which forces us to consider nearly all of the reviews as "staff" products.

However, there is a certain uniform attitude towards the novel traceable in the reviews appearing during the years Smollett wrote for the \textit{Critical} and slacking off slightly after his departure. Not unlike the \textit{Monthly}, the \textit{Critical} emphasized language and style but more specifically, Smollett's paper stressed two elements of any particular performance: the "execution" of its parts and the "genius" of its spirit.

Identified and defined only by abstract terms, the "execution" was the manner in which the sentiment, characterization, structure, diction, and even the morality in a given piece were interconnected. Ultimately, it described the functional unity of a novel or play. How these elements were interlaced while respecting decorum and creating a momentum towards a total emotional effect was the deciding factor to Smollett and his staff for whether a work had intrinsic value.

\textsuperscript{16}Several convincing attributions have been made to Smollett from internal evidence; I will identify these as they appear in the text.

Armstrong helped Smollett with the scientific and medical works; Murdoch wrote the foreign article section.
Such a position represents a break from the earlier standards of reviewing which, like the beauty-faults method, required a separate judgment for each element in a work.

Probably the most emphatic statement on the importance of unity, or execution, was the definition of the new romance included in the review of The Peregrinations of Jeremiah Grant, Esq.; the West-Indian:

This kind of romance is a diffused comedy unrestrained by the rules of drama, comprehending a great variety of incident and character, referring, however, to one principal action and one particular personage, whose fate must interest the reader, and whose importance must not only engage our attention and esteem, but also unite the whole concatenation of scenes and adventures.

(CR 15: Jan. 1763, 13) 17

A later passage in the same article suggests the end to which this action and characterization was to be directed while it pinpoints the need for spirited writing: "The question is, whether a dull recital of uninteresting facts can afford any entertainment to the public, or be of any use

---

17 This review is attributed to Smollett by Philip J. Klukoff, "Smollett as the Reviewer of Jeremiah Grant," N & Q, n.s. 13 (1966): 466. Certainly the resemblance of viewpoints and vocabulary to Smollett's description in his introduction to Ferdinand Count Fathom (1753) cannot be ignored:

"A novel is a large diffused picture, comprehending the characters of life, disposed in different groups [sic], and exhibited in various attitudes, for the purposes of an uniform plan, and general occurrence, to which every individual figure is subservient. But this plan cannot be executed with propriety, probability, or success, without a principal personage to attract the attention, unite the incidents, unwind the clue of the labyrinth, and at last close the scene, by virtue of his own importance."
to the community" (CR 15: Jan. 1763, 15). The bond between entertainment and instruction lies in the manner as much as the matter of the narrative, these reviewers would say. The successful author captures the imagination of his readers by the variety of incidents he portrays and by the "colour," "energy," "grace," "force of novelty" or "animation" he injects into his style. This spirit, along with a pleasing variety of incidents, carries the reader willingly to a determined conclusion which, if the central thrust is apparent, causes aesthetic as well as ethical appreciation.

One further passage in the Jeremiah Grant article gives us a key to the interpretation of "genius" as distinguished from the man of "taste":

It is the happy faculty of genius to strike off glowing images, to seize the ridicule of character, to contrive incidents that shall engage the passions and affections of the reader, to support the spirit of the dialogue, and animate the whole narration. It is the province of taste to regulate the morals of the piece, to conduct the thread of the story, to make choice of airs and attitudes, to avoid impropriety, to reject every thing that is extravagant, unnatural, mean, and disagreeable. . . . The seeming ease with which a performance of this nature is written, is a proof of the excellence of the author's art; it is the curiosa felicitas, which distinguishes the works of genius from the efforts of mere labour. (CR 15: Jan. 1763, 14)

As used here, "genius" applies both to a very specific set of standards and to a certain unaccountable quality of execution. Words and phrases such as "exuberance," "poet of nature," "aura divina," and "hand of the master" describe the genius of execution while "mechanical invention,"
"correctness," "artificer," "decorum" and even "delicacy" are manifestations of taste. Without "genius" a book or play can be good but never great in the eyes of these reviewers, and they are very quick to point out the folly of those authors who try to simulate this creative spirit by either imitating the masters such as Fielding and Richardson, or by manipulating the emotions of their readers with contrived situations, affected language, or misplaced erudition.

The Critical Review's notion of an ideal novel or play will become more apparent as we study the function of each of the elements described in the "Jeremiah Grant" definition: plot ("one principal action"), character ("one principal personage"), sentiment and language ("engage our attention and esteem"), and morality ("use to the community"). Also, as in previous chapters, there will be a chronological progression as we compare criteria for the novel with those of the drama. However, because of a few intrinsic similarities and differences in the material and because of the likely influence of Smollett on the ideas expressed by reviewers during his connection with the Critical, the twelve years will be considered in four groups: 1) 1756 to 1758; 2) 1759, the year when certain attitudinal changes become apparent; 3) 1760 to 1763, the last years of Smollett's association; 4) 1764 to 1767.
During these early years, the new reviewers reported on forty-two novels and forty-four dramatic pieces and set a pattern for readable and entertaining essays. These writers either opened their articles with a plot summary or included one near the beginning. They were inclined to include more directly-quoted passages or scenes in a review than were critics from other magazines. While it was not unusual for the Critical writers to intersperse judgments and critical commentary within the plot summaries (which made the oftentimes dry summaries eminently more appealing), they generally shifted any literary philosophy or definitions to the end of the article.

There was but a slim suggestion of an underlying theory of the novel in the reviews of these first three years. In general, the critics stressed the need for continuity and connection between incidents comprising the plot, had little to say about characterization and morality, criticized writers who wrote in an affected manner, and searched for the genius who had mastered the "Art of touching the passions." Most of these ideas were blended rather

---

18 The Monthly Review, which had pledged to review every publication on the market, reviewed 55 novels and 32 dramatic pieces during the same period. A final count for these twelve years shows the Critical having reviewed 211 novels and 144 dramatic pieces, 47 of which were comedies; 32, tragedies. The Monthly, over the same period, covered a total of 245 novels and 149 dramatic pieces. See Appendix B.
than distinguished as separate considerations, as we see illustrated by the following passage from Derrick's review of *The Adventures of Jack Smart*:

It appears to us, that the author of this piece sat down determined to write whatever came uppermost, without paying the smallest regard to order, connection, probability, manner, or stile; being perhaps of a genius not to be confined by vulgar rules; and he has this advantage, that he finds himself either witty or comical, or both, in every page; and lest the reader should not discover it, he takes care to tell him of it. He that will believe him, may. The whole book consists of commonplace witticisms, thread-bare stories newly vamped up, and extracts of the lives of two or three whores, which contains nothing either entertaining or affecting: in order to relate these, Mr. Smart finds some way of thrusting himself into a connection with them, without knowing why or wherefore; he introduces them to the reader with the same ease; and the book taken altogether, may justly be compared to an old coat patch'd up of ill-coloured rags, without either neatness or fancy.

(CR 1: Mar. 1756, 126)

Plot was Derrick's chief concern. His hierarchy is clear: "order, connection, probability, manner, [and] . . . stile."

His irritation with the author stems not only from the pretentiousness "Mr. Smart" displays in his style and humor, but from his apparent disregard for maintaining a sense of authenticity and credibility when introducing new episodes. In other words, as author, he interferes with the illusion and thus the momentum created by his own fiction. This interference might be acceptable—as were Fielding's digressions—if the author could convince the reader of his intelligence and wide experience. So, eventually, the critical focus returns to the impression the author creates of himself through the arrangement and execution of his
The goal towards which these unified narratives were to aim was not specified by those early reviewers of novels. Neither the design nor poetic justice was ever mentioned, and morality appeared to be an afterthought. Almost the same held true for the reviewers of drama. When discussing plot, they cited the ancients, using terms such as "denouement," "catastrophe," and "discovery." They argued and never resolved age-old issues such as the proper length of a play, the ideal number of acts and scenes, and the introduction of subplots. Smollett criticized one play because "there are some scenes, which, tho' well written, do not conduce to the action" (CR 1: Apr. 1756, 276), another because "there is no intrigue, recognition, nor change of fortune in the conduct . . ." (CR 1: Jan.-Feb. 1756, 83), and another, a revision of Shakespeare's *The Winters Tale*, because the editor retained an anachronism (CR 1: Mar. 1756, 145). Francklin introduced the only direct statement on morality when he referred to an unhappy ending as "A species of justice which we apprehend to be by no means poetical, and to speak seriously, rather tending to dispirit and discourage than to increase or promote the practice of virtue; which, in our opinion ought to be the chief end of Tragedy, and indeed of every other performance" (CR 1: Mar. 1756, 161).

Not until we examine the non-technical language of
these reviews do we see what their authors are really advocating. After Smollett made the criticism that some scenes of *Virginia* did not "conduce to the action" he recovered with: "there is something very pleasing, sentimental, warm, and poetical in the dialogue" (CR 1: Apr. 1756, 277), and in his opening remarks to this play, he defends the literary talent of his day by saying that "the fairest flower will blow unregarded among people who have no faculties of feeling, and no ideas of beauty" (p. 276). Derrick points out the two "principal pictures" in the novel *The Supposed Daughter*, and ends with the remark "but neither of them are introduced in a light that either affects or is probable. In short, you don't feel for, nor are you interested in either" (CR 1: Apr. 1756, 262). These men are encouraging their readers to maintain the critical openness which permits them to respond throughout the novel or play on an emotional and elevated level. The enjoyment, entertainment and any value the work has to offer does not reside simply in the end or the lesson it teaches, or even in the good form it displays, they would say. One reviewer of the tragedy *Cleone* drew the distinction quite clearly when he summarized: "... we will recommend it as a performance which abounds with the most affecting strokes of nature: for, as often as the head may sit in judgment against it, the heart will never fail to bring in a verdict in its favour" (CR 6: Dec. 1758, 475).
It is this point of view which distinguishes the reviews of the Critical from the Monthly's. Both periodicals use roughly the same terminology to describe the effects that certain works may have on their audiences, but the Monthly writers wished primarily to describe the contents of the publications to their readers and to advise them on their literary or moral values. The Critical writers show more interest in the psychological exchange which continues between the author and his audience and, to this end, they seemed to be more open to innovative forms of art and extended considerable effort to assess the author's intentions, his talent and experience, and the effect any departures from conventional patterns had on the total impact of the literary work.

During these first years of the Critical's existence, any receptivity to new forms and careful analyses of these changes found their way through the reviews of drama, not the novel. One of the most vivid presentations of this willingness to suspend what amounted to modern interpretations of ancient rules occurs in the review of a collection of Italian operas by Metastasio (CR 5: May 1758, 423-31; June 1758, 511-22).

Here the reviewer confronts the much maligned art of using music as an accessory to tragedy and he not only finds reason to justify every practice his British compatriots may object to, but he finds merit in several more subtle
adaptations to modern taste. For instance, he observes that the choruses "are ushered in by the subject itself; and that they do not remain on the stage, against all probability, often to overhear what is supposed to be the greatest secret" (p. 424). The resulting shortage of stage business eliminates the need for the full five acts prescribed by Horace, he later explains, so the reduction to three acts without the linkage of music or cantata at once causes the style to be more lively and the staging less complex (p. 424).

By reformulating an early statement, that "the poet and musician should be so justly in concert with each other, that the words should be adapted to the subject, and the music to the words" (p. 424), the reviewer anticipates those who would object to the heroine's breaking out into a "melodious cantata" right in the midst of "the most violent passions." He explains: "The tone only is changed, the manner of action continues the same." And what of the improbability of such behavior? It is "compensated by the circumstance of furnishing a compleat diversion, that strikes at once the mind, the heart, the eyes, and the ears" (p. 425).

The emphasis laid here upon the total effect of the scene--even at the cost of probability--is extended to the total effect of the drama when the reviewer defends Metastasio's mixtures of metres and rhymes.
This liberty of his is not without its beauty. The Italian verse, rhymed or not, has its cadence and proper harmony, far from ungrateful to an English ear. By this rhyming too, by intervals, he unites all that a happy rhyme has of agreeable, and what the liberty of dispensing with it adds of ease and life to the sentiment and action. Perhaps too, he has aimed at avoiding, in the inequality of his metre, the tiresomeness of the monotony of verses all of one measure. His poetry seems, in short, to consist less in the strictness of metrical rule, than in the sublimity or propriety of his terms, in the choice and disposition of his subject, the expression of his characters, the natural turn of his sentiments, the vivacity of the passions, beauty of images, striking maxims, affectiveness of situations, surprize of incidents, and catastrophes: all these the editor Cazalbigi admires in his friend Metastasio, and in which we cannot refuse joining him. (p. 425)

Apart from the aesthetic pleasure which the reviewer suggests may be derived from comprehending both the relative ease with which the changes are introduced and the variety of forms themselves, the zestful poetry serves to unify all of the major elements of the drama in a coherent yet interesting manner. The total sublimity of the experience finds its make-up in the diversity of character, the reversals and variety of action, and in the ebb and flow of sentiments, all of which find their expression in appropriate but vivacious and colorful language which swells the affections in the process of interpreting the subject. "The mind is constantly kept on the stretch, and the heart in suspense, either in the expectation of some deep distress, or at the sight of some moving situation, till the very instant of its happy conclusion" (p. 430).

Two values lie at the heart of this analysis. The
reviewer endorses variety within unity and stresses that the emotional activity of the audience throughout the performance is an important measure of the performance's success. Both values demand originality and a look to the whole performance—not only to the outcome. Balance between cause and effect is to be preferred to either a random or highly predictable presentation of moving events.

Such recommendations were more easily applied to Italian opera than to tragedy which was already tied into convention. The reviews of 1756-58 dramas do reveal more departures from this ideal than conformity to it. Only through Smollett's dramatic reviews did this line of criticism stay open during the early years of the Critical Review.

Smollett combined a show of deep interest in innovations in elements such as characterization with a strong strain of criticism against those whom he believed abused the traditional English language. In a departure from the reviews of novels where characters were never mentioned by name and were described only in the context of plot, i.e., how they contrasted one another as virtue versus vice, or how well they were "drawn" as though they were immovable portraits, Smollett always devoted part of his dramatic reviews to an analysis of some of the chief characters by name and of their effect upon the audience.

This [Virginia] is an amiable character of great softness and sensibility, for which the reader cannot help being deeply interested. Nothing can be more natural,
more melting, than this exclamation when her father recapitulates his parting scene with her deceased mother. '---I cannot bear this softness!'

(CR 1: Apr. 1756, 279)

With respect to the execution; we seldom find an usurer of Wingate's irascibility; that species of mankind, consists chiefly of cool, sly, phlegmatic hypocrites, who having no inflammatory passions themselves, take the advantage of the over-heated tempers of their neighbours.

(CR 1: Jan.-Feb. 1756, 80)

Crab's character is well coloured; but we apprehend, not so correctly designed. Is not his deportment too brutal, and his heart too humane? Does not he recede from his disposition, when he pays that compliment to the Scotch nation,¹⁹ which by the bye, is thrust in by the head and shoulders, and not easily understood? Is not the author too national in his sarcasms upon the French? Are not such reflections so many sacrifices made to the galleries, at the expense of politeness and common justice?

(CR 1: Jan.-Feb. 1756, 83)

These passages illustrate the several directions that Smollett took in his considerations of character. The first shows not only his eager response to sentimental scenes, but also his manner of reflecting those emotions for the reader through, in this case, words carefully selected for their sibilant sounds and phrases whose rhythm first catches the throat and then spews out like the anguish it represents. When he describes a scene with such warmth we are sure long before he draws the conclusions at the end of his review that he rates this performance highly.

¹⁹No reviewer makes more mention of nationality than Smollett. This preoccupation appears to arise as much from his interest in character types as from the constant torrent of criticism, chiefly the Monthly Review's, aimed at him in the name of his Scottish beginnings.
The second and third passages show Smollett's concern that dramatic characters be recognizably from real life and that the author use them with consistency and discretion. Though these passages appear in reviews of farce, Smollett himself is remarkably consistent. In his review of Armstrong's *Sketches or Essays on Various Subjects*, he quotes with favor the following passage on tragedy:

As to the characters, if it was not for a very few exceptions, one would think the art of drawing them was lost amongst our dramatic writers. Those that appear in most of our modern plays, tragedies call them or comedies, are like bad portraits, which indeed represent the human features, but without life or meaning, or those distinguishing strokes, which, in the incomparable Hogarth, and in every great history painter, make you imagine you have seen such persons as appear in the picture. In short, those mechanical performances are as imperfect as unnatural representations of human life, of the manners and passions of mankind, as the Gothic knights which lie along in armour in the Temple Church are of the human figure. (CR 5: May 1758, 384)

An important part of those "distinguishing strokes," according to Smollett, was the dialogue. Within these early reviews he frequently picked out representative " inaccuracies in the diction" but he was particularly hard on misrepresented dialects:

... the Caledonian spouter, in the *Apprentice*, neither uses the pronunciation nor the idioms of his country; for example, 'What do'st luer at mon?'--'when I enacted in the Reege/ceede:' 'yesterneet,' ...
In our opinion, the author has succeeded but very indifferently in drawing the character of his own countryman, the Hibernian: His pronunciation indeed favours of the brogue; but his phraseology is, we conceive neither English nor Irish; his dialogue is extremely flat, and there is only one costive attempt, in the whole character, towards that peculiar solicism [sic] which is distinguished by the appellation of an Irish bull. (CR 1: Jan.-Feb. 1756, 80-81)

Later reviews show Smollett's continued emphasis on correct usage, which, in the language of characterization, boils down to an inflexible standard: the character must be convincing but cannot be so if any peculiarity of language or diction prevents his being identified with a real-life counterpart.

We have already noted that Smollett expected to see his dynamic and realistic view of character in the novel when he reviewed Jeremiah Grant. By then, 1763, other reviewers had followed his lead and begun to investigate characterization with more seriousness. But the change does not move immediately from a view of character as portraiture to an appreciation of natural characterization. The evolution in the Critical's treatment passes through a period where the reviewers describe characters in terms of their effect on the audience.
When Smollett reviewed The Prince of Abyssinia, he was very delicate with Johnson but made it clear that this book had neither the form nor the appeal of a novel.

Those who employ their pens on moral subjects, free from limited systems, narrow prejudices and subtle disquisitions, cultivate a science of all others the most conducive to private content and publick utility. Narration has justly been deemed the most essential and pleasant vehicle for this kind of instruction, where the attention is fixed by our solicitude for the event, and the precept enforced by example. To convey knowledge by insensible steps, to teach while you divert, and make wisdom steal into the heart, requires execution, genius, and great address. For this reason the laws of history prohibit tedious reflections, long dissertations, and laboured disquisitions either in morals or politicks; such only are permitted as rise easily from the subject, and illustrate, without breaking the thread of the narrative. In this particular our learned author may possibly be thought to fail. He has in a simple, but elegant tale, couched in the method of dialogue the most important truths and profound speculations. No plot, incident, character, or contrivance, is here used to beguile the imagination. The narrative might have been comprised in ten lines; all, besides a flowery description of the happy valley, will please philosophers, but possibly be laid aside as unintelligible by the readers of novels. To the former, therefore, we recommend this little tale, as a beautiful epitome of practical Ethics, filled with the most judicious observations upon life, the nicest distinctions upon conduct, and in every respect worthy of the learned and sensible author of the Rambler. . . . [Here gives one chapter verbatim.]

Upon the whole, we imagine the talents of the author would appear to more advantage, had he treated his different subjects in the method of essays, or form of dialogue. At present, the title page will, by many readers, be looked upon as a decoy, to deceive them into a kind of knowledge they had no inclination to be acquainted with.

(CR 7: Apr. 1759, 372-75)

---

Smollett did not object to the subject nor to Johnson's moral purpose but to the superficial use of the novel form. *Rasselas* is a pleasant way to take straightforward philosophy, but it is an unexciting "tale." Smollett admires the author who enhances his moralizing with art; he would prefer him "to beguile the imagination" with "plot, incident, character" and "contrivance." His idea of instruction, which permeates the opinions expressed in many of the reviews from 1759 on, is not the candy-coated pill suggested by *Rasselas*. Art and morality were more intimately connected, according to these reviewers.

To instruct is subordinate to the artistic intention, they maintained. Part of the art is to inculcate truth without the reader's awareness. Another part is to create characters who depict human conduct while they appeal to and entertain the audience. To achieve these ends, a simple plot, appropriate diction, and a style indicative of genius are required. In 1759, the Critical reviewers upheld each of these notions but in varying degrees and with less conviction than appears in Smollett's reviews—and with less sense of a cohesive theory of the novel backing each idea. This will be illustrated in the following discussion.

The only form under which instruction should appear is that rising naturally "from the subject," says Smollett. In the case of *The Prince of Abyssinia*, that form should have been the essay or a series of dialogues, for the
narrative and the "flowery description" of the happy valley interfered with the thread of philosophical thought. Smollett preferred to reserve the novel form for the depiction of human conduct, not for abstract ethical enquiries.

By telling a story about a realistic character, an author could easily convey the truth without the reader's notice. The Critical reviewers used this method of moralizing as a criterion for the novelist but not for the dramatist during the year 1759, when they covered twenty-eight novels and eight plays. The statement in the review of The Prince of Abyssinia, "To convey knowledge by insensible steps, to teach while you divert, and make wisdom steal into the heart," is the most forthright, but other reviews concur with this objective. The History of Wilhelmina Susannah Dormer is recommended to the reading audience on the basis of style, plot, and even its conclusion which contains "more than poetical justice."

However, while the plot thus morally conducted, aims at pleasing the judgment, perhaps it fails of captivating our affections; while it instructs it ceases to interest. We esteem the characters, without being solicitous about their success; and we find them happy in the conclusion without sympathizing in the event.

(CR 7: Jan. 1759, 67)

This novel, therefore, did not meet the standard of moral instruction the reviewer imposed.

Involving the reader emotionally with the fortunes of the characters seems to be the most highly endorsed method of persuasion. The reviewer of The Happy Orphans
credits the author for showing the characters in such a way as to manipulate the audience's reaction: "the principal characters . . . are placed in a light to do credit to virtue and honour, and to excite imitation. On the contrary, the vicious characters will not fail to produce contempt and abhorrence" (CR 7: Feb. 1759, 174). Later in the same review, he speaks with favor of the author's intention to "mingle the profitable with the pleasant."

This emphasis on the character to elicit an audience's reaction puts characters in a new role in the reviews. A faceless, unemotional figure draws neither sympathy nor mirth. Therefore, the reviewers will soon be forced to name and describe the characters in some detail as they point out their function in the total movement of the work. Up to this point, only a few reviewers have suggested that characters are more than simply representatives of a group.

During this year, which marks several transitions for the Critical, there is still much evidence of earlier, stereotyped views of characterization. "The character of a Turk is pretty well-supported in this piece" (CR 7: Mar. 1759, 287); "he has . . . entertained us with a variety of incidents, among which are interspersed divers striking characters, some of them originals, and all of them well-sustained" (CR 7: May 1759, 409) are passages which exemplify the non-essential status of characters. One reviewer even tells his readers that the lack of interest in the characters
might have been avoided "had the author made the hero somewhat younger, or given his heroine a little more beauty" (CR 7: Jan. 1759, 67). Other reviewers speak of characters being drawn "pretty exactly from life" (CR 7: Jan. 1759, 78) or criticize a performance such as Candide because "there is no such character in nature" (CR 7: June 1759, 551). These last few examples parallel the content of the few references to characterization in drama for 1759.22

What we have seen thus far is that one standard which existed for evaluating a novel was the extent to which the art dominated the instructive material to bring it to the reader without his full awareness. The obligations are to both personal and social orders.23 Secondly, we see the beginning of a change in attitude towards the function of characters in a novel, particularly as they unite instructive and entertaining processes. But, as we shall now see, the molding force in both the moral and the aesthetic process is the plot.

22 I could find no reviews of plays in 1759 of the caliber of Smollett's earlier drama reviews. These 1759 articles of the Critical show a less defined concept of characterization than equivalent reviews in the Monthly.

23 See the opening of the review of Rasselas, above: ". . . most conducive to private content and publick utility." M. A. Goldberg discusses Smollett's attempts to reconcile social- and self-love as part of his adherence to the principles of the Scottish Common-Sense School. Smollett and the Scottish School (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1959), pp. 108-41.
"Simplicity" of plot appears to be the 1759 outgrowth of the "continuity" and "connection" urged in former years. On the other hand, the reviewers endorse intrigue, "luscious" descriptions, a variety of incidents and characters, and many intimate looks at the practice of virtue and vice in the real world, as signals of a writer's genius. To reconcile the two, simplicity and variety, some examine the interaction of incident with plot, including motivation, in terms of the ongoing emotional effect on the audience.

In a review of The Orphan of China, a tragedy, Oliver Goldsmith charges that the first error in the plot is "that the pathos begins without a proper preparation of incident." He explains this by showing the difficulty of keeping an audience's sympathy up for five acts unless the dramatist--after the pattern of Shakespeare, Otway, and Rowe--first shows the characters in joy. After this, he says, they are easier to pity. Further on, he identifies the source of pleasure in this performance:

... the whole house seemed pleased, highly and justly pleased, but it was not with the luxury of woe they seemed affected: the nervous sentiment, the glowing imagery, the well-conducted scenery, seemed the sources of their pleasure: their judgment could not avoid approving the conduct of the drama, yet few of the situations were capable of getting within the soul, or exciting a single tear: ... (CR 7: May 1759, 435)

In this review, Goldsmith distinguishes between the emotions created by the separate incidents and the cumulative effect of the entire play. But he stresses the overall plan of action as his major concern as a critic and suggests that the emotional response of the audience which is brought about by the controlled use of characterization is a unifying factor. It can be diverted by inconsequential pleasures, but even though an audience may approve a play on an intellectual basis, failure on their part to become consistently involved emotionally is a failure for the writer.

One other dramatic critic, in passing, attributes the absurdities of a particular comedic plot to the inconsistencies of characterization (CR 7: Feb. 1759, 172), but no other reviewer of plays--or novels--posits such a connection between characterization and plot during this year.

For the novel, the reviewers emphasize a simple story, though containing a variety of incidents. "Simple" especially implies a single-purpose and a naturalness, and it is frequently linked with a description of a style which draws the reader emotionally onwards towards the catastrophe. "The adventures . . . are not enough diversified to amuse the fancy . . . and the book is almost quite destitute of that naivete, simplicity, or nature, which, when present, never fails to act as a charm in captivating the attention" (CR 8: Nov. 1759, 373; see also CR 7: Jan. 1759, 67).

Having opposite qualities is The Campaign, "a true story,"
which receives a mediocre rating ("The piece is not devoid of merit") and is described as "a plain, artless story, without intrigue, intricacy, reverse of fortune, or entertaining recognition" (CR 7: Jan. 1759, 79). Candide is condemned because, among other reasons, "the incidents are . . . the ravings of a delirious poet, strung together without order, or the least shadow of verisimilitude" (CR 7: June 1759, 551).

The relatively objective pronouncements above are surrounded by subjective responses: "to amuse the fancy," "captivating the attention," "entertaining recognition," and Candide's reviewer continues: "with a view to disgrace human nature." Thus, while they are describing the structure, the reviewers are accounting for the emotional effects of that structure. To some extent, they view the incidents, not the characters, as the generators of emotion. Certainly many see the fable as the vehicle which, when it is simple, permits the emotions to flow. Undue complexities of plot serve only to provide intellectual pursuits which can impede the course of feeling.

Both language and style are treated in very general terms in the Critical during 1759. Of the eight plays

---

reviewed, only one, Caractacus, "a dramatic poem," merits any detailed treatment of its language. It is interesting because of the use of "genius" as a criterion:

But Mr. Mason's great misfortune in this poem, is his frequent sinking from passion into poetry. In endeavouring to soften the bold, and to correct the free, touches of nature, he buries genius. He is perpetually heightening his fine outlines with the colouring of epithets which destroy their effects; and those epithets are often so many expletives. Nature and genius, that is, Shakespear, is frugal of epithets; learning and poetry are fond of them... Those alliterations are unnatural and studied. Alliterations when spontaneous are beautiful; and when an author gives a free scope to his genius, they always offer themselves in aid of passion; when sought after, they are puerile and poetical. (CR 8: July 1759, 14)

Such reliance on spontaneity is quite unusual even in the Critical of this period, although references to Shakespeare's genius have always been a signal for endorsing all kinds of rule-breaking. The diminution of the value of poetry in drama, which, of course, was already an issue in Dryden's time, is never discussed by the Critical reviewers, beyond this passage, so we can draw no conclusions about that.

What is more surprising is the meager treatment of language among the twenty-eight reviews of novels this year. One reviewer refers to "a great deal of small talk" after the manner of Clarissa and describes the language as "free and copious" (CR 7: Jan. 1759, 79), and another notes that the language of dialogue is "such as befits the several stations of the speakers" (CR 7: Feb. 1759, 174). A third talks about language and diction, a distinction not often
made in these publications and not clearly functional here:

We must likewise own, that the language is pure and elegant, and the diction animated with that spirit which, though we feel it agreeably in reading, is not easily described or explained: perhaps this is the very zest that constitutes a work of genius.

(CR 7: May 1759, 409)

As pointed out earlier, Smollett's concern for correct diction supported his taste for highly defined characters. These reviewers do not seem to share this interest. They are suspending talk of specifics in favor of a larger, amorphous subject called "spirit," which they will eventually break down into more tangible components. At this point, in 1759, by far the largest proportion of remarks on the novel are on the execution, the style, and the spirit.

The elusiveness of these qualities causes the reviewers to seek a new vocabulary for describing them. Some simply refer to the quality as "something" or "the one thing needful"; another will turn to a Latin phrase, "aura divina" (CR 7: Jan. 1759, 78, 79; see also, CR 8: Aug. 1759, 165). Still others describe the quality as it affects the reader:

Here likewise we find some tolerable painting, and a few scenes well worked up, so as to interest the tender passions.  

(CR 8: Dec. 1759, 452)

or in terms of its unifying power:

... few passages can be selected as specimens, since that grace, which is derived from connection, is destroyed by separation.  

(CR 8: Dec. 1759, 482)

But the two most successful attempts to define these
qualities compared the works at hand with the products of Henry Fielding:

The present history, as it is called, it must be owned, has fewer of those flights of fancy, less of that strong sense, and that thorough acquaintance with the vicious parts of human nature, for which the author of *Tom Jones* is justly famous . . . (CR 7: Apr. 1759, 378)

. . . these digressions, and these remarks, are almost wholly uninformed by that which may be considered as the soul of Fielding's writings; we mean, that fund of native humour, which alone would keep up the reader's attention, through a long string of remarks, that frequently leave the action of the piece to languish. This is real genius, the gift of heaven, the *aura divina* that pervades and enlivens his works, the precious ingredient which, like the embalming gums of the antient Egyptians, diffuse an aromatic odour, and preserve them incorruptible, for the entertainment of posterity. (CR 7: Jan. 1759, 78)

In 1759, the Critical reviewers are reaching out beyond the novels they have before them and are attempting to set up standards against which they will judge future pieces. Many conceive the novel as a unified work whose moral and aesthetic properties are blended. All other elements work towards a common end and the whole uniquely represents the spirit of its author. However, all the Critical reviewers do not subscribe to such an interpretation, nor is there any indication that they soon will.

1760-1763

These four years designate a period of both ferment and coalescence in the development of a theory of the novel among the Critical reviewers. Their views on the relationship between art and moral instruction become diversified,
characters are named and differentiated in some of the reviews, and fables are required to include more variety and reliance on the characters' motives. Fifty-four novels and thirty-nine plays are reviewed and the distinction between the expectations for each genre grows more apparent. Even the reviewers themselves write more discursively. They cover a broad range of topics surrounding the performance at hand and thereby set the piece into a social and literary context.

Art and morality. One of the best examples of this pattern of writing is the review of J. J. Rousseau's *Eloisa* (CR 12: Sept. 1761, 203-11). The writer uses the fact of Rousseau's imitation of *Clarissa* as an opportunity for comparing Rousseau's and Richardson's styles, methods, and achievements. The result is a deeper insight for us into what at least one reviewer saw as the relationship between art and moral instruction.

The reviewer is quite obviously partial to (one almost dares to say "envious of") Rousseau's incisive style and great ingenuity. He describes him as one who is "incapable of speaking or thinking in the common beaten tract" (p. 207).

---

26 Klukoff assigns this review to Smollett in his dissertation (p. 138) but with less firm evidence than accompanies his other assignations.
Rousseau despises the common aids of plot, incident, and contrivance, and effects all his purposes by mere strength of genius and variety of colouring. His attitudes are common, but they are painted with such energy and grace, as cannot fail of striking with all the force of novelty. (p. 203)

"Energy" seems to be the quality which most distinguishes Rousseau's style from Richardson's. He "lays naked the heart at a single stroke, and interests you in the fate of his personages, before you can be said to know them." Richardson "unfolds his characters by a variety of slight touches and circumstances, which appear trivial unless you regard his design" (p. 205). Richardson says in three volumes what Rousseau says "by a few lines." This is not to fault Richardson but to point out the difference between the two types of genius.

They may also be distinguished by their effect on the audience. Rousseau's single strokes create characters who engage the imagination, and

... the impression they make is strong, but it is evanescent; like the fleeing pictures of a dream, they strongly agitate for the time, and are afterwards forgot; while those of Richardson imprint the mind more durably, because the stroke is more frequently reiterated. (p. 205)

One would think that the writer would direct this sensitivity for style and its power over the mind towards an understanding of the way writing can bring about a moral effect. But to the question, which of the writers succeeds best in inculcating instruction, he has an answer with another explanation. Richardson "renders his heroine proof against
all the assaults of temptation, thereby proposing a perfect pattern for the imitation of her sex; [Rousseau]... describes her subject to human frailty, lest, by elevating virtue too high, we should be discouraged from attempting to climb the steep ascent." The only response open is to submit to "the different dispositions of their readers; one will be animated with an example, which would throw another into despair" (pp. 204-5). However, he continues ("If we may speak our own sentiments"), because Rousseau teaches us "the means of retrieving the esteem of mankind, after a capital slip in conduct," he furnishes the most useful instruction.

This critic identifies morality with the content of a piece and, though he speaks of the audience's being animated or being thrown into despair, he is pointing to the ideas of the book and not to the artistic development of the situations as responsible for the readers' emotional reactions. His awareness of the different effects of various styles does not carry him into an explanation of how instruction comes about, or how moral conviction is transferred from one to another. He does not even consider the possibility of instructive method being an artistic problem, though he places it in the midst of other artistic considerations.

Other reviewers in the Critical rely even more heavily than this critic on the content to carry the moral message. A large number have slipped into the pattern of
the other periodicals so that they recommend novels on the basis of their "good sense," or "just observations" (CR 13: Feb. 1762, 159); on their "decency" (CR 15: Jan. 1763, 16, 63, and 77); or on the "triumph of wit and virtue over beauty" which is illustrated in the favored Mrs. Lennox's *Sophia* (CR 13: May 1762, 434).

However, some critics made no distinction between the artistic form and the moral impact of the novel. The reviewer of *The History of Frederick the Forsaken* placed full confidence upon the power of the novel form to sway its readers.

Assisted by the powers of invention, the novelist can make his situations so interesting as to deprive the reader of the power of election, and engage him to espouse virtue or vice at discretion. The passions spontaneously become the instruments whereby we are insensibly deluded, and invariably retained in the interest of those characters painted with the strongest fervour of genius, and glow of colouring: thus villainy may be rendered so amiable, and virtue so ridiculous, that we cannot but exult in the triumph of the former. . . . To impress the mind with a sense of virtue by an affecting detail of natural incidents, is rendering the passions subservient to the purposes of religion and morality. We regard examples as the incidents of the narrative, and consider its precepts rather as influences from the story, than designed instructions. It is with pleasure then we bestow just praises on the most feeble endeavour to promote virtue, and assure our readers, that every line in the novel before us, seems to be dictated with a view to rouse, unite, and direct the social affections, to exert themselves in the cause of piety and moral sentiment. (CR 10: Oct. 1760, 280)

This writer seems to agree with Smollett and those who believe the novel can "make wisdom steal into the heart" by the very force and color of the narrative. But he speaks of
the process as a kind of tyranny of the author over his readers and not as a legitimate entertainment in itself. The effort in the first part of this passage is not to explain the connection between art and morality but to warn the potential reader of the dangers his unchecked emotions can lay him open to. However, the warning is accompanied with a certain awe of such power and, we might add, some slight contempt for the author who usurped such a minute ("feeble") portion of it for the narration of the present story.

A more typical statement by a reviewer who sees the novelist as capable of evoking a simultaneous moral and aesthetic response through the imaginative powers appears in a review of *Longsword Earl of Salisbury*, "An Historical Romance":

>The story of this romance . . . is founded on real facts, and without doing any great violence to truth, pleases the imagination, at the same time that it improves the heart.  (CR 13: Mar. 1762, 252; see also, CR 13: Feb. 1762, 148; 15: Feb. 1763, 133)

But this position is far from representative of the reviews of this period. What is most typical is the diversity of opinion about the mingling of the moral and the aesthetic. One passage runs nearly the entire gamut of opinions. The reviewer of *The Reverie: or, a Flight to the Paradise of Fools* censures the author's narrow attempt at satire:

>To unmask hypocrisy, and correct vice, we allow to be highly useful; yet when a writer has all human nature before him, we should expect him to select examples of
imitation as well as objects of aversion. This would preserve the balance, inspire the reader with a contempt for individuals, without diminishing his respect for the species, rouse his detestation of vice, and quicken his sensibility to whatever is beautiful in moral conduct. (CR 14: Dec. 1762, 440)

To move from the argument of maintaining both aesthetic and moral balance to one of quickening sensibility to beauty is to move from a quite objective literary criterion to a more tenuous and subjective position. On another plane, this reviewer acknowledges both the social utility of didactic literature and its power to motivate individuals. Furthermore, he touches the universal and the particular, virtue and vice, inspiration and imitation, and the ugly and the beautiful—all with about equal emphasis.

The only conclusion we can draw from such a diversity of opinion about the instructive nature of art must acknowledge the growing awareness of the audience's role in harmonizing the elements through its emotional response. Perhaps what we come back to is some form of the statement made by the author of the review of *Eloisa* about the comparative achievements of Rousseau and Richardson, that we "submit to the different dispositions of their readers." But the Critical reviewers also considered the power of the author to sway his audience by the execution of his material, and, although they did not always link the style directly with their estimation of the moral quality of the work, they included both in their ultimate estimation of the novel.
Plot and character. Early in this chapter, a critical passage from the Jeremiah Grant review was cited as the most comprehensive description in the Critical of the new romance. In it, "one principal action and one particular personage" were designated as the chief sources of the unity of the novel. During this 1760 to 1763 period, the reviewers considered plot and characterization together with increasing frequency and in widely varying relationships. The result of this dual consideration was to bring the art of characterization into sharper focus in both drama and fiction reviews.

Generally speaking, the Critical writers wanted characters of the drama to be recognizable as drawn from real life. What this seems to mean is that they wanted some display of weakness, particularly in their domestic heroes and heroines, which would bring out the affections and the sympathetic response of their viewers. A hero, particularly one from history such as Essex, should maintain his dignity while speaking "like a human creature" (CR 11: Jan. 1761, 30). On the other hand, a character who is intended to be "a beloved" must display elegance, sensibility and tenderness if he/she is to warrant credibility.

The few long analyses of individual characters reveal a slightly more informed and sophisticated awareness of the interaction of character and plot than the multitude of off-hand remarks about characters being "well-sustained,"
"well-painted," and "well-supported" would have us believe. The motives of the characters should not only be apparent to each other but should convince the audience by natural means, they are beginning to say. In *The Way to Keep Him*, the reviewer wishes

the author had more strongly marked that part of the wife's character which was disgusting to the husband: she seems to be a woman of spirit and sensibility, without any defect in point of delicacy or decorum; and one would imagine that the husband, being cloyed with possession, goes astray rather from the inconstancy of his own disposition, than from any disgusting circumstances in his wife's person or conduct. When he comes home, and sees such an agreeable alteration in her dress and behaviour, it would have had a good effect if he had expressed some pleasure as well as surprize at the change: if he had appeared to be struck with her fine person, her genteel air, her elegant taste in dress, and exclaimed, as it were in spite of himself, that without all doubt she could, when she pleased, make herself a charming woman. Something of this kind would have prepared us for his reformation, which, as it stands, is, we apprehend, a little too abrupt and violent. A man may be very sorry for having withdrawn his love, although he has it not in his power to restore his affection. (CR 9: Feb. 1760, 142-43; see also, CR 11: Feb. 1761, 134)

If characters are compelling enough, according to at least one reviewer (of *The Discovery*, a comedy), they may obviate any need to justify even so crass an improbability as "the unexpected creation of a new daughter, dropped from the clouds" when a "plot cannot by any other more probable means be unravelled."

It may indeed be affirmed with great truth, that nothing less than an event so extraordinary and unexpected could, with any degree of probability, have brought about so total a change in the sentiments and character of Lord Midway, as to make him a thoroughly reformed man. (CR 15: Feb. 1763, 102)
In other dramatic pieces, the plot may interact with the characters to destroy the character's effectiveness, as when the heroine became "too familiar to the eyes and hearts of the spectators" and the "sympathetic horror" of her distress diminished (CR 9: Mar. 1760, 208). Or, the incidents could show the characters off to best advantage while uniting the whole performance:

The incidents are all of them agreeably natural and interesting, extremely well adapted to the different situations and circumstances of the persons concerned, and have withal this essential beauty, that they are all subservient to character; and, whilst they illustrate the several parts, conduce, like so many lines tending to one center, to bring about the catastrophe. (CR 15: Feb. 1763, 102)

An increasing tendency of the reviewers to discuss the state of each of the genres led one reviewer to remark with a note of disgust that in comedy,

humour and character are intirely forgotten, and nothing succeeds but plot and intrigue, whilst tragedy-writing is reduced to a mere mechanic art, and a few striking incidents, so contrived as to elevate and surprise, or to give a favourite actor an opportunity of shewing his attitudes and stage-tricks, supply the place of fable, sentiment, and diction; whilst the lines in one even tenor flow, correctly cold, and regularly low. (CR 13: Jan. 1762, 53-58)

That character and plot should be considered as mutually dependent and that one of the obstructions to the implementation of such a balance in the current drama was the indulgences granted to favored actors were issues frequently raised in dramatic reviews. However, these reviews, more than those of novels, continue to give characterization
primary consideration.

The reviewer of *The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves* observes the similarities between characterization in plays and novels and bemoans the lack of imagination apparent in the delineation of individual characters.

The poets of these days aim at nothing more than interesting the passions by the intricacy of their plots; if a smile be accidentally raised upon the countenance, it rather proceeds from our finding the characters of the drama in some ridiculous or unexpected situation, than from their having said or done any thing characteristic. In novels especially, the historian thrusts himself too frequently upon the reader. Take a single chapter and it will appear egregiously dull, because the whole joke consists in untying some knot, or unravelling some mystery, and is generally placed in the epigrammatic fashion, in the tail. It is the suspense merely, with respect to the issue, that engages the reader's attention. Characters are distinguished merely by their opposition to some other characters; remove the contrast, and you annihilate the personages, just as little wits in conversation are reduced to mere inanimate figures, when you have taken away the fool who drew forth their talents. How different from this is the ridiculous simplicity of Adams, the absurd vehemence of Western, the boisterous generosity of Bowling, the native humor of Trunnion, and the laughable solemnity of uncle Toby! Each of these characters singly is complete; without relation to any other object they excite mirth; we dip with the highest delight into a chapter, and enjoy it without reflecting upon the contrivance of the piece, or once casting an eye towards the catastrophe. Every sentence and every action, diverts by its peculiarity; and hence it is that the novels in which those characters are to entertain merely from the nature of the incidents, and the conduct of the fable, are for ever laid aside after a single perusal: an engaging story will bear relating but once; a humorous character will bear viewing repeatedly. (CR 13: May 1762, 427-28)

This reviewer's unabashed enjoyment of "every sentence and every action" connected with his favorite characters leads us to another review where the writer compares the two kinds
of "dramatic writing": the epistolary style and the techniques for writing a play.

Memoirs written in the epistolary manner, necessarily appear prolix and redundant; to imitate nature more closely, the reader is withheld from the principal events by a thousand little previous formalities, which, though they exert his patience at the time, fully compensate it in the end, by marking the characters more strongly, and introducing a variety of natural circumstances, that cannot fail under the pen of an historian. Slight strokes, and gentle touches, seemingly frivolous and impertinent, have an astonishing effect in strengthening the resemblance of the portraiture. Under correction of the critics, we must profess ourselves admirers of this kind of dramatic writing; where every character speaks in his own person, utters his feelings, and delivers his sentiments warm from the heart. It admits of an infinity of natural moral reflections, which a true biographer cannot, without pedantry and seeking the occasions, introduce. To sustain with propriety all the different personages, to think, to act in their peculiar characters thro' a whole life, chequered with prosperity and adversity, requires a truly dramatic genius. If the writer is not confined to the unities of time and place, he labours under other inconveniencies, from which the strict dramatist is exempted. He supports a character through life, the other only through one particular action; he observes probability in the transactions possibly of half a century, the other only of a day; he must rouse the passions, and engage the attention through a variety of unconnected incidents, the dramatist directs his whole strength only to one object; in a word, the memoir writer must be minute, without being tedious; he must study variety, and yet be perfectly simple and natural; he must extend without enervating his characters, rise gradually to his catastrophe, unfold his design slowly, and, after running a long course, appear vigorous, fresh, and unexhausted.

(CR 11: Mar. 1761, 186)

The combined effect of these two reviews convinces us of the preeminent position that characterization held for at least some of the writers and readers of the Critical. With a
kind of reverence, the latter reviewer elevates characterization over plot as the means of stimulating reader response in a genre where the feat of generating emotional resonance is admittedly difficult. At one point, he says of Mrs. Sheridan's book that "the situations are highly interesting, because the passions are strongly engaged in the fate of characters rendered so eminently amiable, noble, and heroic" (p. 197). (As an isolated example, the reviewer of Frederick the Forsaken, earlier cited, views the order in reverse; he speaks of the "incidents that render the character of our hero interesting"--CR 10: Oct. 1760, [2]90.)

To endorse the epistolary style is one method of setting up the priority of character over plot because the attention becomes so fixed on the individual's circumstances. Another way the reviewers indicated at least some affection for effective characterization was to describe it in the same terms as they describe a successful plot. Thus, some characters are "demonstrative of the genuine humour, satirical talents, and benevolent heart of the writer" (CR 13: May 1762, 429), and several reviewers call for more diversity and variety among incidents and characters. Tristram Shandy, charged with being incoherent and digressive, was redeemed somewhat by abounding with "pertinent observations on life

Klukoff lists Smollett as the "probable" author of this review of The Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph; in his dissertation, pp. 108-10.
and characters" (CR 11: Apr. 1761, 315).

Finally, a few critics named specific characters, analyzed their personalities and motives, and evaluated their roles in the final products. However, the same reviewers who did this also wrote at length on the topic of characterization, and they have already been cited.

In general, the reviewers of novels wanted authors to see human nature as good, and they saw novels as useful, entertaining, and "beneficial to the republic of letters" (CR 11: Mar. 1761, 198). They opposed exaggerated villainy as "nature reflected by a false mirror" (CR 9: May 1760, 419) and continued to praise authors who possessed "that perfect and intimate knowledge of the human heart" which characterized Richardson and Fielding (CR 16: Aug. 1763, 108). In these respects, they were very much in stride with the expectations for the drama. With respect to the use of language, however, there were marked differences.

**Language.** The first difference is based on the relative leisure the novelist has, compared with the quick pace necessary on the stage. We have already seen this in terms of the difficulties the lengthier time span imposed on the novelist, but the reviewer of Jeremiah Grant perceives the condition with more optimism.

If the writer has any talent for wit, humour, satire, and description, here he may display it to the best advantage, without being obliged to polish high, or to sow his pearls so thick, as we expect to find them in
the epic, the drama, or any other species of poetry. A romance writer may slacken the reins of his genius occasionally, without fear of offence, and sport with his subject in a careless manner, which will relax the attention of the reader, and agreeably prepare it for the more interesting parts of the execution. Provided the author takes nature for his guide, and has taste enough to select her in her most agreeable attitudes, he needs not fear going astray.

(CR 15: Jan. 1763, 14)

Such an attitude opens the door to poetry, lengthy descriptions, and other digressive material designed for leisurely entertainment. The reviewers seem to be generally amenable to the insertion of odes, hymns, and other poetry (CR 13: Feb. 1762, 154) as well as poetic descriptions and a florid style (CR 13: Mar. 1762, 252) into fiction. Only when an author interlards his book with poor poetry, superficial information, or anecdotes from other authors does the Critical draw the line (CR 15: Jan. 1763, 13). In addition to exposing his lack of talent, the author thereby takes other men's writings, and not nature, for his guide.

Dramatic productions, on the other hand, have no place for such digressions, unless the piece happens to be labeled "A Dramatic Poem" which can afford "some interesting situations to engage the affections" (CR 9: Feb. 1760, 133). But this should not be so in "real tragedy,"

where the distress should be always increasing, where the passions should be still rising to fuller and stronger emotions, and where of course the poet ought not to find leisure for imagery and description.

(p. 133; see also, CR 12: Aug. 1761, 152)

Soliloquies might have been an exception to this rule by
1760, if they disclosed the secret workings of the mind and contributed to the plot (CR 10: Aug. 1760, 155).

The second and third differences between the expectations for the novel and the drama in the use of language find their cause in the reviewers rather than in the nature of the genres themselves. The Critical's drama reviewers were more likely to talk about the effect language has on the total impact of the play, and they were more precise in their assessment of the language than were the novel reviewers. A passage which combines both of these notions appears in the review of Henry Brooke's The Earl of Essex. The reviewer is comparing this version of the tragedy with two earlier pieces.

He hath mended the diction, improved the versification, retrenched superfluity, rejected ridiculous rant, rhapsody, simile, and bathos; supplied real ornament in lieu of frippery, and substituted sentiments in the room of bombast. With the same taste he has avoided that string of inflated epithets, which float like blown bladders on the surface of sense; that continued pleonasm or tumidity, by which the last earl of Essex is distinguished, rendering the whole dialogue emphysematous and disgusting; and taught the characters to speak like human creatures, while he hath animated their discourse with all the fire of genuine nature, and all the propriety of diction.

(CR 11: Jan. 1761, 30)

We emerge from this inundation of prose with some hope that the tragedy is at last streamlined and elegant. The reader of the entire review will have the benefit of selected passages which illustrate the language so admired by this critic.

Although they supported the simplex et unum form for
drama, these reviewers also recognized the pitfalls of blandness. Consequently, they looked for "heightening of art" for dialogue that was "too naked" (CR 10: Aug. 1760, 153), and saw "executive art" as the source of pathos (CR 9: Feb. 1760, 140). Lillo was a favorite dramatist because of his ability to use language to seize the heart; to wring it with contending passions; to melt it into pity; to rouse it to horror; and to torture it with remorse. (CR 15: Feb. 1763, 133)

These writers continually describe the language in emotive terms ("easy," "flowing," "pert flippancy," "warm," "dramatic") which colors their entire assessment of the play. The same is not true of the novel. The characters, sentiments or situations draw the emotive adjectives, and the only review where the writer extends his discussion to the particularities of language is in the Jeremiah Grant review where Smollett takes two pages to explicate a Latin passage, much to the detriment of its author (CR 15: Jan. 1763, 16-18).

We can only conclude from this comparison that facility with language was considered a skill more integral to the success of drama than of the novel. Like characterization on the stage, it must be sharply drawn and immediately appealing. The novel's expanded room for diversity allowed for a variety of tensions and experimentations in language. But the focus of the readers of the novel was on what is being said, not how it is told.
The 1760-63 period is a high point in novel reviewing for the *Critical*. The articles are written with a serious, informative approach and show that the reviewers are interested in the novel as a respectable genre. There is no consistent opinion, but there is a vitality and variety in the reviews which enhances the descriptions and yields new insights into the reasons behind their writers' judgments.

**1764-1767**

The years immediately following Smollett's departure from the *Critical* mark a period of reversal from the notion of the novel as an art form to an estimation of it as having primarily a moral function. In fact, the trend reaches a point where it seems no longer possible to find an underlying theory for the novel which distinguishes the *Critical* from any of the others publishing reviews at this time. Gone is the exuberance which sought out the "spirit" of a piece and the "genius" writer. Novels, plays, emotions, and even reviewers' styles are soft, sentimental, mellow, and moral.

*Art and instruction.* What is to be said for this period about the relationship of art to the moral influence of novels on their readers can be summarized with the following passage from the review of *Maria; the Genuine Memoirs of an Admired Lady of Rank and Fortune*:
The charge of corrupting the morals and inflaming the passions, which has formerly been objected against works of this kind, seems now no longer to subsist. A modern romance may now with safety be put into the hands of the youthful reader; and tho' perhaps it may not allure the imagination, yet will it tend to reform the heart. For this reason we would recommend the present little performance, the heroine of which is in herself the pattern of every virtue, and drawn in so amiable a light as to excite the softer sex to emulation, and their admirers to admiration and esteem. (CR 18: Oct. 1764, 313)

First of all, the novels which the reviewers have before them are little more than dramatized sermons designed to warm—but not heat—the emotions, and to draw admiration, esteem, and emulation. The distance between the author and reader is not only created by the novelists but fostered by the reviewers. One novel was even criticized because the reviewer felt that the "authoress" had not sufficiently disguised her own experiences and feelings in the narrative (CR 17: Apr. 1764, 297).

Secondly, the reviewers are looking upon themselves as protectors. Warning his readers about the delicate seasoning of the harmful food found in *The History of Miss Jenny Salisbury*, one reviewer claims collective authority:

The Critical Reviewers think that this is an imposition of the most fatal tendency to youth, and that the more artfully it is managed, the more hurtful it is to genuine unsuspecting virtue. As they look upon themselves to be in some measure responsible for the morals as well as the taste of their readers, never will they give, be the pretext ever so plausible, any countenance to, or apology for vice, or an attempt to soften profli-gacy under the term of human frailty.

(CR 18: Oct. 1764, 314)

In this role they are quick to label indecency (for example,
CR 21: Mar. 1766, 237; 17: Jan. 1764, 36-37; 21: May 1766, 395), to declare the dangers that accompany the overemphasis on love as a ruling passion (CR 20: Oct. 1765, 288; 23: Mar. 1767, 210), and to prescribe which books "can bring no blush on the cheek of the most delicate reader" (CR 18: July 1764, 75).

The general belief here exhibited is that the novel is a mask for moralizing (CR 18: Oct. 1764, 313). There are no speculations about the interaction of instruction with the aesthetic process. The few glimmers of such a theory which appeared now and then in the reviews throughout Smollett's regime have disappeared.

**Character and plot.** The **Critical** writers of this four-year period subdued any extreme reactions they might have had towards the works they reviewed while they commended the same refinement and modesty in the books themselves. Their discursive style obviated any vehemence, and they continually sought out qualities of naturalness and unruffled calm, particularly in characterization and plot.

Under these presuppositions, characters given to excess were reproached because of their unreality.

... we scarcely meet with the character of a real man and woman, as they come from the hands of nature, with passions to influence, and reason to direct them. Her [Madame de Beaumont's] agents are all superior beings, either divine or diabolical; they observe no medium in their conduct, nor are they composed of flesh and blood. Every little surprize throws them into tremblings,
faintings, convulsions, and it requires all the art of friends and physicians to bring them from the gates of death. (CR 21: June 1766, 438)

Even a plain but highly virtuous character such as Sir George Ellison draws criticism because "perfection is not the lot of humanity, and frail nature can only contemplate, with astonishment, such ideal greatness, such imaginary goodness" (CR 21: Apr. 1766, 281). This character is not only inimitable because of his extraordinary virtue but he is unsympathetic in that the readers can only look on him with awe and detachment.

Along the same lines, the reviewers mock characters who are excessively handsome (CR 22: Dec. 1766, 438), extremely beautiful and soft (CR 24: Oct. 1767, 297), and persecuted by "ill-fated stars, and the inflexibility of parental opposition" (CR 23: Mar. 1767, 217).

Characters drawn from nature possess virtues which are "practicable in real life, and by persons in moderate circumstances" (CR 17: May 1764, 398). Therefore, they are drawn with "truth, justice, and precision" (CR 20: Aug. 1765, 120). Thus, for the first time in the Critical's years of reviewing, the critics are calling for finishing touches on the portraits which will give the characters more "novelty" and "sentiment" (CR 21: Apr. 1766, 291). They are also singling out characters by name for the purposes of illustrating the variety and the interlockings of the plot. However, the characters are never fully distinguished and
are usually described primarily in terms of their types ("Sir Harry Pembroke is a finished rake; widow Jackson an artful procurer"--CR 23: Mar. 1767, 211), or as they affect the audience ("the merit . . . arises from Mr. Brass's friend Fitzpatrick, without whom the whole would be a more insipid and unentertaining medley than it is"--CR 19: Jan. 1765, 74). They are still seen as figures for manipulation and, as such, never far-removed from the balance they contribute to the plot.

So few passages suggest any further notions about the interplay of plot and character in the reviews of these four years that they are not worthy of comment. But the concepts about the structure of the plot have undergone the same changes as those affecting character. Improbabilities, absurdities, disconnections and plots that are either too thin or too complex comprise the list of excesses which the reviewers dislike. The Castle of Otranto was particularly repugnant to its reviewer who declares that he can find no accounting for such "rotten materials" being published in England at his time (CR 19: Jan. 1765, 51).

The taste for outwardly calm behavior, which is so expressive of the sentimental psyche, is reflected chiefly in the preference for a happy ending to the domestic tales of woe (CR 23: Apr. 1767, 278-79), which even includes a significant number of cases where punishment to the wicked is prescribed under the convention of poetic justice (CR 17:
June 1764, 480; 23: Apr. 1767, 277, 278). This taste is also reflected in the discussions about the smooth interconnection of separate events within the plot. In general, the expectations for the form of the novel have expanded to accommodate the variety which is so badly needed. The Critical writers have even found reasons to justify the episodic plots based on the Arabian Nights. The reviewer of Oriental Anecdotes: Or, The History of Haroun Alrachid speaks in favor of the "number of incidents and collateral circumstances" which embellish the frame of the story and he even endorses the "several episodic adventures introduced" on the grounds that they are "connected with the main subject" and "throw into it not an unpleasing variety" (CR 17: Apr. 1764, 297). Another book, The Tales of the Genii, "is so intimately connected together that it admits of no detached quotations" (CR 19: Feb. 1765, 136).

A new value for the epistolary form is found under this accommodating spirit. Though the author of A Series of Genuine Letters, between Henry and Frances admits in his preface "'that there is not to be expected much connection among his letters,'" the reviewer of that book demurs: "This we regret the less, because it gives rise to many beautiful transitions from the sprightly to the serious, and from the witty to the moral, which form the soul and beauty of an epistolary intercourse" (CR 23: Jan. 1767, 33-34). Letters from Emerance to Lucy introduces incidents from
"Scudery, Behn, Richardson, Fielding and all the numerous tribe of romances and novelists" but the reviewer justifies all that because "they are so judiciously introduced, and so artfully disguised, that it is with difficulty we know them again" (CR 21: June 1766, 432).

Such accommodations no longer extend to interruptions by "long dialogues and tedious soliloquies" (CR 17: Jan. 1764, 38), to "the Arachnean arts" which inflate thin plots to three or so volumes (CR 24: Nov. 1767, 355), or to the unnecessary crowding of incidents at the end of a volume in order to facilitate poetic justice (CR 23: Feb. 1767, 135). And most emphatically do these reviewers object to improbabilities (CR 17: June 1764, 480; CR 21: Feb. 1766, 139; 21: Mar. 1766, 219-21) because of the unnatural quality they lend to the narrative (CR 23: Apr. 1767, 272).

Never have the Critical reviewers been so consistent in their expectations for the novel and never—as far as can be ascertained in the few drama reviews treating plot or character—have these been so consistent with their demands for drama. Samuel Foote is particularly singled out for his admirable characterizations which—even in farce—are considered natural, very instructive, and novel (CR 18: July 1764, 53). However, in their attempts to expunge the indecency from two of Wycherley's plays, the authors have, according to these reviewers, "unnerved" the Plain-Dealer Manly and lost "much on the side of wit" in The Country Wife.
(CR 21: Jan. 1766, 61; 22: Nov. 1766, 379). The emphasis on energetic and original characterization which pervades all of dramatic criticism in the periodicals is still a foremost requisite during a period where the movement to level the emotional response to literature is so dominant. Otherwise, the writers comment favorably when songs are well adapted to the situations and dispositions of characters (CR 18: Dec. 1764, 476), and they object to the introduction of characters "wholly foreign to the fable" of a rewritten comedy (CR 21: Jan. 1766, 56). In ways such as these they show us their taste for the smooth-flowing production which ruffles neither the emotions nor the intellect.

Language and sentiment. Before going into any detail about the evaluations of language in the 1764-67 reviews, some comment should be made about the sudden demise of value accorded the "execution" of novels and plays during these years.

The idea of an author's performance which includes his facility for unifying sentiment, character, structure, diction, and morality has been broken into the several elements. Because this unity--and the concept of "genius"--reflects more than the sum of its parts, something is lost in the division. Both terms are seldom mentioned during this period. The closest the reviewers come to touching the execution of a piece is to describe its author's style.
Instead of the authors who command confidence by their very manner of expression, novelists have become "the bakers of gingerbread" who all use the same ingredients but differentiate themselves "in the manner of disposing the decorations" (CR 24: Nov. 1767, 350). In lieu of decent examples, one reviewer attempts to describe seriously the artistic achievement of the novelist:

That man is a being composed of different, and sometimes contradictory qualities, cannot be denied; but the highest perfection a novel-writer can arrive at, is to discover the springs and the play of passions which activate those qualities, and put them in motion. (CR 24: Sept. 1767, 194)

In another review, the writer commends a book to "those who do not recollect Mr. Richardson's Grandison" for they "will discover great merit in it, as the style is in general elegant, and often pathetic" (CR 21: Apr. 1766, 288).

The emphasis in the reviews, however, does not support the achievement of the author but rather concentrates on the reaction of the reader. A passage from the review of The London Merchant, a tale (not Lillo's), illustrates this tendency quite well. Note the number of emotive terms.

Incidents related in an unaffected manner, and characters wholly inconsistent, form the plan of this weak and inanimate production. We find a wise citizen engaged in a course of sentiments and conduct diametrically opposite to the plainest maxims of prudence; and are informed of the greatest insult that could be offered to female modesty, in terms which neither move our compassion in

---

28 This is the only reviewer in this period to use the term "(well-)executed."
favour of distressed virtue, nor excite our indignation against the person who committed the outrage. We certainly had reason to expect some very tender and pathetic effusion, when Mr. Kite, the hero of the tale, is cast into prison, by the rigour of his creditors. Yet this important transaction is mentioned without the smallest appearance of emotion.

(CR 24: Aug. 1767, 157-58)

In this review, the feelings are described as being attached to the situations. In a great many others, the emotion is tied to style and language. Seldom is language referred to in terms of correctness, often only in terms of its effect.

Probably the most important function of language, according to these reviewers, and one which is coordinate with the qualities they expected of plot and character, is its ability to make a piece credible. The end of credibility, it is pointed out, is instruction and amusement (CR 21: Feb. 1766, 156). To obtain this effect, a writer may take on such a natural story-telling method as the epistolary style through which he can print sentimental reflections, moral observations and the like (CR 24: Oct. 1767, 296). Or, he may lavish his talent upon descriptions which detail his settings; and this particular undertaking, like painting, to which it is compared, is met with growing enthusiasm. One passage selected by the reviewer of *The History of Sir George Ellison* as demonstrative of its author's "talent at description" should indicate what kind of style we are talking about. Speaking of the state of an old mansion, he quotes a character as saying:
... spiders had supplied the place of other inhabitants, and like good housewives, had hung every room with webs of their own weaving. Not once in the last ten years had the inimical brush disturbed their peace-dwelling; the lines once spun to convey them to the ground, or from one side of the room to the other, remained unbroken for the same uses year after year, and by frequent additions were rendered so strong, that it was difficult to stand in any of the rooms, without being persuaded one was caught in a net. In short, so curious was the workmanship, that had the spinster goddess beheld it, she might have envied Arachne a second time, and metamorphosed her anew, into some less artful and less diligent insect. Mr. Ellison felt a little compunction at the thought of destroying so numerous a race, who had the rights of long possession to plead."

(CR 21: Apr. 1766, 284)

Unfortunately the reviewer does not analyze for us what it is about this passage he finds appealing, but the web-work is the kind of imaginative detail which is simply an extension of a natural phenomenon that most readers would be acquainted with. Furthermore, the classical allusion and the housewife simile add a poetic dimension which most Critical reviewers would appreciate after the drought caused by novels filled with "flat," "insipid," "forced," and "affected" language. They wanted language which was "natural" and "easy," but appreciated "wit," "delicacy," and "elegance" (e.g., CR 19: June 1765, 468). The language of Eastern stories could be more "bold and figurative, and delicate when the subject requires it" (CR 18: July 1764, 40).

Dramatic language is evaluated in more concrete, though not technical terms. Reviewers do not rely as much on the effect of language on the audience (although "pleasure" and "humour" are two terms appearing more frequently
in drama reviews than in fiction reviews). Dialogues are evaluated most frequently, as would be expected. The standard of natural behavior seems to operate here.

The scene between Sir John and Sterling is one of those Terentian conversation-pieces which is indebted neither to wit, humour, or accident, but to a close observation of human nature. (CR 21: Mar. 1766, 223)

There is a studied smartness of dialogue, which this author gives his personages, even in their deepest distress. This is as puerile as the conduct of his piece, where the surprize we meet with in disposing the fate of the prisoners is even ludicrous. (CR 19: May 1765, 387)

Little more that is not repetitious can be said about the language evaluation of plays. There are only half as many plays in this period as novels, and many of them are rewritten forms of old favorites or experiments which are apparently unsuccessful. In general, the reviewers are searching for the same thing on the stage as they are finding in the novel.

If we were to assemble all the attributes of a good novel enumerated by the Critical during this four-year period into one ideal novel, the product would probably closely resemble The Vicar of Wakefield. Judging by the accolade he received in the June 1766 issue, the Vicar stands on firm ground as the master of simplicity and instruction. The entire setting ("simple, unstudied, and unadorned"), the manner of narration ("This author seems to us to possess a manner peculiar to himself; it is what the French would term naiveté"), and the range of emotions displayed by the
characters ("easy strokes of humour, pathetic pictures of domestic happiness and domestic distress, [a happiness proceeding from innocence and obscurity, and a distress supported with resignation and cheerfulness]"), are proportionate and appropriate to the main character, his family, and his situation. We do not expect great "Knowledge of the world" from "a man acquainted indeed with books, but in many particulars a stranger to men; of primitive manners, and an unsuspecting mind; living in the country, and confining his views to his family, his function; and his farm." A simple ballad in his book: Yes. "It is an exquisite little piece, written in that measure which is perhaps the most pleasing of any in our language, versified with inimitable beauty, and breathing the very soul of love and sentiment."

The other members of the cast provide a pleasing variety: Sir William Thornhill, original and amiable; his nephew, we detest; Jenkinson, a rascal who is susceptible to remorse so we at last pardon him. Within the family, Mrs. Primrose diverts us with her affectation and folly, and the children affect us with "the various play of their youthful passions." The passage where little Dick offered the stranger his part of the bed is cited as particularly exemplary of the family's sincerity, hospitality, and overflowing affections.

Only one question this reviewer asks of Goldsmith: "was it necessary to bring the concluding calamities so
thick upon your old venerable friend; or in your impatience to get to the end of your task, was you not rather disposed to hurry the catastrophe?" But he does not really want an answer, nor does he care to criticize Goldsmith for this slight miscalculation in a tale which does so much honor to his head and heart. (p. 441)

Summary

The issues of the Critical Review for the years 1760 to 1763 present some reviews which formulate the most cohesive theory of the novel shown anywhere in the periodicals of this study.

In the Jeremiah Grant review (1763), the writer gives sustenance and direction to earlier pronouncements about unified and connected plots (1759), about form following the subject matter (1759), about the visibility of the author in his work (1756), and about the interconnections of plot and character (1761). His focus on "one principal action and one particular personage, whose fate must interest the reader, and whose importance must . . . engage our attention and esteem" provided a convenient set of probes for searching out the concepts and attitudes the Critical reviewers had of the novel between 1756 and 1767. These probes, namely, plot, characterization, sentiment and language, and morality, were significant in varying degrees in each of the four periods of reviewing studied: 1756-1758;
In the Sir Launcelot Greaves review (1762), we see the delights that imaginative characters can provide even apart from the plot in which they function. This reviewer points out to us something that only a few of the earlier moralists had done: that the value of a literary work is not solely dependent on the outcome, and that the audience may be entertained and influenced even more by the behavior of the characters, by the language, and by the variety and intensity of emotions evoked during the course of the performance.

The author of the review of Miss Sidney Bidulph (1761) distinguishes the art of writing a novel from the art of writing a play and thereby demonstrates the unique values of the novel. Its slow pace and wide dimensions in time and space permit at once a long and an intensive view of its main characters. The novel permits a more natural setting and revelation of incidents than the drama can, but it requires great ingenuity to keep the reader interested and emotionally involved to the very end.

Together, these three reviews form a cohesive theory of the novel and find support from many minor reviews of both drama and the novel throughout the twenty-four volumes.

In the 1756-58 period, just after the Critical was founded by Tobias Smollett, the reviewers stressed the need for continuity and connection within a fable, but they said
little about character and morality. They were more interested in the achievements of the author and rebuked those writers who showed affectation instead of genius. The purpose of the reviews was chiefly to educate the readers not only about the contents and moral values of each piece, but about the qualities of good literary art. They seemed, at this point, particularly interested in the response the author was able to evoke from his readers. One review of a collection of Italian operas substantiates the emphasis that one reviewer, at least, put on the total emotional and aesthetic effect of a work.

By 1759, the emphasis is on simplicity and, for some, at least, on the fusion of the aesthetic and ethical elements of the novel. One standard of measure for a successful novel which emerged at this time was the extent to which it could instruct without the awareness of the audience. The reviewers were still seeking out "genius" and finely executed stories.

By the 1760-63 period, the thread of this aesthetic theory reaches both its strongest and weakest points. Some reviewers with their penchant for analysis have broken down a few abstractions connected with the novel such as "genius" and "execution." There are many illuminating reviews such as the one comparing Rousseau with Richardson where we not only witness "genius" being dissected but come to a further understanding of the distinctions some reviewers made
between art and moral instruction--this one, based on the content, not solely on the execution, of the work.

The connection between Smollett's departure from the Critical and the sudden lapse of long discussions relating to the particular theory of the novel which we have been tracing should not be overlooked. The 1764-67 period in Critical reviewing is much like the Monthly's. The critical curiosity about the relationship between author and audience has faded to effete observations about pathetic scenes, delicate sentiments, and affecting situations. Of course, the novels being read could provide a minister with endless sermons without any alterations.

In effect, a new theory of the novel for the Critical has emerged. This one is grounded in sentimentalism. Characters and situations are measured by the extent to which they evoke tears and sympathy from the audience. The reviewers become moral agents who prescribe instructive materials for women and children. The key word is "nature" and the most forbidden is "excessive." However, the dimensions of the novel expand further by the end of this period to accommodate replicas of the old romance and oriental tales, once a modicum of unity is established.

The Critical Review lost either its inspiration or its chief writer when Smollett left for the continent. The thrust given to an organic theory of the novel during his association with this periodical, and lost afterwards, is
enough to make us regret his departure. But the drifting spirit and the clichés that replace his work are even more dismaying. Fortunately, his novel-writing days were not over and his theories were still being transformed into practical entertainment.
CONCLUSION

This study of the reviews in London periodicals between 1740 and 1767 shows that, with a few exceptions, the novel was not held to be a serious art form, that it was recognized as an instructive device, and that it was generally considered to be entertainment for women and older children. The exceptions have to do with 1) the emulation of Richardson, Fielding, and, occasionally, Sterne, as innovators of form and writers whose spirit and genius are inimitable; 2) the theories of the union between the aesthetic and ethical elements in literature, particularly as presented in the Critical Review during Smollett's association with it; 3) the influence of the awareness of audience response on the expectations for the novel. In addition to these exceptions, there are variations based on the distinctive outlook and purpose of each of the four publications examined.

The Gentleman's Magazine was founded primarily as entertainment and therefore literary articles were included as enticements for prospective readers and as incidental to the magazine itself. To this end, the larger part of a "review" was originally but a summary of the story.

254
Eventually, the remarks which were added corresponded with those of the other magazines and consisted of brief passages concerning the moral design and social value of each piece.

Even when the Gentleman's reviewers began to use emotive terms more frequently, the intention was basically the same: to tell or to recommend a proper story which taught through its purposeful action. The novel, according to these writers, was of greater interest to the fashion-conscious—who should not be led astray through their desire to gossip—than to the "gentlemen" for whom the magazine was designed.

The few articles on novels and the selected titles on the book lists suggest that Richardson—not Fielding—was appreciated most by the Gentleman's reviewers and readers. But this distinction is made chiefly on grounds of the moral behavior of the characters Pamela, Charles Grandison, and Tom Jones. The reviews of drama, which are more numerous than reviews of the novel in the Gentleman's, support the interpretation that these reviewers tended to judge the total value of a literary work by its moral design.

The London Magazine was always a little inferior to its precursor, but probably as much in touch with its readers as the Gentleman's always was with its readers. The London's attitude towards the novel was basically uniform throughout the twenty-eight-year period and conforms with the description above. One indication that the London—more
than the Gentleman's--was attuned to the entertainment possibilities of the novel, and could separate this from a novel's morality, was its predilection for *Tristram Shandy*, whose humorous and pathetic qualities it praised, while ignoring the charges of indecency and immorality by other reviewers.

The change which the more literary publications underwent was based on a shift in taste toward the sentimental. But the London readers had been satisfying their craving for the sentimental since the magazine was founded for them in 1732. Emotive language was always a part of its reviews and the terms of affection never became more sophisticated, even after the publication of several philosophical treatises on the subject of sentiment.

The *Monthly Review*, from its beginning in 1749, treated the novel with the respect accorded a valuable means of instruction and entertainment. In the years before 1760, Griffiths and his chosen reviewers expended considerable effort to explain the processes by which the novel could become a useful instructive device. Basically, they saw the novel form and moral instruction related to each other as the sugar to the pill, and although they spoke of the imagination as the faculty through which the novel affects its readers, this was usually with respect to planting ideas in the minds of the young or inexperienced, and not to the process of moving the affective imagination which some
writers of the Critical alluded to.

Around 1759 and 1760, the Monthly began to rely heavily on emotive terms to evaluate novels. This signifies not just a conformity with the sentimental movement but a genuine shift of values for the Monthly reviewers. The novel, which they always considered as instructive through entertaining devices such as the incidents and language now, as they see it, takes on an emotional character which delights and pleases the reader throughout the reading. The emotive terms used to express their response to the novel are not applied to their response to any kind of drama during the sixties. Furthermore, they were eager to expand the dimensions for entertainment and they looked for humor and novelty, while other reviewers seemed to be satisfied with pathos. Nevertheless, this new appreciation for the novel's potential for entertainment did not cloud the Monthly's watchful eye for its moral responsibilities.

The Critical Review under Smollett from 1759 to 1763 displayed some indication that a cohesive theory of the novel was used as a standard by a few of its writers. Those who held this theory judged a novel by its total aesthetic and moral effect. Every element, according to this theory, conduces in one direction. By this standard, there should be but one major personage and one action which unite many diverse elements. Much emphasis is placed on the author of the successful novel for he must combine great knowledge of
the world and of human nature in order to raise the hearts of his readers sufficiently to carry them to the end. The great enthusiasm which seemed to accompany this theory and the reviews which promoted it suddenly died at about the time of Smollett's departure. From 1764 on, the reviews written by the Critical concentrated on the more refining elements of fiction such as its flowing language and moral lesson.

From the comparison of the novel with the drama throughout these publications, we find several significant differences which tell us slightly more about the expectations for the novel at this time than an examination of reviews of novels alone would have revealed.

"History" applied to drama in a manner much more conditioned to reality and tradition than it did to the novel. The reviewers only drew attention to a novelist's claims to the authenticity of his facts when he belaboured the point, whereas the reviewer of the historical play usually took some pains to correlate the play with the known historical facts. The stress on the instructive potential of the novel was primarily towards human behavior and not on its informational content or accuracy.

The use of language was less important to the novel reviewer than to the reviewer of drama. Until the last decade of this study, the dramatic reviewer was the more likely of the two to comment upon the correctness of the
language and on its appropriateness to the characters and situations involved. Even in the sixties, when there was less concern for grammatical accuracy, he stressed the power of the language in a play and the use of the dialogue to show distinctions among the characters. The novel reviewer was more interested in the ease with which the novel was read and seldom explicitly considered its language or diction as part of its art.

Basically the same is true of the treatment of characterization in the two genres. Characters were nearly always distinguished in the dramatic reviews and their roles defined, even in the forties and fifties when the plot was the chief aesthetic focus. The novel reviewers were basically bound to the plot and its related situations and settings for their interest in the genre. Characters are painted as portraits whose chief virtue is consistency so that the fable may be credible. Even when a character is selected for individual analysis, it is done in terms of his contribution to the plot and to the other characters. The meaning of the character, as these reviewers see it, arises from his depiction as part of a larger society with its complementary and antagonistic individuals, situations, and values.

This, ultimately, was also the value of the novel for the reviewers and readers of this period. It was a window through which they were able to see the society which
surrounded them. It could teach them how to cope with society's diversities and evils, to find its pleasures and goodness, and to see themselves as part of a rich, resourceful, and thriving civilization.
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CITED AND
OTHER SELECTED WORKS

I. Primary Sources

**Critical Review; or, Annals of Literature** 1-24.
Ed. Tobias Smollett to 1763.

**Gentleman's Magazine; or, Monthly Intelligencer** 10-37.
Ed. Edward Cave to 1754.

**London Magazine; or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer** 9-36.
Ed. Isaac Kimber to 1755.

**Monthly Review; or, Literary Journal** 1-37.
Ed. Ralph Griffiths to 1803.

II. Secondary Sources


---


Essay on the New Species of Writing Founded by Mr. Fielding:


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

REFERENCES TO NOVELS IN THE MAGAZINES

BETWEEN 1740 AND 1767
APPENDIX A

REFERENCES TO NOVELS IN THE MAGAZINES
BETWEEN 1740 AND 1767

The following two tables list English novels mentioned more than twice in the Gentleman's Magazine (Table 1) and the London Magazine (Table 2) between 1740 and 1767. All of these novels were written during this time period.

KEY

a - Mention in book lists
   Includes:
   1) First and subsequent volumes and editions
   2) Mention of former title to identify author of new book
   3) Parodies of a work easily recognized as such, e.g., Life and Opinions of Sukey Shandy is entered as a parody of Tristram Shandy. Life and Opinions of Jeremiah Kunastrokius, while probably influenced by Sterne, is not included on this table.

b - Publications about the novel given in book lists
   Includes serious essays, full-length poems

271
c - Review of novel in book lists (short)

d - Review or critique elsewhere in the issue (lengthy)

e - Mention in other contexts

   Includes:

   1) Verses

   2) Humorous essays or letters

   3) Extracts with no comment
APPENDIX A: TABLE 1

REFERENCES TO NOVELS BETWEEN 1740 AND 1767: THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Novel</th>
<th>1740</th>
<th>1741</th>
<th>1742</th>
<th>1743</th>
<th>1744</th>
<th>1745</th>
<th>1746</th>
<th>1747</th>
<th>1748</th>
<th>1749</th>
<th>1750</th>
<th>1751</th>
<th>1752</th>
<th>1753</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pamela</td>
<td>a,e,e,</td>
<td>a,a,a,</td>
<td>b,a,a,</td>
<td>a,b,a,</td>
<td>a,</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e,a</td>
<td>e</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Andrews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felicia to</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>e,a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Simple</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarissa</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e,d,d,</td>
<td>e,a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e,a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Jones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amelia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>e,e,d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d,c,a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandison</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tristram Shandy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

273
APPENDIX A: TABLE 1—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1754</th>
<th>1755</th>
<th>1756</th>
<th>1757</th>
<th>1758</th>
<th>1759</th>
<th>1760</th>
<th>1761</th>
<th>1762</th>
<th>1763</th>
<th>1764</th>
<th>1765</th>
<th>1766</th>
<th>1767</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pamela</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Andrews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felicia to Charlotte</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Simple</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarissa</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Jones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amelia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Grandison</td>
<td>a,b,b,b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tristram Shandy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The eighth "substantial article" referred to on the text is on Rasselas, not appearing on this table because this was the only reference to Johnson's book (April, 1759). It would have been labeled "c."*
APPENDIX A: TABLE 2

REFERENCES TO NOVELS BETWEEN 1740 AND 1767: THE LONDON MAGAZINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Novel</th>
<th>1740</th>
<th>1741</th>
<th>1742</th>
<th>1743</th>
<th>1744</th>
<th>1745</th>
<th>1746</th>
<th>1747</th>
<th>1748</th>
<th>1749</th>
<th>1750</th>
<th>1751</th>
<th>1752</th>
<th>1753</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pamela</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a,a,a,</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Andrews</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a,a</td>
<td>a,a,a</td>
<td>a,a,a</td>
<td>a,a,a</td>
<td>a,a,a</td>
<td>a,a,a</td>
<td>a,a,a</td>
<td>a,a,a</td>
<td>a,a,a</td>
<td>a,a,a</td>
<td>a,a,a</td>
<td>a,a,a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Simple</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felicia to Charlotte</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarissa</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roderick Random</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Jones</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
<td>a,a,d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amelia</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Grandison</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasselas</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tristram Shandy</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
<td>a,a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX A: TABLE 2--Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1754</th>
<th>1755</th>
<th>1756</th>
<th>1757</th>
<th>1758</th>
<th>1759</th>
<th>1760</th>
<th>1761</th>
<th>1762</th>
<th>1763</th>
<th>1764</th>
<th>1765</th>
<th>1766</th>
<th>1767</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pamela</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Andrews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Simple</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felicia to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarissa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roderick</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Jones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amelia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandison</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasselas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a,e,e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tristram</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shandy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

276
APPENDIX B

NUMBER OF NOVELS AND PLAYS TREATED

BY THE REVIEWS PER YEAR
## APPENDIX B: TABLE 1

**MONTHLY REVIEW: 1749 TO 1767**

**NUMBER of NOVELS AND PLAYS REVIEWED PER YEAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Novels Reviewed at Length</th>
<th>Plays Reviewed at Length</th>
<th>Novels in Catalogues</th>
<th>Plays in Catalogues</th>
<th>Chief Reviewers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1749</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cleland, Griffiths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1750</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Griffiths, Hill, Rose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1751</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cleland, Griffiths, Collier, Smollett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1752</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Griffiths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1753</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Griffiths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1754</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Griffiths, T. Cibber, Dawson, Leman, P[ ] &lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1755</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Griffiths, Cibber, Berkenhout, P[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Berkenhout, Griffiths (Bewley, Grainger: 1 review apiece)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1757</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Goldsmith, Grainger (Cibber)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1758</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Griffiths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1759</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>10&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Kenrick, Ruffhead (Berkenhout)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27&lt;sup&gt;g&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>9&lt;sup&gt;g&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Kenrick, Ruffhead (Berkenhout)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ruffhead, Berkenhout (Kenrick, Langhorne, Griffiths)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Number of reviews

<sup>b</sup> The year 1749 is included.

<sup>c</sup> Chief Reviewers: Cleland, Griffiths

<sup>d</sup> Chief Reviewers: Griffiths, T. Cibber, Dawson, Leman, P[ ]

<sup>e</sup> Chief Reviewers: Griffiths, Cibber, Berkenhout, P[ ]

<sup>f</sup> Chief Reviewers: Berkenhout, Griffiths (Bewley, Grainger: 1 review apiece)

<sup>g</sup> Chief Reviewers: Kenrick, Ruffhead (Berkenhout)
APPENDIX B: TABLE 1 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Novels Reviewed</th>
<th>Plays Reviewed</th>
<th>Novels in Catalogues</th>
<th>Plays in Catalogues</th>
<th>Chief Reviewers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1762</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Langhorne, Ruffhead, Kenrick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1763</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Griffiths, Kenrick (Langhorne)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1764</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Langhorne, Kenrick, Ruffhead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1765</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Langhorne, Griffiths, Kenrick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1766</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Griffiths, Shaw, Langhorne (Berkenhout)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1767</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30&lt;sup&gt;h&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>17&lt;sup&gt;h&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Garrick, Colman, Langhorne, Griffiths</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>The numbers indicated in the columns do not include numbers from other columns.

<sup>b</sup>First issue appeared May 1749.

<sup>c</sup>Operas, farces, masques, and other dramatic stagings are included under "plays" along with tragedies and comedies.

<sup>d</sup>"Novel" is stretched, especially this year, to include almost any fiction published under separate cover.

<sup>e</sup>A suitable writer for this initial in Griffiths' copy of the Monthly is yet to be found.

<sup>f</sup>The catalogue reviews have substantially more content this year.

<sup>g</sup>A few catalogue entries are as much as a full page in length this year.

<sup>h</sup>The catalogues contain some very long reviews here.
# APPENDIX B: TABLE 2

**CRITICAL REVIEW: 1756 TO 1767**

**NUMBER OF NOVELS AND PLAYS REVIEWED PER YEAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Novels Reviewed at Length</th>
<th>Plays Reviewed at Length</th>
<th>Novels in Catalogues</th>
<th>Plays in Catalogues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1757</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1758</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1759</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1762</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1763</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1764</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1765</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1766</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1767</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

FIRST APPEARANCES OF EVALUATIVE WORDS EXPRESSING EMOTION
APPENDIX C

CRITICAL REVIEW: 1756 TO 1767
FIRST APPEARANCES OF EVALUATIVE WORDS EXPRESSING EMOTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative Words</th>
<th>Drama</th>
<th>Fiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1749</td>
<td>1755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to 1754</td>
<td>to 1759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tenderness</td>
<td>T C*</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expressive of real feelings</td>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>move passions</td>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terror and pity</td>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grief and pity</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspense</td>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sensation of pleasure at truth</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentimental</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entertainment --for rational minds</td>
<td>T X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--surprise as...</td>
<td>T C X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sensible</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sensibility</td>
<td>C X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feeling</td>
<td>T X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attention --excite</td>
<td>C X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--engage</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gratify</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taste</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moved the emotions</td>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluative Words</td>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>Fiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1749 to 1754</td>
<td>1755 to 1759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enthusiasm</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delighted</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>displeased, please, displeased,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unpleasing, pleasure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affecting</td>
<td>T C</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nervous and high-wrote</td>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>movingly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wrought up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pathetic</td>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delicacy (of sentiment)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open, elevate mind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vivacity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effusions of the heart</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hearts burn within us</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distress</td>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>curiosity (attraction of)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impatience (to know)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interesting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluative Words</td>
<td>Drama 1749 to 1754</td>
<td>Drama 1755 to 1759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>striking passions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sympathize</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tediously</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cool(er)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disgust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well-painted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profitable amusement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>draw tears</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forcible impression on imagination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persuasion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>captivating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agreeable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laugh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wonder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approbation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amiable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>benevolence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*T=tragedy; C=comedy; X, under drama= other dramatic pieces.
The dissertation submitted by KAREN JO ANN KOENIGS has been read and approved by the following Committee:

Dr. Douglas White, Chairman
Associate Professor, English, Loyola

Dr. John Shea
Associate Professor, English, Loyola

Dr. Eileen Baldeshwiler
Professor, English, Loyola

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Date: December 1, 1975

Director's Signature: Douglas White