



# MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH

SEMESTER-II

ENG-2.1: THE NOVEL IN 18<sup>TH</sup> – 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES

CREDIT: 04

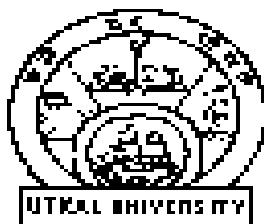
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*AUTHORS*

S. Deepika



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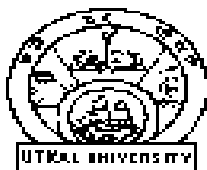
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DIRECTOR

**ENG-2.1: The Novel In 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries**  
**Brief Syllabi**

<b>Block No.</b>	<b>Block Name.</b>	<b>Unit No.</b>	<b>Unit</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>DANIEL DEFOE</b>	1.	Daniel Defoe and His Age
		2.	Defoe and Other Works
		3.	Moll Flanders – An Analysis
		4.	Moll Flanders – Narrative Techniques and Themes

<b>Block No.</b>	<b>Block Name</b>	<b>Unit No.</b>	<b>Unit</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>JANE AUSTEN</b>	5.	Jane Austen and Her Age
		6.	Austen and Other works
		7.	Persuasion – An Analysis
		8.	Persuasion – Narrative Techniques and Themes

<b>Block No.</b>	<b>Block Name</b>	<b>Unit No.</b>	<b>Unit</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>EMILY BRONTE</b>	9.	Emily Bronte and Her Age
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<b>Block No.</b>	<b>Block Name</b>	<b>Unit No.</b>	<b>Unit</b>
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		14.	Jonathan Swift and Gulliver’s Travels
		15.	Novella and Literature
		16.	Richardson and Pamela

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**EXPERT COMMITTEE:**

Prof. Jatindra Kumar Nayak,  
*Retd. Prof. in English, Utkal University*  
Prof. Himansu Sekhar Mohapatra  
*Retd. Prof. in Department of English, Utkal University*  
Prof. Asim Ranjan Parhi,  
*Prof. in Department of English, Utkal University*  
Prof. Kalyani samantaray,  
*Retd. Associate Prof. in the Department of English, Utkal University*

---

**COURSE WRITER:**

S. Deepika,  
*Asst. Prof. in Department of English, Utkal University*

---

**COURSE EDITOR**

Dr. Prajna Paramita Panigrahi,  
*Asst. Prof. in Department of English, C.D.O.E, Utkal University*

**CONTENT AND STRUCTURE EDITOR**

Priyanka Priyadarshini  
*Faculty in Department of English, C.D.O.E, Utkal University*

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## **ENG-2.1: THE NOVEL IN 18<sup>TH</sup> – 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES**

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**BLOCK-1: DANIEL DEFOE**

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UNIT 2: DEFOE AND OTHER WORKS

UNIT 3: MOLL FLANDERS – AN ANALYSIS

UNIT 4: MOLL FLANDERS – NARRATIVE  
TECHNIQUES AND THEMES

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## UNIT 1: DANIEL DEFOE AND HIS AGE

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### STRUCTURE

- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Daniel Defoe – Early Life
- 1.4 Engagement in Political and Religious Issues
- 1.5 Takes up a Writing Career
- 1.6 Final Years: Death in Poverty
- 1.7 Victorian Afterlife
- 1.8 Summary
- 1.9 Key Terms
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### 1.1 Objectives

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This chapter shall let the students to know the following:

- The learners shall know about the background of Victorian age and afterlife.
- The learners shall know about who Daniel Defoe is.
- The learners shall get to know final years of Daniel Defoe.
- The learners shall know about the engagement of Defoe in Political and Religious Issues.

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### 1.2 Introduction

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When he wrote the first part of *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner*, by far the best known of the 375 works with which he is authoritatively credited, Defoe was fifty-nine. By any standard he was one of the most remarkable men who ever lived. Yet while it would be absurd to maintain that his genius has not received its due, one does notice quite commonly in his critics a certain meanness of spirit towards him; praise tends to be grudging; and one can only see in these then vestigial remains of the contempt, which is one of class, expressed in Swift's reference to him as 'the fellow that was pilloried, I have forgot his name'. In fact, Defoe was almost the prototype of a kind of Englishman increasingly prominent during the eighteenth century and reaching its apotheosis in the nineteenth: the man from the lower classes, whose bias was essentially practical and whose success in life, whether in trade or industry, was intimately connected with his Protestant religious beliefs and the notion of personal responsibility they inculcated. — Walter Allen, *The English Novel*.



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### 1.3 Daniel Defoe – Early Life

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Born Daniel Foe, probably in the parish of St. Giles Cripplegate, London, Daniel Defoe in youth seemed destined for a career as a dissenting minister. Neither the date nor the place of his birth is documented. His father, James Foe, although a member of the Butchers' Company, was a hard-working London tallow chandler, and a devout Presbyterian. Daniel later changed his name to "Defoe," out of a desire to have it sound more gentlemanly. Occasionally, he would claim descent from the family of De Beau Faux. Defoe graduated from Reverend Charles Morton's academy for the children of dissenters at Newington Green—Morton later emigrated to Massachusetts and became vice-president of Harvard University.

In 1683, in his early twenties, Defoe went into business, abandoning his original intention to become a non-conformist minister. As a businessman he travelled widely, trading principally in hosiery, general woollen goods, and wine. To fulfil his lofty ambitions, he purchased a country estate, a trading vessel, and civet cats with which to make perfume. In 1692, Defoe was arrested for non-payment of a £700 debt, although his liabilities may have amounted to £17,000. Following his release, he probably travelled in Europe and Scotland, and probably traded in wine to Cadiz, Porto, and Lisbon. By 1695 he was back in England, using the name "Defoe", and serving as a "commissioner of the glass duty," a minor official responsible for collecting the tax on bottles. Pursuing a lifelong interest in politics, Defoe published a political pamphlet in 1683, his first literary piece. In 1696, he was operating a tile and brick factory in Tilbury, Essex. Recognizing that he would never repay all his debts if he stayed in business, in 1703 Defoe gave up business entirely for writing.

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### 1.4 Engagement in Political and Religious Issues

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As a staunch Protestant, Defoe joined the disastrous rebellion by the son of Charles II, the Duke of Monmouth, when James II, a Roman Catholic, ascended the British throne on 2 February 1685. Luckily, Defoe escaped the ill-fated Battle of Sedgemoor, Somerset, on 6 July 1685, in which the rebels were routed. Three years later, Defoe sided with William of Orange against the Jacobite's, the supporters of King James II, who went into exile after the Glorious Revolution of 1688. One of his most popular works during the reign of Queen Mary and William III was *The True-Born Englishman* (1701), in which he defended the Dutch Protestant monarch against racial prejudice, calling him "William, the Glorious, Great, and Good, and Kind." Throughout William III's reign, Defoe supported him loyally as his leading pamphleteer.

In 1702, as a result of suppression of religious dissent by the established Church of England, Defoe adopted a rhetorical strategy which Jonathan Swift, championing the cause of Ireland, would emulate in *A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People from Being a Burden to Their Parents or Country, and For Making Them Beneficial to the Public* (1729).

In *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, Defoe writing anonymously appears to embrace the religious intolerance of some radical Anglicans in order to reduce their position to absurdity. Although he sided with the Dissenters, Defoe pretended to advocate for the "off-with-their-heads" stance towards any who dared to diverge from the tenets of the Church of England. The authorities at first thought the anonymous author of the pamphlet was in earnest, and many unwary Church authorities embraced the political agenda of the seemingly rabid document. When his authorship and true intention were discovered, he was arrested for sedition, and on 31 July 1703 Defoe was sentenced to both a prison term and three successive appearances in the public pillory, a penalty usually reserved for those guilty of public immorality. However, he turned his punishment into a triumph when his supporters sang a satirical song that Defoe had composed especially for his public humiliation ("Hymn to the Pillory," 1703) and pelted him with flowers rather than with the customary rotting fruits and vegetables at him. After his three days in the pillory, Defoe was sent to Newgate Prison. In exchange for Defoe's agreeing to serve as a government spy, Robert Harley, First Earl of Oxford, arranged the pamphleteer's release. Subsequently, masquerading as a merchant (although he was in truth a government operative), Defoe travelled throughout western Europe and Scotland, trading in wine from Cadiz, Porto, and Lisbon. By 1695 he was back in England, using the name "Defoe," and serving as a "commissioner of the glass duty," collecting the tax on bottles. He mined his mercantile travels from these years in the three-volume *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724–26).

Defoe was absorbed by English foreign policy since he feared that, as a consequence of the Treaty of Rijswijk (1697), Great Britain would become embroiled in a major European war which the death of the childless Spanish king would precipitate—hence its name, The War of Spanish Succession (also called Queen Anne's War). To support his political masters, in 1704 Defoe established the pro-Tory political periodical *A Review of the Affairs of France*, which ran uninterrupted for the next nine years. When Harley lost power in 1708, Defoe continued writing it to support Godolphin, then again to support Harley and the Tories in the Tory ministry of 1710 to 1714. After the death of Queen Anne and the Tories' fall from power, Defoe continued his intelligence work for the Whig government, meanwhile continuing as a political writer and journalist, activities which occasionally landed him in jail. Just after the accession of King George I in 1714, perhaps prompted by a severe illness, Defoe wrote the best known and most popular of his many educational works, *The Family Instructor*.

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## 1.5 Takes up a Writing Career

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**Journalism**, the collection, preparation, and distribution of news and related commentary and feature materials through such print and electronic media as newspapers, magazines, books, blogs, webcasts, podcasts, social networking and social media sites, and e-mail as well as through radio, motion pictures, and television. The word *journalism* was originally applied to the reportage of current events in printed form, specifically newspapers, but with the advent of radio, television, and the Internet in the 20th century the use of the term broadened to include all printed and electronic communication dealing with current affairs. The earliest known journalistic product was a news sheet circulated in ancient

Rome: the *Acta Diurna*, said to date from before 59 BCE. The *Acta Diurna* recorded important daily events such as public speeches. It was published daily and hung in prominent places. In China during the Tang dynasty, a court circular called a *bao*, or “report,” was issued to government officials. This gazette appeared in various forms and under various names more or less continually to the end of the Qing dynasty in 1911. The first regularly published newspapers appeared in German cities and in Antwerp about 1609. The first English newspaper, the *Weekly Newes*, was published in 1622. One of the first daily newspapers, *The Daily Courant*, appeared in 1702.

At first hindered by government-imposed censorship, taxes, and other restrictions, newspapers in the 18th century came to enjoy the reportorial freedom and indispensable function that they have retained to the present day. The growing demand for newspapers owing to the spread of literacy and the introduction of steam- and then electric-driven presses caused the daily circulation of newspapers to rise from the thousands to the hundreds of thousands and eventually to the millions.

Magazines, which had started in the 17th century as learned journals, began to feature opinion-forming articles on current affairs, such as those in the *Tatler* (1709–11) and the *Spectator* (1711–12). Appearing in the 1830s were cheap mass-circulation magazines aimed at a wider and less well-educated public, as well as illustrated and women’s magazines. The cost of large-scale news gathering led to the formation of news agencies, organizations that sold their international journalistic reporting to many different individual newspapers and magazines. The invention of the telegraph and then radio and television brought about a great increase in the speed and timeliness of journalistic activity and, at the same time, provided massive new outlets and audiences for their electronically distributed products. In the late 20th century, satellites and later the Internet were used for the long-distance transmission of journalistic information.

Journalism in the 20th century was marked by a growing sense of professionalism. There were four important factors in this trend: (1) the increasing organization of working journalists, (2) specialized education for journalism, (3) a growing literature dealing with the history, problems, and techniques of mass communication, and (4) an increasing sense of social responsibility on the part of journalists. An organization of journalists began as early as 1883, with the foundation of England’s chartered Institute of Journalists. Like the American Newspaper Guild, organized in 1933, and the Fédération Nationale de la Presse Française, the institute functioned as both a trade union and a professional organization.

Before the latter part of the 19th century, most journalists learned their craft as apprentices, beginning as copyboys or cub reporters. The first university course in journalism was given at the University of Missouri (Columbia) in 1879–84. In 1912 Columbia University in New York City established the first graduate program in journalism, endowed by a grant from the New York City editor and publisher Joseph Pulitzer. It was recognized that the growing complexity of news reporting and newspaper operation required a great deal of specialized training. Editors also found that in-depth reporting of special types of news, such as political affairs, business, economics, and science, often demanded reporters with education in these areas. The advent of motion pictures, radio, and television as news media called for an ever-increasing battery of new skills

and techniques in gathering and presenting the news. By the 1950s, courses in journalism or communications were commonly offered in colleges.

The literature of the subject—which in 1900 was limited to two textbooks, a few collections of lectures and essays, and a small number of histories and biographies—became copious and varied by the late 20th century. It ranged from histories of journalism to texts for reporters and photographers and books of conviction and debate by journalists on journalistic capabilities, methods, and ethics.

Concern for social responsibility in journalism was largely a product of the late 19th and 20th centuries. The earliest newspapers and journals were generally violently partisan in politics and considered that the fulfilment of their social responsibility lay in proselytizing their own party's position and denouncing that of the opposition. As the reading public grew, however, the newspapers grew in size and wealth and became increasingly independent. Newspapers began to mount their own popular and sensational "crusades" in order to increase their circulation. The culmination of this trend was the competition between two New York City papers, the *World* and the *Journal*, in the 1890s (*see yellow journalism*).

The sense of social responsibility made notable growth as a result of specialized education and widespread discussion of press responsibilities in books and periodicals and at the meetings of the associations. Such reports as that of the Royal Commission on the Press (1949) in Great Britain and the less extensive *A Free and Responsible Press* (1947) by an unofficial Commission on the Freedom of the Press in the United States did much to stimulate self-examination on the part of practicing journalists.

By the late 20th century, studies showed that journalists as a group were generally idealistic about their role in bringing the facts to the public in an impartial manner. Various societies of journalists issued statements of ethics, of which that of the American Society of Newspaper Editors is perhaps best known.

Suddenly turning his back on party factionalism in 1719, Defoe, aged 59, published companion *Robinson Crusoe* novels, *true-to-life fictions based on several short essays that he had composed over the years and mining the castaway experiences of sailor Alexander Selkirk and of Henry Pitman, a castaway who had been surgeon to the Duke of Monmouth*. Another five novels followed between 1722 and 1724, for the most part employing rogues and criminals as the protagonists: *Moll Flanders*, *Colonel Jack*, *Captain Singleton*, *The Journal of the Plague Year*, and *Roxana*.

In the mid-1720s, Defoe returned to writing editorial pieces, focusing on such subjects as morality, politics and the breakdown of social order in England. Some of his later works include *Everybody's Business is Nobody's Business* (1725); the nonfiction essay "Conjugal Lewdness: or, Matrimonial Whoredom" (1727); and a follow-up piece to the "Conjugal Lewdness" essay, entitled "A Treatise Concerning the Use and Abuse of the Marriage Bed."

## Check Your Progress

### 1. How has journalism been an important phase in Defoe's life. Discuss.

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### 2. What important works Defoe has contributed to literature? Elucidate.

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## 1.6 Final Years: Death in Poverty

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Although hardly working in optimal conditions for a writer, Defoe continued producing pamphlets and manuals well into 1728, when he was in his late sixties, but he was never able to avoid his debtors, including a Mary Brooke. To escape these harassing creditors Defoe lodged in a rooming-house in the Barbican area of central London, in Ropemaker's Alley. Defoe's last years had been fraught with legal problems resulting (allegedly) from unpaid bonds dating back a generation, and he probably died while in hiding, on 24 April 1731. Given his later national and international popularity as a writer, it is ironic that he was buried in Bunhill Fields under the name "Dubow" because a semi-literate gravedigger has misspelled the name he was given at the boarding house. Although his novels continued to be best-sellers in the next century, Defoe was stalked in his final years, as Moll Flanders says, by the "spectre of poverty" The cause of his death was labelled as lethargy, suggesting that he probably experienced a stroke. He was interred two days later in what is today Bunhill Fields Burial and Gardens alongside such Puritan worthies as John Bunyan, in the Borough of Islington, London, where a subscription list of seventeen hundred persons (undoubtedly admiring readers) with a Christian newspaper resulted in the erection of a plain stele to his memory in September 1870. His chief contribution to European letters is the distinction of having written the ultimate boys' adventure book:

*As De Foe was a man of very powerful but very limited imagination — able to see certain aspects of things with extraordinary distinctness, but little able to rise above them — even his greatest book shows his weakness, and scarcely satisfies a grown-up man with a taste for high art. In revenge, it ought, according to Rousseau, to be for a time the whole library of a boy, chiefly, it seems, to teach him that the stock of an iron-monger is better than that of a jeweller. We may agree in the conclusion without caring about the reason; and to have pleased all the boys in Europe for near a hundred and fifty years is, after all, a remarkable feat. [Leslie Stephen, "De Foe's Novels"]*

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## 1.7 Victorian Afterlife

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Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* continued to be enormously popular in the nineteenth century, and was frequently abridged and adapted for younger readers. A number of prominent Victorian artists, including the Dickens illustrators George Cruikshank, Hablot Knight Browne (Phiz), and Wal Paget published illustrated editions that emphasized the exotic and adventure-story aspects of the novel *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* and its sequel, *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, often issued together in a single volume.

The children's pantomime *Robinson Crusoe* was staged at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in 1796, with Joseph Grimaldi as Pierrot in the harlequinade. The piece was produced again in 1798, this time starring Grimaldi as Clown. In 1815, Grimaldi played Friday in another version of *Robinson Crusoe*. Jacques Offenbach wrote an opéra comique called *Robinson Crusoé*, which was first performed at the Opéra-Comique in Paris on 23 November 1867. This was based on the British pantomime version rather than the novel itself. The libretto was by Eugène Cormon and Hector-Jonathan Crémieux.

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## 1.8 Summary

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Some critics have debated *Robinson Crusoe*'s status as a novel per se: its structure is highly episodic, and Defoe's uneven narrative pacing and niggling errors—a goat that is male, for example, later becomes female as circumstances demand—suggest that he may not have planned or executed the work as a single unified whole. In many ways, however, its heterogeneity—the fact that it draws together features of the genres of romance, memoir, fable, allegory, and others—argues that *novel* is the only label large enough to describe it. *Robinson Crusoe* is best understood as standing alongside novels such as *Tristram Shandy* and *Infinite Jest*, all of which expand the novel's possibilities by blurring its boundaries.

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## 1.9 Key Terms

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- **Realism:** Realism, in the arts, the accurate, detailed, unembellished depiction of nature or of contemporary life. Realism rejects imaginative idealization in favour of a close observation of outward appearances.
- **Legacy:** A man of many talents and author of an extraordinary range and number of works, Defoe remains in many ways an enigmatic figure. A man who made many enemies, he has been accused of double-dealing, of dishonest or equivocal conduct, of venality.
- **Motion pictures:** Like 20th-century drama and literature, the art of cinema has depended heavily on the 19th-century realist tradition for thematic material and often for structure.

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## 1.10 Review Questions

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1. Discuss Daniel Defoe and his contribution to Victorian literature.
2. Trace out the biography of Daniel Defoe.
3. How Daniel Defoe's thoughts influenced the Victorian Literature.
4. Discuss the early life and profession of Daniel Defoe.
5. How was the profession of journalism different from today's standpoint of the same.

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## 1.11 References

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## UNIT 2: DANIEL DEFOE AND OTHER WORKS

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### STRUCTURE

- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 References to Defoe's writing in 'Works of Literature'
- 2.4 Defoe the Novelist' Vs. Other Defoe's'
- 2.5 Defoe and Other works
- 2.6 Daniel's Theory of Fiction
- 2.7 Summary
- 2.8 Key Terms
- 2.9 Review Questions
- 2.10 References

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### 2.1 Objectives

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The learners shall get to know the following:

- About Defoe as a writer.
- Defoe and his other literary works.
- Brief knowledge about the plot of the works written by Defoe.
- To Understand the style of writing and themes.

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### 2.2 Introduction

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The original reference source that inspired this collection may be found in the Herculean cataloguing efforts undertaken by Spiro Peterson in his *Daniel Defoe: A Reference Guide 1731–1924*, supplemented by my personal inclusion of critical writing on Defoe from 1700–1731. Peterson's work provides a comprehensive listing, purportedly of all writings about Defoe and his works, listed first by year of publication and then alphabetically by author (although this does not include works such as published doctoral theses). Each listing features a brief annotation summarising the content of the work and Peterson also offers his readers useful indices for Authors and Titles, as well as Subjects.

Peterson's comprehensive annotated bibliography also includes critical writing on Defoe in languages other than English; it has not been possible to include these works in this selection but Peterson notes a number of French works from the latter eighteenth century that would be worth



including in a discussion of Defoe's critical reputation as a novelist. In addition, Johann Gottfried Schnabel's 1731 Foreword to *Wunderliche Fata einiger See-Fahrer, absonderlich Alberti Julii* (commonly known as *Die Insel Felsenburg*), the work that first coined the phrase and concept of the 'Robinsonade,' would be a valuable foreign-language inclusion to this critical selection.

Another invaluable resource that merits consideration in the compilation of this collection is Pat Rogers's *Daniel Defoe: The Critical Heritage*. Rogers's selection includes a great many of the most notable writers on Defoe before 1900 and, in his superb Introduction, he makes the very important point that much of the earliest writing on Defoe, particularly those works published during his lifetime, first established the author's reputation as "a polemicist and party writer" rather than as an esteemed literary personage (1). It is certainly true that much of the writing on Defoe from this early period is of a personal or biographical rather than strictly 'literary' nature -- with arguable exceptions -- and to this end, most of Rogers's critical extracts from prior to 1731 are very brief. Nevertheless, as Rogers rightly goes on to observe, "Defoe was a culture hero even when few of his books were read and fewer still admired" (3); in other words, the enduring fascination with Defoe's wider critical reputation -- including his authorial or biographical reputation as it was first conceived during his lifetime -- considerably pre-dates his (later) critical recognition as a novelist and literary heavyweight. It is because of this that my selection provides a larger number, and more generous excerpts, from writings before 1731 than are included in *The Critical Heritage*. For Defoe scholars who seek to consider the further development of Defoe's critical reputation, after 1900, a valuable starting-place would be John A. Stoler's *Daniel Defoe: An Annotated Bibliography of Modern Criticism, 1900–1980*.

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## 2.3 References to Defoe's writing in 'Works of Literature'

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Not directly included in either Rogers's selection or my own, but usefully alluded to in *The Critical Heritage*, are the 'glancing' Defoe references that proliferate in other well-known literary works. In this context, Rogers offers the example of the extended passage in the seventh chapter of Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766) that refers to Crusoe's periagua. To such a list might also be added the Defoe-related references in the sixty-first chapter of Smollett's *Roderick Random* (1748), the first and fifth chapters of Book VIII of Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749), Book Two of *Emile* (1762), Hester Piozzi's *Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson* (1786), James Boswell's *Life of Johnson* and Benjamin Franklin's *Memoirs* (both 1791), and many more. The relative frequency of such references in eighteenth-century texts, most of which allude to Defoe's own works of extended fiction, underlines the burgeoning critical reputation of 'Defoe the novelist' from the second half of the eighteenth century. The inclusion of one particular literary text from the eighteenth century merits some clarification in this context. This is William Cowper's *Verses, Supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk...*, a text which is included in this critical selection despite my editorial reluctance to include too many works that might be described as Robinsonades. The distinction here, of course, is that Cowper attributes his literary inspiration not to Robinson Crusoe but directly to the Selkirk narrative itself. Important parallels might now be drawn between the uniquely contemplative and solitary entity whose divine faith is inspired by his natural surroundings in Cowper's poem, and Defoe's

protagonist (a feature emphasized in the later frequent reprintings of Cowper's poem under an altered title or the authorship of "Robinson Crusoe" himself) but Cowper's original work remains an interesting parallel work of literature rather than a Robinson Ade.

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## 2.4 Defoe the Novelist' Vs. Other Defoe's'

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If it will come as no surprise that "Defoe the novelist" has remained the chief consideration of most writers on this author, particularly since the second half of the eighteenth century, there are many more pleasant surprises awaiting readers who seek 'other' Defoes in this selection of critical writing. The prolific and often polemical response to Defoe's political writing during his lifetime is welldocumented in this selection of writing; over the centuries, however, Defoe's canon has continued to provide certain writers with ample textual material with which to defend their own -- sometimes distinctly different -- political and economic arguments. In this consideration may be included zealous Poor Lawreformer Thomas Gilbert's inclusion of Giving Alms No Charity in his 1787 edition of A Collection of Pamphlets Concerning the Poor.

This inclusion merely reproduces Defoe's original text without providing further editorial comment and thus is not included in this selection, but its example provides strong evidence of Defoe's sustained political relevance in the decades following his death. In the preface to the third edition of his *The Right Divine of Kings to Govern Wrong!* (1821), William Hone refers to his ensuing work as a "partial revival" of *Jure Divino*, which "[a]fter the lapse of a century, nearly the same reason exists for the publication as [Defoe] adduced on its first appearance." In an 1829 parliamentary speech on much-needed regulation for Parish Vestries, radical reformer John Cam Hobhouse makes pointed reference to a century-old tract by Defoe, "perhaps, not so much known to honourable members as Robinson Crusoe" entitled *Parochial Tyranny*. Here, the continued relevance of Defoe's political writing (and, indeed, the implicit need for politicians and others in the public realm to continue to read widely in Defoe's canon) is expressed in such works as timely lessons for nineteenth-century readers. Perhaps the significance of such a lesson would not be lost on their twenty-first-century equivalents.

### Check Your Progress

#### 1. Discuss Daniel Defoe as a novelist.

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## 2.5 Defoe and Other works

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Nineteenth-century writers consistently paid tribute to the man who was among the first to write "the doctrine on which ... all free political constitutions rest." They acknowledged "the debt which

the people ... owe, not simply for the pleasure afforded by his incomparable works of imagination, but because of the long years of suffering which he endured on account of the ... heroic efforts that he made to place our religious and political freedom upon a true and lasting basis." We may have forgotten pamphlets like *The Original Power of the Collective Body of the People of England* (1702), but they were enthusiastically and frequently quoted for two centuries and echoes of them exist in, for instance, the United States Constitution. Defoe described the English as a mongrel race, the product of wave after wave of immigrants. He concluded, "A *True Born Englishman's* a Contradiction, / In Speech an Irony, in Fact a Fiction" and " 'Tis Personal Virtue only makes us great." The most popular poem of the Restoration and early eighteenth century, it went through ten authorized and at least twelve pirated editions in the first year and appeared in fifty editions by midcentury.

Defoe continued to write poetry and began to write political pamphlets. In 1702 he published *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, the pamphlet that led to his conviction for seditious libel and his pillory sentence. Because of his continued weaknesses as a businessman and the year (1703) he spent as a fugitive and then a prisoner in Newgate, he went bankrupt again. Robert Harley, secretary of state for the Northern Department, effected his release from prison in November 1703, and Defoe expected to become one of his agents. Employment from Harley was slow in coming, and, in order to support himself, his wife, and seven children, he began to write for money. His major effort was the *Review*, a periodical he wrote alone for nine years (19 February 1704-11 June 1713). Soon he reached an agreement with Harley. He traveled as a propagandist and opinion sampler for Harley in 1704 and 1705 and, in 1706, went to Scotland to work for the proposed union of England and Scotland.

He spent most of the next four years there and part of 1710-1712. During this time, he became the most prolific and feared propagandist of the century. With the accession of George I in 1714 and the more tranquil Hanoverian years, he largely turned from controversy to other kinds of writing. In April of 1719 he published *Robinson Crusoe*, and four editions of it sold before *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* was published that August. In 1722 he produced *Moll Flanders*, *A Journal of the Plague Year*, and *Col. Jack*. His last novel, *The Fortunate Mistress*, the novel we call *Roxana*, came out in 1724. In the last fifteen years of his life, he published millions of words: histories, travel books, biographies, and proposals for improving society, morals, and the economy. He died on 24 April 1731 in his lodgings on Rope Maker's Alley, in the heart of the city he loved.

Exactly how much nonfiction prose Defoe wrote, we shall probably never know. Some of what has been attributed to him is disputed, and other things are surely skillful compilations rather than entirely original compositions. In 1981 Frank Bastian made a case for adding twenty-nine pieces, some long rejected by other Defoe experts, and, beginning in 1986, P. N. Furbank and W. R. Owens have pointed out the inadequately argued attributions of other works. Careful cases for the exclusion of individual items have been made by J. A. Downie, Rodney Baine, Henry Snyder, and Pat Rogers. During the same years, others, most notably Maximillian E. Novak, have attributed or identified substantial works by Defoe. Novak, for instance, located the manuscript for the 1682 *Historical Collections* in the William Andrews Clark Library at the University of

California, Los Angeles.

Defoe published the notorious pamphlet, *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, to coincide with the House of Lords' debate on the Occasional Conformity Bill in December. *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* imitated the immoderate language of High Church sermons and pamphlets. In this mock-sermon, the High Church persona argued that England should eliminate the Dissenters for the good of posterity and that the time was right; the metaphors, again taken from High Church rhetoric, described the Dissenters as butchers, rats, snakes, poison, weeds, and wounds. Unfortunately for Defoe the pamphlet was taken at face value by many people and acclaimed and quoted by the High Church. Soon the Tories who had approved so enthusiastically of *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* learned that they had been tricked; they had been lured into revealing their fanaticism, and, as Defoe said later, "these Gentlemen are satyrs on themselves, by fixing the Characters, as things which must be suitable, since the likeness was such they could not know themselves from a Stranger."

Before Defoe died, he had written more than sixty-five individual works on issues affecting the Dissenters and another fifty or so on the recurrent threat of the Jacobites. The other large group of pamphlets he wrote was in the service of three monarchs, and his religion influenced them as well. These pamphlets commented on almost every political issue. For William, he wrote on the succession, standing armies, and the war with France. During Anne's reign, he advocated such policies as moderation, union with Scotland, support of public credit, and peace with France. A firm supporter of the Protestant succession, he condemned the Jacobite riots and praised George I, then wrote about the measures Walpole took to stabilize the government and hasten economic recovery.

As a master propagandist, Defoe had to reach a number of different audiences, and, to do so, he needed to adopt different perspectives. In the last few years before Anne's death, he learned to write from points of view ranging from opposition Whig to moderate Tory. He brought diction, tone, anecdotes, and metaphors into harmony for each type of narrator. Carefully appealing to the interests and prejudices of each group, he would, for example, describe the advantages peace would have for trade in pamphlets such as *An Enquiry into the Danger and Consequences of a War with the Dutch* (1712), which was directed to the Whigs, or he could rehearse the ways the Dutch had gained at British expense in order to justify separate negotiations to the Tories in tracts like *Peace, or Poverty* (1712). He could portray Marlborough as a victim of the Junto struggle for power and his relatives' greed, or he could remind the nation of the enormous casualties at Malplaquet, site of one of the last battles where Marlborough was in command, and of the nature of Marlborough's personal demands.

A typical pamphlet of this period would begin with a statement of the issue to be discussed, definitions, and an anecdote or, at least, a witty saying. He would insist that his motive was to open the eyes of his countrymen, to undeceive the misguided. Defoe liked to use history to explain how the problem or disagreement arose or to offer instructive parallels, and he often included statistics, quotations from treaties, or references to recent, familiar events to make his case seem irrefutable. His conclusions tended to be exhortations; were they to accept his point of view and follow his advice, they and the entire country would prosper. *The Present State of the Parties in*

*Great Britain* (1712), for instance, begins with one of Defoe's favorite metaphors: "Satyr, like Incision, becomes necessary when the Humour rankles, and the Wound threatens Mortification: When Advice ceases to work...." He explains that this book will give the "present state of the Nation," describe the "divisions" parties have caused, provide a history of parties, and end with special attention to the Dissenters. He carries out this plan and concludes in the manner of a sermon--they will be tested and must be prudent and steadfast.

Although he never gave up political pamphlet writing entirely, after the death of Queen Anne, Defoe wrote far fewer. Realizing that periodicals and more fictional forms reached a broader audience, he chose to address the English people in other ways. The diminution of political-party strife reduced the payment and market for the kind of ephemeral pamphlets that Parliamentary debates, elections, and diplomatic developments had called forth. To compare the subjects and numbers of pamphlets written before and after 1714 shows a more selective Defoe. His opposition to the Jacobites motivated pamphlets that praised King George and his policies (such as *An Account of the Proceedings of the Government against the Rebels, compared with the Persecutions of the Late Reigns*, 1716). His desire for the continuation of moderate Whig power and government stability led to pamphlets in support of the Triennial Act, and his hopes for an end to the legal restrictions on the Dissenters produced a group of pamphlets including the optimistic *The Question Fairly Stated, Whether Now is not the Time to do Justice to the Friends of the Government* (1717). Somewhat later, he wrote pamphlets to support the domestic wool trade (*A Brief State of the Question, between the Printed and Painted Callicoes and the Woollen and Silk Manufacture*, 1719) and to encourage international trade (*A Humble Proposal to the People of England, for the Encrease of their Trade*, 1729). At age sixty-seven he could be aroused to argue the advantages of a war with Spain, and he traced the origins and implications of the conflict as cogently as he had that with France when he was forty-five.

Since boyhood Defoe had read history avidly. He once said that he had read "all the Histories of Europe, that are Extant in our Language, and some in other Languages." The methods and purposes of historiography attracted him early. *The Storm* (1704) is a combination of what Francis Bacon would call the history of an event and a collection of "remarkable provinces," God's actions in the world or proofs of God's presence in the world. He called the *Review* "history writing by inches" and initially designed it as the explanation of how the War of Spanish Succession began and an exploration of the characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses of the participating nations. In 1709 he published *The History of the Union of Great Britain*, an account of the event he considered the greatest achievement of Queen Anne's reign. About the same time, he began the *Memoirs of the Church of Scotland*, which he did not publish until 1717. A book of more than four hundred pages, it came out in April to support the Parliamentary presentation of a delegation from the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland who hoped for the repeal of the imposition of the Oath of Abjuration, the oath that required them to aid in barring all members of their own Church from the throne of Great Britain. His earlier histories were written from the point of view of an objective eyewitness; in this one, he characterized himself as "an officious Stranger" and called the Church's history a revelation to him, a "*Terra incognita*, a vast Continent of hidden, undiscovered Novelties." Defoe began with the Reformation and characterized the Church of Scotland's history as one of dedicated resistance to Roman Catholicism. He hoped that with a sympathetic understanding of the Church of Scotland,

M.P.'s might heed the arguments that the Oath of Abjuration should not be required of Scots or should even be revised in their favor.

Late in his life, he began an ambitious universal history, *A General History of Discoveries and Improvements* (1725-1726), and wrote three historical accounts of the preternatural: *The Political History of the Devil* (1726), *An Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions* (1727), and *A System of Magick* (1727). *A General History of Discoveries and Improvements*, like other universal histories, began in biblical times and encompassed the entire earth. Promising to absorb all useful knowledge, the histories collected whatever the writer believed worth knowing and preserved it for the benefit of new generations. Defoe's history was part of his elaborate campaign to persuade his countrymen of the benefits of exploration and colonial expansion, and he explained that he intended to give a "view of what may yet be undertaken." The history was originally published in four installments, and, by the second, Defoe had established a parallel between the British and the Phoenicians, the great "Improvers of what others invented" who had been great merchants and traders. He surveyed the great discoveries (like the Americas) and inventions (like the uses of the lodestone in navigation) and suggested ways that the British could increase their wealth.

In *The Political History of the Devil*, Defoe collects stories and legends about Satan including those from the Bible and Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667). He concludes that the Devil exists but that many representations of him are ridiculous. Defoe promises that *A System of Magick* will provide a profitable and diverting history of magic beginning with the Chaldeans. He describes the Chaldeans as mathematicians and, like all of the earliest magicians, men of learning and observation. As they were made to serve governments and turned to more and more arcane studies, their reputations suffered, he concludes, and magicians came to take dishonest advantage of the superstitions and curiosities of people. *An Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions* is intended to support religion by giving what evidence he can for good spirits, angels, and other divine manifestations and to discourage superstition by ridiculing delusions and naive credulity. In this book, too, he collects many examples of apparitions, including material from such sources as the Bible and John Aubrey's *Miscellanies* (1696).

Historical examples and anecdotes are everywhere in his writing. He offers biblical and secular examples as proof of the principles and general truths in almost everything he wrote. *Jure Divino* (1706), a twelve-book verse essay, includes books of summaries of the actions and miserable ends of tyrants, and he can refer to Second Samuel, Hugo Grotius, and Abraham Cowley with equal ease and familiarity. In ordinary pamphlets such as *An Essay on the Treaty of Commerce with France* (1713), he habitually draws upon history as he does here when he summarizes the history of trade agreements, quotes them, and then insists that the Treaty of Commerce is more to Britain's advantage than France's. He is capable of including such detailed information as the reasons for the trade restrictions imposed after the Treaty of Ryswick. One of his earliest manuscripts, the *Historical Collections*, brings together anecdotes from sources as diverse as Richard Knolles's *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603), Plutarch's *Lives*, and Bede's *History of the English Church and People* (completed in 1731). *A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724, 1725, 1727) uses historical anecdotes to bring English towns and places to life and to characterize the British people. For instance, Defoe describes the chapel built on the stone bridge over the Calder in Yorkshire. It was built, he says, by Edward IV in memory

of the Battle of Wakefield, where his father, Richard, Duke of York, died in 1460. He finds this memorial no less remarkable than a small fenced square of ground between two nearby towns where the common people had erected a stone cross on the spot where the Duke of York actually fell. In another place, he records the way the Hadley residents maintain a stone to mark the spot where the Protestant martyr Rowland Taylor died at the stake.

*A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, a twelve-hundred-page travel book, is the only one of Defoe's books that has been accorded the status of belles lettres without change from its publication to our own day. It appeared serially; the first volume (May 1724) described eastern and southern England, the second (June 1725) the West Country, Midlands, Wales, and London, and volume three (August 1726 but dated 1727) Scotland and the northern counties. For almost every county, Defoe would describe the topography, towns, rivers, harbors, population, occupations, notable families, major buildings, and evaluate the agriculture, manufacture, and transportation. He would include accounts of important historical events that took place there and of interesting facts about the place, such as the fact that all the ships that go to sea from London depart from Gravesend. He would also include amusing personal memories and sights; in a village in Sussex, for instance, he had seen a woman go to church in an ox-drawn carriage.

Defoe said in 1711 that he had been in every county in England except one, and, in 1724, he told his readers: "As ... I made myself Master of the History, and *ancient State of England*, I resolv'd in the next Place, to make my self-Master of its *Present State* also; and to this Purpose, I travell'd in three or four several Tours, over the whole Island, critically observing, and carefully informing myself of everything worth observing in all the Towns and Countries through which I pass'd." Above all, *A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain* reflects Defoe's love for travel and his insatiable curiosity about the economy and how all manner of people live. So valuable has this book been to economic and social historians that Defoe as its author has been called "a special correspondent for posterity." In his classic introduction to it, G. D. H. Cole wrote that *A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain* "is by far the most graphic contemporary account of the state of the economic and social affairs near the beginning of the eighteenth century." A recent critic called the book "a vision of nationhood."

Also concerned with the state of the British economy are *The Royal Progress* (1724), *The Complete English Tradesman* (1726, 1727), *A General History of Discoveries and Improvements* (1725-1726), *A Plan of the English Commerce* (1728), *Atlas Maritimus & Commercialis* (1728), and several shorter works such as *An Humble Proposal to the People of England, For the Encrease of their Trade, and Encouragement of their Manufactures* (1729). In these books, Defoe characterizes the English people, identifies their strengths and advantages, and charts their course to greatness. Typically, he begins with surveys--of the present state of England (*A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*) and of their place in worldwide commercial history (*A General History of Discoveries and Improvements*)--and with guides for the most basic cogs in the machine (*The Great Law of Subordination Consider'd* [1724] and *The Complete English Tradesman*).

Books such as *A Plan of the English Commerce* and *Atlas Maritimus* target countries and products and challenge Englishmen to develop trade with them. In them, Defoe surveys the globe

and determines what each part of the world has to offer. Besides improving territory already held, he urges the establishment of new settlements and colonies. In the aftermath of the disappointing Treaty of Utrecht, Defoe's countrymen can hardly disagree. He returns to the arguments of his 1712 pamphlets and reminds people how necessary peace is for a flourishing trade and that the longest purse, not the longest sword, wins wars. Conquest, he reminds them, is a "Thing attended with Difficulty, Hazard, Expence, and a Possibility of Miscarriage."

Defoe had once said that a conduct book could be written for each stage of life, and *The Complete English Tradesman*, published in 1726 and 1727 is part of the economic series written late in his life but also related to a group of his books that rivaled his novels in popularity. As early as 1715, Defoe had published *The Family Instructor*, and he followed this book, which outsold everything else he wrote except *Robinson Crusoe* for the next century, with a second *Family Instructor* (1718), *Religious Courtship* (1722), *Conjugal Lewdness* (1727), *A New Family Instructor* (1727), and the posthumously published *Compleat English Gentleman* (1890). Defoe's readers would have instantly recognized these books as additions to a widely popular kind of literature. The domestic conduct book had grown up beside the courtesy book and, by the early eighteenth century, held a secure place in the personal libraries of all social classes. Courtesy books were largely directed at the upper classes and chapters included "Of Friendship," "Of Temperance," and "Of Diversions," while those in conduct books more often read "Of the Duty of Parents in Educating their Children" and "Of Duty to Parents; Magistrates, Pastors." Conduct books, or works of "practical divinity," addressed a broader audience, emphasized moral relationships, and concentrated upon marriage and household governance.

Defoe divides *The Family Instructor*, his first conduct book, into three parts: "I: Relating to Fathers and Children. II. To Masters and Servants. III. To Husbands and Wives." These categories are standard, but his book is unusual in that it is highly narrative, made up of realistic dialogues, and addressed to the parents of older children. Parts one and three describe the efforts of parents who had been shamed by their youngest child to recall the family to sober piety. Part two concerns two apprentices, and their contrasting situations. The second *Family Instructor* has two parts. The first portrays two couples who argue and nearly destroy their marriages over religious differences. The rancor between the couples that grows almost to the point of violence prefigures material in his novel *Col. Jack*. Always ready to draw the broadest conclusions possible, Defoe has one character say that their quarrels "put me in mind of the Divisions among the People of this Nation about Religion; methinks the Church and the Dissenters act a little as you and I did, one goes this way and another that ..., but all meet, I hope in Heaven at last...." The second part illustrates the correct discipline of children. In a series of dialogues, Defoe tells the story of a good but hot-tempered London tradesman, of two other fathers (one too lenient and the other brutal), and of a sea captain who marries a religious servant named Margy.

*Religious Courtship*, the most narrative and unified conduct book yet, follows the lives of three daughters commanded by their dying mother to marry pious men. The youngest, exemplary in her obedience to her mother, brings her suitor to religion, but the second marries for money and is horrified to discover that she has married a Catholic. This book, too, has lengthy sections on the obligations of masters to servants and on the wisdom of choosing religious servants. In *Conjugal Lewdness* Defoe analyzes the reasons for unhappiness in marriage and illustrates the mutual respect he believes necessary. He discusses many intimate aspects of marriage such as



having intercourse during pregnancy. Here he combines essays with lively dialogues. *A New Family Instructor* offers an exemplary family with a father who has made his chief business to instruct his children in "the most Essential Points of the Christian Religion." He explains how to instruct children, how to adapt material appropriately for each age group, and what the result will be. As part of its strongly anti-Catholic theme, the book shows one of the brothers becoming Catholic and the object of pity from his family, who often laugh at his "ignorance" and mistaken opinions. *A New Family Instructor* includes one of Defoe's longest discussions of reading fiction and of the most effective means of education. Written after the publication of his last novel, *Roxana*, his statements, even though made to a conservative audience, have considerable interest. He says,

the End and Use of every Fable was in the Moral....

.... where the Moral of the Tale is duly annex'd, and the End directed right ... making just and solid Impressions on the Mind; recommending great and good Actions, raising Sentiments of Virtue in the Soul ... in such Cases, Fables, feigned Histories, invented Tales, and even such as we call *Romances*, have always been allow'd as the most pungent Way of writing or speaking; the most apt to make Impressions upon the Mind .... for some Ages, it was the most usual, if not the only Way of Teaching in the World....

Somewhat related to the conduct books are others like *The Great Law of Subordination Consider'd*. As he had in the conduct books, he discusses the proper duties and obligations of masters to servants and servants to masters. He gives instructive illustrations and didactic admonitions, but he also offers "projects." In the eighteenth century "projects" meant plans or schemes designed to improve something and often to attract investors or patrons. People often satirized projectors as impractical, officious dreamers or even busybodies. Defoe's first full-length book had been *An Essay upon Projects* (1697), and the last work published in his lifetime was *An Effectual Scheme for the Immediate Preventing of Street Robberies* (1731). *An Essay upon Projects* includes plans for improving roads, teaching military arts, building an academy for women, and establishing a Merchant Court similar to the Admiralty Court. He continued to suggest such schemes in his periodicals and novels and returned openly to projecting in the last six years of his life. He said that he hoped to produce a "useful kind" of writing, and at one point he described such books as "Testimony of my good Will to my Fellow Creatures." *Every-body's Business, Is No-body's Business* (1725), *The Protestant Monastery* (1727), *Parochial Tyranny* (1727), *Augusta Triumphans* (1728), and *Second Thoughts are Best* (1729) belong in this category. These books, with *The Great Law of Subordination Consider'd*, return to some of his 1697 concerns--gambling, education, the treatment of seamen--and all show a keen awareness of injustice.

Every Man ought ... to contribute in his Station, to the publick Welfare, and not be afraid or ashamed of doing or at least, meaning well.

I hope therefore the Reader will excuse the Vanity of an over officious *Old Man*, if like *Cato*, I enquire whether or no before I go hence and be no more, I can yet do anything for the Service of my Country.

Tempered by a hint of self-deprecating humor, these works cast in gentler form the Defoe of *An Essay upon Projects* and even of the Queen Anne propaganda, but here individual and domestic concerns take precedence. In *Augusta Triumphans*, for instance, he rails against the treatment of foundling children and the use of private madhouses to confine unwanted wives. In *Parochial Tyranny*, he condemns the results of the policy that the parish in which an indigent child is born must care for it and asks, "How many poor Women in Labour have been lost, while two Parishes are contending to throw her on each other..." Here, too, he proposes a home for old people where they can live healthful, dignified lives.

Yet another group of substantial works are part of the crime literature of the period. Defoe wrote them during the 1720s, the time when the popularity of such works was at its height. Readers could choose broadsides, ballads, chapbooks, newspapers, pamphlets, "anatomies," *Old Bailey Sessions Papers*, *Accounts by the Ordinary of Newgate*, and collections such as *A Compleat Collection of Remarkable Tryals*. *Moll Flanders* is, of course, Defoe's best-known book about crime. Moll's multitude of adventures and resilient, lively personality, even as the book addresses serious moral, economic, and social issues, assure its well-deserved, lasting appeal. Before he wrote *Moll Flanders*, however, Defoe had written about the Scottish rebels imprisoned after the 1715 rebellion and may have written about the famous Scottish outlaw Rob Roy, highwaymen, and housebreakings for periodicals such as *Mist's Weekly Journal* and *Applebee's Journal*. Some of these reports have been interpreted as sources or sketches for *Moll Flanders*. An *Applebee's* for 16 July 1720 is a "letter" from a woman who went from pickpocket to shop thief, was caught, tried, transported, and has returned to England just as Moll did. The writer, "Moll" of Rag-Fair, mentions that her adventures are too long for the letter.

In 1724, Defoe wrote two entertaining pamphlets on John Sheppard, the thief who achieved his greatest fame from his astonishing escapes from prison. His *History of the Remarkable Life of John Sheppard* and *A Narrative of all the Robberies, Escapes, &c. of John Sheppard* portray Sheppard as a clever Jester who exchanges jokes, "[I] made the door my humble servant." It was Sheppard's violent attack on one of the most famous criminals in English history as he was led to prison that helped bring about Jonathan Wild's downfall. Wild had come to the public's attention first as the proprietor of his "Office for the Recovery of Lost and Stolen Property" and then as the thief taker chiefly responsible for the destruction of London's four largest gangs. Two years later, Wild was exposed as the man who received thieves' plunder and sold it back to their victims. In 1724 Defoe wrote at least one life of Wild, and Wild was the model for John Gay's Peachum in *The Beggar's Opera* (1728). Defoe's *A Brief Historical Account of the Lives of the Six Notorious Street-Robbers, executed at Kingston* was published in 1726. From then until his death, Defoe published proposals for reducing crime, especially in London. He wrote *Some Considerations upon Street-Walkers* (1726), *Second Thoughts are Best* (1729), *An Effectual Scheme for the Immediate Preventing of Street-Robberies* (1731), and periodical essays on subjects such as the current opinion that soldiers and sailors were brutal men who turned criminal in peacetime. Defoe's sense of justice and respect for humankind shows in lines such as these from a 5 March 1726 *Applebee's*:

Though there is a kind of Poverty and Distress necessary to bring a poor Man to take Arms ... and run the risk of Life and Limb, for so mean a Consideration as a red Coat and 3s. a Week. Yet those poorest of Men may have principles of Honour and Justice in them, at least it should be supposed they have, till something appears to the Contrary....

Some of Defoe's nonfiction can still be read with pleasure. Some--*A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, *The History of the Union of Great Britain*, groups of his pamphlets--are essential sources for political and economic historians. Others, such as *A History of Apparitions*, offer the folklorist unmined treasures. All have some interest for those who would understand Defoe and his time. In a 1731 proposal to reprint the best pamphlets of the last century, William Oldys called them "the liveliest Pictures of their Times" and "The truest Images of their Authors" because they are written hastily and, therefore, show the mind "in the most natural Form and Symmetry." He continues to say that in them we can "discover the genuine Abilities of an Author." Oldys intended to reprint several of Defoe's works, and the modern reader of Defoe's nonfiction can certainly recognize the truth of Oldys's statement.

Defoe's greatest legacy, however, is surely his contribution to journalism. During his lifetime the power of the press as we know it was established, and Defoe deserves a considerable share of the credit. When he began his *Review*, nothing like the modern newspaper existed. Newspapers printed a sentence or two, or at most a few paragraphs, on even the most important events. These items came from the official *London Gazette* or the best French or Dutch newspapers. A few special-interest periodicals like John Dunton's question-answer paper *The Athenian Gazette* existed. The *Review*, published first as a kind of serial history intended to explain the causes and implications of the War of Spanish Succession and to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of both sides, quickly became an essay periodical with timely comment on current events, controversies, and topics of discussion. Although it began and remained primarily political, it included some poetry, letters from readers, and articles on bankrupts, education, and city happenings. Especially in *The Little Review*, *Miscellanea*, and the *Scandal Club*, the *Review* resembled the later *Tatler* and *Spectator*. Here Defoe satirized rival journalists, foolish young men, and bickering married couples.

The *Review* became increasingly political, and Defoe demonstrated the potential papers had to interpret events and shape opinion. He wrote the *Review* almost alone for nine years and, during that time, covered nearly every political and religious issue that arose, was a tireless champion of England's emerging credit economy, served as apologist for most of Robert Harley's policies and positions, and intelligently explained foreign events as remote from the ordinary Englishman's knowledge as the Great Northern War, the changes made in Russia by Peter the Great, and the African trade.

Defoe well understood the power of the press; at one time he owned every newspaper in Edinburgh and, during the reign of George I, infiltrated Tory periodicals in order to diminish their effectiveness. One of these, *Mist's Weekly Journal*, he transformed by filling the paper with entertaining, nonpolitical material. The *Weekly Journal* became a magazine filled with lively anecdotes and letters on every subject under the sun. The novel, even bizarre, nature of reported incidents, the variety of strong personalities displayed in the letters, and the "letters introductory"

invented by Defoe became the paper's most distinctive features. It soon had a circulation of eleven thousand copies a week, remained the most popular journal in England for years, and set the standard for this increasingly popular kind of periodical.

He wrote several papers, including the *Mercator* (26 June 1713-20 July 1714) and the *Manufacturer* (30 October 1719-17 February 1720), to support individual causes (the Treaty of Commerce and the weavers' campaign for protective legislature in these cases). Among his other papers were *The White-Hall Evening Post* (18 September 1718-circa 14 October 1720), a good, standard newspaper; *The Daily Post* (3 October 1719-circa 27 April 1725), one of the rare early eighteenth-century dailies and a lucrative paper because of its large number of advertisements; and *The Commentator* (1 January-16 September 1720), an amusing and informative essay periodical that he wrote "to pry into the Faults and Follies of Mankind." Articles on superstition, freak shows, medicine, education, human foibles break up an important, lively eyewitness account of the South Sea mania.

Check Your Progress

**2. Write down the important works of Daniel Defoe with their plots in details.**

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## **2.6 Daniel's Theory of Fiction**

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Many of Defoe's critics have regarded his fiction as a kind of accident arising from his desperate need to support his family and to keep off his creditors. Rudolph Stamm points to Defoe's moral position on fiction and argues that it is amazing that he could have ever written fiction at all; while Ian Watt, noting Defoe's attacks on Homer and James Sutherland's comment on Defoe's alienation from the literary society of his time, comments, "he is perhaps a unique example of a great writer who was very little interested in literature, and says nothing of interest about it as literature." This last remark would probably have surprised Defoe, who admired Rochester's poetry for its wit in spite of its immorality and Milton's for its genius in spite of its "heresies." More recently John Robert Moore has discussed Defoe's interest in the theatre and Arthur Secord his indebtedness to the "memoir" as a literary form.<sup>3</sup> Both of these subjects require more study, but for the purpose of this paper I want to discuss three aspects of Defoe's approach to fiction: (1) his attitude toward fiction as a genre practiced by his contemporaries and to the taste of his audience; (2) his theory of reality and its effect on his realistic technique; (3) his concept of the uses of fiction and his efforts to defend it on moral grounds. Although there are obvious disparities between his theories and his practice, Defoe's opinions on fiction throw light on what he contributed to the development of the novel.

In approaching Defoe's ideas on fiction, we must remember that his remarks are addressed to different reading audiences for different effects. For example, in *A Vindication of the Press*, written in 1718, Defoe is addressing a literary audience, and as one critic has remarked, he adapts all "the critical commonplaces of the time." His most original statements concern himself. What are we to think of his comparison of himself to Shakespeare and to contemporary women novelists as writers of "little Learning, but of prodigious Natural Parts"? And how seriously are we to take his praise of Pope's translation of Homer and his defense of the literary hack as a person who deserves pity rather than execration? Are these Defoe's true sentiments, or are we to believe that he detested Shakespeare's immorality and regarded all novels and romances as immoral lies? The exact answer will never be known unless some new documents are discovered giving us an insight into his private life and opinions, but we can be certain that Defoe knew what he was writing in a given work for a given audience and that his fiction did not spring from the air. Defoe never wrote a romance in the manner of Aphra Behn, Mrs. Haywood or Mrs. Manley, and while he may have admired these writers for their ingenuity, he probably regarded them as trivial. On the other hand, for all his praise of Bunyan, he never wrote a lengthy allegory in the manner of *Pilgrim's Progress* and he devoted several pages of his *Political History of the Devil* to mocking the naivete of authors like Bunyan.

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## 2.7 Summary

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Perhaps no writer in human history has written so knowledgeably and sympathetically on so many subjects. Whatever kind of writing he took up, he transformed. He combined genres, he invented new arts of persuasion, and he brought his country and his time to life. He felt his audience to be the English people in the broadest sense, and his sturdy, confident prose cajoled, admonished, teased, exhorted, prophesied, explained and--occasionally--ridiculed. He told them stories endlessly and, above all, caught them up in his enthusiasm, his wonder, his vision for the future, and his imaginative vigor. Defoe will always be remembered for *Robinson Crusoe*, but the broad knowledge, strong opinions, and amazingly diverse interests found in the nonfiction stand behind the great novel.

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## 2.8 Key Terms

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- **The Savages:** Cannibals that come to Crusoe's Island and who represent a threat to Crusoe's religious and moral convictions as well as his own safety.
- **Robinson Crusoe:** The narrator of the novel who gets shipwrecked.
- **Xury:** Servant to Crusoe after they escape slavery from the Captain of the *Rover* together. He is later given to the Portuguese Sea Captain as an indentured servant.
- **Enlightenment:** The Age of Enlightenment or the Enlightenment, also known as the Age of Reason, was an intellectual and philosophical movement that occurred in Europe, especially Western Europe, in the 17th and 18th centuries, with global influences and effects.

- **Verse:** Chapter and verse divisions did not appear in the original texts of Jewish or Christian bibles; such divisions form part of the paratext of the Bible. Since the early 13th century, most copies and editions of the Bible have presented all but the shortest of the scriptural books with divisions into chapters, generally a page or so in length. Since the mid-16th century, editors have further subdivided each chapter into verses – each consisting of a few short lines or of one or more sentences. In the King James Version (KJV) Esther 8:9 is the longest verse<sup>[1]</sup> and John 11:35 is the shortest.

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## 2.9 Review Questions

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1. Explain Daniel Defoe's theory of fiction.
2. Discuss the role of Daniel Defoe towards the works of literature.
3. How is Daniel Defoe different from his contemporaries? Explain.
4. Discuss Defoe as both journalist and as a writer.
5. What is most important work of Defoe. Discuss it in details about the plot and theme of the work.

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## UNIT 3: MOLL FLANDERS – AN ANALYSIS

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### STRUCTURE

- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Introduction
- 3.3 Background
- 3.4 Historical Context of Moll Flanders
- 3.5 Introduction to the Novel
- 3.6 Characters of the Novel
- 3.7 Plot of the Novel
- 3.8 Chapter – wise Analysis of the text
- 3.9 Other Books related to Moll Flanders
- 3.10 Summary
- 3.11 Key Terms
- 3.12 Review Questions
- 3.13 References

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### 3.1 Objectives

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This unit shall let the learners to know the following:

- The text ‘Moll Flanders’
- An in – depth analysis of the text Moll Flanders.
- Background to the text.
- Contribution of Defoe in Moll Flanders.

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### 3.2 Introduction

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Daniel Defoe was born in 1660 in London, England. He became a merchant and participated in several failing businesses, facing bankruptcy and aggressive creditors. He was also a prolific political pamphleteer which landed him in prison for slander. Late in life he turned his pen to fiction and wrote Robinson Crusoe, one of the most widely read and influential novels of all time. Defoe died in 1731. Daniel Foe, born circa 1660, was the son of James Foe, a London butcher. Daniel later changed his name to Daniel Defoe, wanting to sound more gentlemanly.

Defoe graduated from an academy at Newington Green, run by the Reverend Charles Morton. Not long after, in 1683, he went into business, having given up an earlier intent on becoming a dissenting minister. He travelled often, selling such goods as wine and wool, but was rarely out of debt. He went bankrupt in 1692 (paying his debts for nearly a decade thereafter), and by 1703, decided to leave the business industry altogether.

Having always been interested in politics, Defoe published his first literary piece, a political pamphlet, in 1683. He continued to write political works, working as a journalist, until the early



1700s. Many of Defoe's works during this period targeted support for King William III, also known as "William Henry of Orange." Some of his most popular works include *The True-Born Englishman*, which shed light on racial prejudice in England following attacks on William for being a foreigner; and the *Review*, a periodical that was published from 1704 to 1713, during the reign of Queen Anne, King William II's successor. Political opponents of Defoe's repeatedly had him imprisoned for his writing in 1713.

Defoe took a new literary path in 1719, around the age of 59, when he published *Robinson Crusoe*, a fiction novel based on several short essays that he had composed over the years. A handful of novels followed soon after—often with rogues and criminals as lead characters—including *Moll Flanders*, *Colonel Jack*, *Captain Singleton*, *Journal of the Plague Year* and his last major fiction piece, *Roxana* (1724). In the mid-1720s, Defoe returned to writing editorial pieces, focusing on such subjects as morality, politics and the breakdown of social order in England. Some of his later works include *Everybody's Business is Nobody's Business* (1725); the nonfiction essay "Conjugal Lewdness: or, Matrimonial Whoredom" (1727); and a follow-up piece to the "Conjugal Lewdness" essay, entitled "A Treatise Concerning the Use and Abuse of the Marriage Bed."

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### 3.3 Background

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The novel is the most popular literary form of the last 250 years. Novels are indeed ubiquitous and provide both intellectual stimulation and emotional satisfaction. The novel is also an especially important and influential form. To the extent, for example, that we see society as complex and interconnected or view human personality as the product of early childhood experience, we are—whether we realize it or not—registering the impact of such writers as Jane Austen and Charles Dickens, Henry James and Virginia Woolf.

This overview of novel is an introduction to the form of the novel and, in particular, to the English novel tradition. No prior knowledge of the texts or authors is assumed. The course has an unusually wide sweep, beginning in the 1740s and closing in the 1920s. In distinguishing the novel from other forms, we might note two of its most striking features. The first is the novel's preoccupation with social values and social distinctions. A great novel often seems to describe an entire society, creating a vivid image of the relationships among whole classes of people. It's no wonder that novels are frequently described as the forerunners of modern ethnographies and social histories.

Equally important to our ongoing definition of the novel form is its interest in human psychology. Whereas plays and films are often forced to concentrate on externals—how a character moves or speaks—novels are free to probe the inner recesses of both mind and heart. By the end of a novel, we may have developed a deep sympathy and, perhaps, some kind of identification with the characters. In addition to examining human communities, then, the novel explores the nature of consciousness itself.

To define the novel in these ways is to recognize its relationship to larger social forces. The rise of the novel through the 18th and 19th centuries coincides with major historical

developments—urbanization and democratization, industrialization and globalization, to name a few. These developments heighten conflicts between established elites and the growing middle class. They also raise urgent questions of personal identity, social responsibility, and moral virtue—the very sorts of questions that turn up in so many of the greatest English novels. That the novel provided compelling responses to such questions is evidenced by its enormous and enduring popularity. No form could have established itself so quickly and so powerfully without addressing the deepest needs of its audience.

The English novel tradition is not the only one to concern itself with the relationship between society and the self. Such concerns can also be seen to dominate the French, Russian, and American traditions. Yet if the English tradition shares much with its Continental and American counterparts, it also possesses a number of distinguishing features. Perhaps the most obvious aspect of the English tradition is its virtual obsession

with courtship, love, and marriage. Almost all of the greatest English novels of the 18th and 19th centuries are love stories, and some of the great Modernist novels of the early 20th century are dominated by issues of love and marriage.

Another distinguishing feature of the English tradition, especially as it unfolds in the 18th and 19th centuries, is its striking preference for comedic plots. Unlike the works of Flaubert, Tolstoy, or Melville, the overwhelming majority of English novels from this period end happily. By the close of a novel by Fielding or Austen or the early Dickens, each of the characters has found his or her proper place in society. These characters not only end up where they belong but also get what they deserve. Virtue is rewarded, and vice is punished—which is to say that a larger sense of poetic justice prevails.

As the 19th century moved on, English novelists began to experiment with other sorts of endings. By the time Thomas Hardy published *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* in 1891, the old conventions and forms had become increasingly untenable. For about a century, it had been possible for English writers to imagine a satisfying resolution to social conflicts. By the time we get to Hardy, after decades of industrialization and the reorganization of English society along modern lines, that possibility had vanished.

In tracing the emergence and consolidation of various approaches to stories and storytelling, we will, of course, fashion a story of our own. The last large movement in that story will focus on the great modern novelists of the 1910s and 1920s. Like their 18th- and 19th-century predecessors, these writers were responding to larger social forces, including those associated with the horrors of the First World War. Yet even as modern novelists create disturbing images of social fragmentation, they deepen our understanding of the individual personality, fashioning character studies of unsurpassed emotional complexity. Thus, one can see why the novel remains a form of unrivalled popularity and undeniable importance.

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### 3.4 Historical Context of *Moll Flanders*

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In the preface of *Moll Flanders*, Defoe claims Moll's story—which is full of “Debauchery and Vice”—is useful instruction for the modest reader looking to live an honest life. He references

“the Advocates of the Stage,” who have argued through the ages for the usefulness of plays when “applied to virtuous Purposes.” Beginning in the 16th century, plays performed in public settings (such as theaters) were thought to carry messages of excessive humor and vice, which some feared would poison society and lead to increased sin and crime. Additionally, there was some concern over playwrights, who were often of the lower classes, representing royalty and the upper classes, and some worried that plays and the theater would lead to the feminization of society, since men and boys often played women’s roles. In 1642, London theaters closed entirely and the official stance on plays aligned with that of the Puritans: the theater exposed citizens to “lascivious Mirth and Levity” and made them more susceptible to sin and immorality.

London theaters remained closed until 1660, at which time the English monarchy was restored, and theaters as they are known today opened. The “Advocates of the Stage” that Defoe mentions in *Moll Flanders* supported the theater as a form of moral instruction and warning, which is exactly how Defoe sells Moll’s story—as a cautionary tale. Defoe’s note situates *Moll Flanders* within a historical context that was still very conservative in its views of sin and virtue (especially for woman) but that was becoming more open to considering depictions of sin—so long as they served a moral purpose.

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### 3.5 Introduction to the Novel

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Considered one of the great English novels, Defoe's book follows *Moll Flanders* as she struggles to avoid the deadly poverty of 17th-century England. From a prison-birth to final prosperity, Moll reckons love, theft and prostitution in terms of profit and loss and emerges as an extraordinary character. This vivid saga of an irresistible and notorious heroine - her high misdemeanours and delinquencies, her varied careers as a prostitute, a charming and faithful wife, a thief, and a convict - endures today as one of the liveliest, most candid records of a woman's progress through the hypercritical labyrinth of society ever recorded.

*Moll Flanders*, published in 1722, was one of the earliest English novels (the earliest is probably Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*, published in 1688). Like many early novels, it is told in the first person as a narrative, and is presented as a truthful account, since at that time the idea of a long, realistic work of fiction was still new. It is not only an extremely entertaining and action-packed story, but also gives a valuable and lively picture of 17th century society. Although Moll is an exceptional character because of her ingenuity and extraordinary life, the problems that Moll faces are firmly rooted in her society.

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### 3.6 Characters of the Novel

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#### **Moll Flanders**

The narrator and protagonist of the novel, who actually goes by a number of names during the course of her lifetime. Born an orphan, she lives a varied and exciting life, moving through an astonishing number of marriages and affairs and becoming a highly successful professional criminal before her eventual retirement and repentance. "Moll Flanders" is the alias she adopts, or rather is given by the criminal public, during her years as an expert thief.

**Moll's Mother**

A convicted felon, Moll's mother was transported to the American colonies soon after her daughter was born. She reappears as Moll's mother-in-law midway through the novel, when Moll travels to Virginia with the husband who turns out to be her half-brother. She leaves her daughter a sizable inheritance when she dies, which Moll reclaims in America at the end of the novel.

**The Nurse**

A widow in Colchester who takes care of the child Moll from the age of three through her teenage years. The sudden death of this nurse precipitates Moll's placement with a local wealthy family.

**The Elder Brother**

One of the two brothers in the family with which Moll spends her teenage years, he falls in love with her. She becomes the mistress of this older brother, under the mistaken understanding that he intends to marry her when he comes into his inheritance.

**Robert**

The younger of the two brothers who fall in love with Moll. He eventually marries her, in spite of his family's disapproval, but dies after five years.

**The Draper**

Moll's second husband, a tradesman with the manners of a gentleman. His financial indiscretions sink them into poverty, and he eventually escapes to France as a fugitive from the law.

**The Plantation Owner**

A man who marries Moll under the deception that she has a great fortune. Together they move to Virginia, where he has his plantations. There, Moll learns that he is actually her half-brother and leaves him to return to England.

**The Gentleman**

A well-to-do man who befriends Moll and eventually makes her his mistress. His wife is mad, but he keeps Moll for six years before an illness and religious experience prompt him to break off the affair.

**The Banker**

A prosperous man whom Moll agrees to marry if he will divorce his unfaithful wife. They live happily for several years, but he then dies.

**Jemy**

Also called James and "my Lancashire husband," he is the only man that Moll has any real affection for. They marry under a mutual deception and then part ways. Eventually they are reunited in prison and begin a new life together in America.

## **"My Governess"**

Moll's landlady and midwife, later her friend and confederate in crime. She helps Moll manage an inconvenient pregnancy and initiates her into the criminal underworld.

## **Humphrey**

Moll's son by the husband who was also her brother. She meets him with an overwhelming affection on her return to America, and he very generously helps her get established there.

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## **3.7 Plot of the Novel**

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As the daughter of a transported convict, she begins life at a great disadvantage: she lacks the support system of family and friends which all children need, and which was particularly necessary for women, since their access to employment was limited. Without any system to protect them, the children of convicts are thrown into the world with no training in any trade and no prospects other than starvation or the same life of crime that ended so badly for their parents. Moll herself was very lucky to be taken in: the parish (the area served by one church) were under no obligation to take care of penniless children who were not born there, or had no other particular claim to charity: "I was not a parish charge upon this or that part of the town by law."

When Moll is a young girl, she is forced to go into service as a maid because she would not be able to make a living sewing and spinning. Maids were paid very little, but at least they were fed and clothed. The fact that women were not able to support themselves legally (the assumption being that their husbands or father would contribute to their support from their higher wages) always underlies Moll's decisions: she really needs to get married. When she is widowed at the age of 48, she is too old to hope to marry again, and has little choice but to embark on a life of crime.

In the 17th century, crime (at least thievery) really paid, because labour was very cheap and things were very expensive. Before the era of industrialization, the production of objects took an immense amount of labour: a piece of cloth could be the result of many hours of work, though stealing it might only take a minute. Even though labour was very cheap, the sheer amount of it which was required to make an object added up to make theft a profitable line of business. For example, the governess bought a lady's watch that Moll stole for 20 guineas, presumably less than it was worth, since it was stolen; 20 guineas would have supported one of Moll's children for 4 years. It would be by no means easy for Moll to make a living doing honest work, but she grows rich rapidly as a pickpocket. The emphasis on cloth underscores the fact that the production of cloth was a very important part of the 17th and 18th century English economy.

Theft was not the only illegal occupation open to women. In the 17th and 18th centuries, prostitution was widespread in London. This was probably the result of a social system in which poor women could hardly make an honest living, and completely lost their reputations if they were seduced, thus making it almost impossible to get an honest job. A "fallen woman" had little choice but to remain on the ground. Also, men could not engage in extramarital sex with respectable women, and commonly married late.

Theft and prostitution were not without their risks, however: a thief could be transported or hanged for stealing a watch or a length of cloth. At the very least, they could expect to spend several weeks in Newgate Prison, a lively but hellish place. Transportation to Virginia was considered a terrible punishment, even though transported convicts could eventually hope to be freed and settle their own land. The difference between colonial America as viewed by Americans, and as viewed by the colonizing English, is worth noticing. We are in the 17th century, long before any breath of revolution: Virginia is simply a place where good money can be made raising tobacco.

Prostitutes could not defend themselves well from infection or pregnancy. Syphilis was probably introduced into Europe from the Americas, in exchange for small pox and a host of other diseases. It appeared in Naples in 1493, and ravaged its way through Europe, known generally as the French Pox, except in France where it was called the Naples Disease (le mal de Naples). It was treated in a variety of harmful and ineffective ways, including the use of mercury, a dangerous poison. Some people argued that it could not be sexually transmitted because so many monks had it! But by the time of *Moll Flanders*, there was apparently little doubt that it was a venereal disease. It appears commonly in 18th century engravings as a punishment suffered by lustful sinners, weakening aristocratic families when infected children were born. Pregnant prostitutes might be chased from parish to parish since the authorities would not want to have to take charge of the unwanted infant. They could take refuge in houses like that of Moll's governess, who had presumably bribed the parish so they wouldn't bother her. Unwanted children could be given to country families to be taken care of, along with a sum of money. However these children were often neglected, and in any case rates of child mortality were very high. Many of Moll's many children quietly disappear, presumably fallen prey to illness. Perhaps because of the high rates of child mortality, some mothers guarded against becoming too attached to their children. Other familial ties were less strong also: people married for money rather than for love.

Despite all these difficulties and dangers, the picture Defoe gives of 17th century England is not altogether black. Its inhabitants seem to enjoy themselves quite a bit whenever they have a little money. Although the gaiety is rather frenetic, and pleasure is rarely without attendant dangers, there seems to be no doubt in Moll's mind that life is well worth having. Perhaps the spice of danger is what gives *Moll Flanders*, and the society it represents, such a vivid and intensely alive quality.

## Check Your Progress

### 1. Draw the character sketch of Moll.

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### 3.8 Chapter – wise Analysis of the text

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#### ➤ Chapter 1: Moll's Childhood

Newgate Prison and London's courthouse sat at the corner of Newgate and Old-Baily Streets; thus, Newgate and Old-Baily are synonymous with crime and criminals. As Moll has concealed her identity over things pending there, it can again be inferred that Moll is a criminal, and perhaps a wanted one at that. Moll's "worst Comrades" were obviously criminals, as they went out by "the Steps and the String," which is to say they were hanged for their crimes. Moll's comment as to who she was and who she is now suggests that identity evolves and changes over time, and she isn't the same person she used to be. Furthermore, the name Moll Flanders is itself highly suggestive. "Moll" is English slang for a low-class woman of ill-repute, and "Flanders" carries connotations of sex and prostitution, as London's most prominent prostitutes for years were Flemish women (that is, women from Flanders). As Moll's name was given to her by people who knew her, it must have special significance, and this suggests that Moll is both a criminal and a prostitute.

Defoe implies that England's failure to care for orphaned children is directly to blame for the "destruction" of Moll's "Soul and Body," which indicates that Moll's morals are destroyed, as well as her physical wellbeing. Defoe suggests here that Moll is more a victim than she is a criminal, and the fault lies with society.

**Moll's mother** was a criminal, convicted of a felony for stealing three pieces of fabric, and she is sentenced to death. She "[pleads] her Belly," however, and **Moll** is born seven months later. In the meantime, Mother's sentence is commuted to transportation to the Plantations, and she leaves Moll at just six months old. Moll is taken in by family for a time, but she somehow ends up in the care of a wandering group of Egyptians. The Egyptians leave Moll in Colchester, where she is taken to the church. The church provides for Moll, but she is too young—only three years old—to do any work. The Magistrates place Moll under the care of a **nurse**, who makes her living keeping children for the church until they are old enough to "go to Service, or get their own Bread."

The **nurse** also operates a school, in which she teaches children "to Read and to Work." The nurse, who comes from "good Fashion," also teaches the children about art, and she takes a good deal of care in her work. She is a pious and "Mannerly" woman, and she brings the children up just as if they had been educated at a fancy school. When **Moll** is eight years old, the Magistrates order her into Service; however, Moll has no intention of ever going into Service, so she begs the nurse to keep her. Moll promises to work for the nurse, doing embroidery and sewing, and she swears she'll work hard.

All day long, **Moll** works and weeps, until the **nurse** asks her why she is crying. Moll explains that she doesn't want to go to Service, where the other maids will surely beat her and make her

do difficult work. The nurse convinces the mayor not to send Moll to Service until she is older, but for Moll, this isn't enough. She *never* wants to go to Service. "What," asks the nurse, "would you be a Gentlewoman?" Moll explains she will; she will make three-pence for embroidery and four pennies for sewing. The nurse assures Moll that won't keep her, but Moll promises to work harder—and give all her money to the nurse.

Moved by **Moll's** sadness and determination, the **nurse** agrees to keep Moll. The nurse relays Moll's pleas to the mayor, who calls in his **wife** and daughters to hear the story, and they all laugh and laugh. A week later, **the mayor's wife** comes to visit. She asks Moll if she is the little girl who wants to be a "Gentlewoman," and Moll confirms she is. The woman smiles warmly and gives Moll a shilling. "Mind [your] work," the woman says, "and learn to Work well." Moll doesn't realize, however, that she does not have the same understanding of a "Gentlewoman" as everyone else.

**Moll** continues her work, all the while talking about how she will become a "Gentlewoman." The **nurse** later asks Moll what she means by "Gentlewoman," and Moll explains that it is a woman who supports herself without going to Service. Moll tells the nurse about a woman in town, who mends lace and launders ladies' hats. "She," Moll says, "is a Gentlewoman, and they call her Madam." The kindly nurse explains. "Poor child," she says, "you may soon be such a Gentlewoman as that, for she is a Person of ill Fame, and has had two or three Bastards."

When **Moll** is about 10 years old, she has begun to mature and is rather pretty. She is humble and has fine manners, and the ladies in town say she will grow into a beautiful woman indeed. Moll continues to work, mending linen and lace, and she gives all her money to the **nurse**, who promises to hold it and give it back when Moll comes of age. By the time Moll is 12, she makes enough money to buy her clothes, pay the nurse for keeping her, and have some extra spending money. The ladies in town also give her clothes, such as stockings, petticoats, and gowns. One **lady** in town is so impressed with Moll that she offers to take Moll for an entire month. The nurse objects, and they finally decide on one week. Moll spends the next week living with the lady and her family, after which they are disappointed to see her go.

By the time **Moll** is 14, she has grown even more beautiful. She continues working for the **nurse**, which, since Moll's "Taste of Genteel" living at the **lady's** house, isn't as easy as it used to be. In short time, the nurse grows sick and dies. The nurse's daughter, a woman with six or seven children, comes to clean out the house; however, she refuses to give Moll the money the nurse was holding for her. Alone and frightened, Moll is pleased when the maid of the lady with whom Moll previously spent a week arrives to get her. The **mayor's wife** also offers to take her in, but Moll is more than happy to live with the lady and her family.

## ➤ Chapter 2: The Older Brother and Moll's First Marriage

Living with the **lady** and her family, **Moll** enjoys the advantages of an education. By the time she is 18, Moll can write, dance, and speak French, and she has a reputation of "Virtue and Sobriety." The lady has two sons, and the **older brother** of the two is known as a handsome and "gay"



young man. He tells Moll (whom he calls Betty) how pretty she is every chance he gets, which Moll rather enjoys. His sisters warn him that Moll is only after money, but they can hardly blame her. Even the most beautiful and refined woman is nothing without money. The **younger brother**, however, claims that, for the right woman, he wouldn't worry about money. This reflects the importance of money in society. "Virtue and Sobriety" are exactly what society thinks Moll has, but since she still doesn't have any money, her refinement isn't worth much. The word "gay" denotes happiness, but it also had negative connotations during Defoe's time and was often used to describe rakes and men of poor reputation.

One day, the **older brother** visits **Moll** in the room where she does her work. He grabs her and kisses her several times. "Dear Betty," he says breathlessly. "I am in Love with you." Moll's heart jumps with desire. She knows nothing of protecting her virtue, and if he were to offer, Moll would allow him to do whatever he wanted to her. The older brother finds other opportunities to corner Moll in the house, kissing her and professing his love, and she doesn't resist. One day, he again visits Moll in her room, where he throws her to the bed and kisses her "most violently." Suddenly, he hears someone coming and jumps up. The older brother helps Moll to her feet, telling her again how much he loves her, and presses five Guineas into her hand before leaving.

**Moll** is more confused with the money than she is with the love. She is a young woman who thinks herself pretty, and she has no reason to doubt the **older brother's** love for her. He soon returns—there was no one coming, he says—and quickly takes to kissing her again. He tells Moll that he loves her passionately, and that he wants to marry her. He kisses her again, and they go farther than Moll can politely mention; however, it does not reach "that, which they call the last Favour." Then, the older brother gives Moll a handful of gold and exits.

**Moll**, full of "Vanity and Pride, and but a very little Stock of Virtue," thinks only of gold and the **older brother's** words. Careful not to draw suspicion, Moll goes to great lengths to ignore him in the company of others, until the day he secretly passes her a note in the hall. He says he will publicly order Moll on an errand the next day, and then he will meet her on her way to town. Sure enough, the older brother orders Moll to town the next day on some petty errands, after which a man comes to the door in a coach. He needs the older brother on urgent business in town, the man says.

The **older brother** hired the coach and the man the day before, but no one knows this. He grabs his best wig and exits, but before he does, he whispers to **Moll** to get away as soon as she can. Later, when they are together, the older brother tells Moll that he plans to marry her as soon as he comes into his estate. He promises to never leave her, but Moll hesitates. She has no reason to doubt his feelings for her, but... "BUT WHAT my Dear?" he asks. He asks if Moll worries about being "with child," and she admits she does. In that case, the older brother says, he will take care of them both. Then, to prove his sincerity, he takes out his purse and gives Moll 100 Guineas and promises to give her another 100 every year until they marry.

**Moll** swoons at the sight of the **older brother's** purse and the sound of his proposal, and she does not resist as he has his way with her. With this, Moll forsakes her virtue, and she is left with

“nothing of Value to recommend [her].” Afterward, Moll and the older brother have many occasions to repeat their “Crime,” until the **younger brother** confesses his own love to Moll. He wants to marry her, too, the younger brother says, but Moll firmly resists him. They are an unequal match, she says, and it wouldn’t be the right way to repay the **lady** for taking her in. Moll doesn’t, however, tell him the truth.

To **Moll**’s surprise, the **younger brother** does not hide his feelings like the **older brother**, and he makes it plain to the **lady** and the rest of his family that he is in love with Moll. Soon, the lady and her family begin to treat Moll differently, and one of the maids tells Moll that she will soon be asked to leave. Moll isn’t surprised. Plus, since she expects to be pregnant at any time, she expects to have to leave soon. The younger brother tells Moll that he will tell his family that he intends to marry her. They may resent it, he says, but he is a lawyer and can take care of Moll himself. **Moll** has “no great Scruples of Conscience,” but even she cannot imagine “being a Whore to one Brother, and Wife to the other.” Still, the **older brother** hasn’t mentioned marriage since they began having sex. Moll doesn’t know what to do about the **younger brother**. She is sure she will soon be put out on the street, which must be no secret to the older brother. She begins to think seriously for the first time and decides to tell the older brother that she will soon be kicked out of the house.

The first chance she gets, **Moll** goes to the **older brother**. She has been crying, and he asks her what’s wrong. Moll lies and tells him that one of the maids must have discovered their affair and told the **lady** of the house, because now there is talk that Moll will be asked to leave. The older brother smiles. No one knows about their affair, he says. Then why, Moll asks, is she being treated so unfairly? It is the **younger brother**, Robin, he says, who has convinced everyone he loves Moll. She breaks into tears, admitting the younger brother’s love. But, Moll says, she denied him without giving him a reason.

Moll likely doesn’t want the older brother to know about the younger brother because she fears it will negatively affect her relationship with the older brother. The older brother doesn’t take any of this seriously (he smiles as Moll cries), which suggests he doesn’t really care about her and is just using her for sex. This is also the first time Moll mentions the younger brother by name, and this reflects her indifference toward him.

It is bad enough the **lady** knows the **younger brother** is in love with **Moll**, but it will be much worse when the lady finds out Moll denied him. The lady is sure to suspect that Moll is in love with another if she is turning down such a match as the younger brother. The **older brother** asks Moll to do nothing for the time being and give him time to think. Moll reminds him that she can’t possibly agree to marry the younger brother when she is already engaged to the older brother; she already thinks of herself as married to the older brother. He kisses her and gives her more money, and then he leaves.

The older brother’s kiss and gift of money again underscore the connection between sex and money. What Moll is really saying is that she can’t marry the younger brother because she has already had sex with the older brother. If she marries the younger brother, he may find out she isn’t a virgin, which would likely be detrimental to their marriage—and to Moll’s security.

Days later, the older brother tells the younger brother that he heard stories that the younger brother is in love with Moll. Yes, the younger brother admits. He loves her more than any woman in the world, and he will have her. The younger brother doesn't believe that Moll will deny him. Moll can't believe it when the older brother tells her later. She must deny the younger brother, and she can't imagine why he expects she won't. The older brother says that he reminded his brother that Moll is poor, but Robin claimed to love her still. Well, says Moll, if the younger brother proposes marriage now, she will say no and tell him that she is already married.

The younger brother is convinced he will have Moll, which reflects the overall sexism of the time. He wants her, so he plans to have her; how Moll feels about it doesn't really matter. He doesn't believe Moll will deny him because he is rich and she is poor, and Moll would be foolish to turn down such an offer. Still, the younger brother clearly loves Moll, since he is willing to endure the resentment that he will likely experience for marrying outside his class.

The older brother says that telling anyone about his relationship with Moll is not a good idea, and she agrees. He asks Moll what she will say when she denies the younger brother's proposal. Moll doesn't see why she owes anyone an explanation, but the older brother says offering no explanation will be suspicious. Moll doesn't know what to do, but the older brother says he has been thinking a lot about it. "Marry him," the older brother says. Moll is shocked, but he says she should at least consider it.

An explanation will be expected from Moll, and her refusal to give one again reflects her resistance to the sexism of the time. It isn't anyone's business why Moll turns down a marriage proposal, but society thinks otherwise. Society expects Moll to jump at the chance to marry someone rich like the younger brother, but she isn't interested—at this point, she still believes that that should be reason enough.

Moll asks the older brother what happened to his love and faith, and he admits that he did promise to marry her when he came into his estate, but his father might live another 30 years. He says Moll never suggested marrying him any sooner—she knows it "might be [his] Ruin"—and she has never wanted for anything. Moll knows this is true, but she doesn't say so. With the younger brother, the older brother says, Moll "may come into a safe Station, and appear with Honour and with splendor at once." It will be like Moll's relationship with the older brother never happened, and he will count her a "Dear Sister."

The older brother implies that Moll may be able to hide the fact that she is no longer a virgin if she marries the younger brother. Their marriage will be "a safe Station" (Moll will be financially secure), and she can "appear with Honor and with splendor," meaning Moll can appear to be a virgin and therefore continue to seem worthy in society's eyes. The older brother's claim that he will count Moll a "Dear Sister" has incestuous connotations, which foreshadow the incest that appears later in the novel.

Moll reminds the older brother that even though they aren't legally married, she is his wife just as sure as if the ceremony had passed between them. She can't possibly stop loving him and consent to love the younger brother instead. She would rather, Moll says, be his "Whore" than the younger brother's wife. The older brother is obviously pleased with Moll's affection for him,

but he tells her he has done nothing to break his promise to her. He says they can remain friends, and then he asks Moll if she is sure that she isn't with child. Moll says she is sure, and he stands to leave.

Moll considers herself married to the older brother because they have already had sex. Since sex consummates a marriage, sex at this time was considered just as important as the actual marriage ceremony, if not more so. Therefore, in Moll's mind, they are already married. Of course, Moll truly loves the older brother, but he is just exploiting Moll for sex and placating her with money. Moll again calls herself a "Whore," which reflects the sexist nature of society; she's doing what she thinks makes sense to secure her future and be with the man she loves, but society would view her as immoral for doing so.

Afterward, Moll falls ill with a fever. She is confined to bed for five weeks, and her recovery is so slow that the doctor fears she will slip into a "Consumption." The doctor claims that Moll's "Mind [is] Oppress'd," and he suspects that she is in love. The younger brother tells his family that if Moll were in love with him, he would gladly help her recover, and the older brother begins to suspect that his brother knows about his relationship with Moll. Moll assures the older brother that she has said nothing of their affair, and she further says that she detests the idea of marrying Robin and will never consent. "Then I am Ruin'd," the older brother says.

The older brother risks angering his family and losing his inheritance if his affair with Moll is discovered, in which case his reputation and status as a member of the upper class will be ruined. During Moll's time, a "consumption" was known as a long, lingering illness, one that was often vague and nondescript. Consumption was often associated with depression and other forms of mental illness, which is why the doctor suspects Moll is in love. Weeks later, Moll is fully recovered, but she still suffers from bouts of melancholy and sadness. One day, Moll decides to tell the lady of the house about the younger brother's proposals. She tells the lady that Robin asked her several times to marry him, but she resisted him each time, telling him that such a relationship cannot come to pass without the consent of the lady and master of the house. The lady is both shocked and touched by Moll's honesty. It seems, the lady says, that Moll has treated them much better than they have treated her. Obviously, Moll isn't being honest here. She cared nothing about the lady's consent when she agreed to marry the older brother. Moll is clearly trying to manipulate the lady and get into her good graces again, so she won't be kicked out. Moll has little money and no way to support herself—unless she goes into Service, which Moll has already said she absolutely will not do.

Later, the lady of the house sits down with the younger brother and asks him about his proposals to Moll. It is true, Robin confirms: he has asked Moll to marry him several times, and she has always resisted him. The lady listens and declares the resentment Moll has been forced to endure in the house is not Moll's fault. Moll's behavior reflects true respect, the lady says, and she values Moll more because of it. Soon, the lady begins to encourage a marriage between Moll and Robin, and she even recruits the older brother to convince Moll.

Moll's behavior doesn't really reflect true respect for the lady, illustrating the deterioration of Moll's morals. Before having sex with the older brother, Moll was of superior moral standing, but her morals go steadily downhill from the moment she loses her virginity. Here, Moll deceives

the lady to serve her own interests. Whether the sex itself is immoral is debatable; however, the behavior the sex leads Moll to is certainly immoral, which reinforces Defoe's point that virtuous readers can learn what not to do by studying Moll's story.

The older brother visits Moll in her room, where he gently kisses and hugs her. He tells Moll that she has the consent of the lady and the entire house to marry the younger brother. If Moll doesn't, the older brother says, he fears that she will "be sunk into the dark Circumstances of a Woman that has lost her Reputation." He begs her to marry Robin, and then he gives her £500. "To make you some Amends for the Freedoms I have taken with you," the older brother says. He adds that if Moll refuses to marry Robin, their relationship can never be again what it once was.

Virginity and chastity are so important in society that Moll will be ruined if she is found out. Here, the older brother puts a price on Moll's entire future and worth and basically pays her for potentially ruining her reputation. £500 is a lot of money (one could live in relative luxury at £300 per year), but he insults Moll and reduces her worth to her body and sex—a common message in Moll's sexist society.

Afterward, Moll considers her life as "a meer cast off Whore," and she is terrified. She had never really considered the danger of her situation. If she is eventually dropped by both the older brother and the younger brother, she will be left to fend for herself with nothing and no one to support her. With these thoughts, Moll agrees to marry Robin, but she never loves him. On their wedding night, the older brother gets the younger brother so drunk that he can't remember whether their marriage was consummated. Moll lies and assures him it was.

Presumably, the older brother gets the younger brother drunk on purpose, so he is less likely to notice that Moll is not a virgin. Moll again calls herself a "Whore," which society considers any woman who has sex out of wedlock to be, and this again underscores the extremely sexist and misogynistic nature of 17th-century England. This insulting view of women is so ingrained in society that even Moll believes it about herself.

Moll lives with the younger brother as his wife for five years, and they have two children together. Each time Moll is in bed with her husband, she dreams of being with the older brother. "In short," Moll says, "I committed Adultery and Incest with him every Day in my Desires," which is just as criminal as actually doing it. The older brother marries and moves to London, and at the end of five years, the younger brother dies. He was a kind man and a good husband, but Moll's finances have not improved by much. Hidden in her private bank, Moll still has most of the money given to her by the older brother, about £1,200, but that is all. The children are "taken happily off of [Moll's] Hands" by the lady and her husband, and she is free.

Moll's words suggest guilt over marrying the younger brother while being secretly in love with the older brother. Despite the slow deterioration of Moll's morals, she clearly feels bad about her decision to marry Robin (which she was forced to do by a sexist society), and this suggests she isn't innately immoral; she was simply doing what she had to do to survive. However, Moll also "happily" abandons her children, which suggests that Moll's morals are lacking. Conflicting actions such as these make it impossible to decide if Moll is truly repentant at the end of the

novel, or if she was just an immoral opportunist all along.

## Check Your Progress

### 2. Discuss the journey and experience of Moll in her first marriage.

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## ➤ Chapter 3: Moll Marries the Linen-Draper

Moll is still young and attractive, and she has many suitors, including a linen-draper, the brother of her landlady. Still, Moll isn't impressed with any of the men she dates. She isn't concerned with love at all—not after losing so badly in love with the older brother—and she resolves “to be well Married or not at all.” Still, it isn't long before she is caught in the “Snare” of the linen-draper, a “Land-water-thing call'd, a Gentleman-Tradesman,” and she marries him. The linen-draper quickly takes to spending all the money Moll saved, and within two years, he is bankrupt. In short, Moll is looking for a wealthy husband; she isn't looking for love after her experiences with the older brother. At first she obviously thinks the linen-draper has money, but the fact that he spends all her money implies he isn't wealthy at all. Moll is caught in the trap of a “Gentleman-Tradesman,” a man she thinks is wealthy but who is just a poor tradesman. Moll's amphibious description of him reflects his slippery identity and ability to deceive her. The linen-draper is arrested for his sizable debts, and Moll goes to see him at the Bailiff's House where he is being held. He apologizes for the state he is leaving Moll in and tells her to take whatever money and valuables are left and run. He wishes her well, and Moll leaves, never seeing him again. Later, the linen-draper breaks out of the Bailiff's House and flees to France. Moll is left with only £500 in her bank and nowhere to go. The only child she had with the linen-draper died in infancy, but since she is still legally married, Moll's options are limited. According to the law, the linen-draper's debt are legally Moll's debts since she is his wife, and she could be thrown into debtors' prison because of him. Moll keeps her personal bank throughout the book, and the hidden stash of money is symbolic of security and Moll's ability to care for herself. 500 pounds is a lot of money, but it must last Moll her whole life. The only way for Moll to increase her wealth is to marry again or go into Service, and since Moll doesn't have a way to divorce the linen-draper, it will be hard for her to marry again.

Fearing creditors, Moll goes to the Mint, poses as a widow, and changes her name to Mrs. Flanders. She has little money, no friends or family, and no idea what she will do. Moll sees nothing but “Misery and Starving” before her, and she vows to get out of the Mint, where the people and conditions are terrible. Moll leaves the Mint and lives for a time with a kind widow,

but the widow soon remarries, and Moll is again on her own.

The Mint was a district in London so named because coins were once manufactured there. The actual mint was closed in the 1500s, but the area remained a jurisdictional interzone, meaning it was ruled over by a lord and the established law didn't have jurisdiction there. Criminals can't be arrested at the Mint, so it is a sort of sanctuary for wanted debtors like Moll. Moll's circumstances are bleak—she has only “Misery and Starving” ahead of her—and she is desperate to get out. Moll's assumed name, Mrs. Flanders, connotes sex and prostitution. At the time, it was said that London's best prostitutes were Flemish women (that is, women from Flanders), and by calling herself Mrs. Flanders, Moll implies she is willing to resort to prostitution to improve her circumstances.

Living in London, Moll discovers that marriage is “the Consequence of politick Schemes for forming Interests, and carrying on Business,” and it has nothing at all to do with love. She also learns that women don't have “the Privilege” to turn down marriage proposals and should consider themselves lucky just for being asked. Women can't question a man's character or fortune before agreeing to marriage, but men enjoy this right. The men go “Fortune Hunting” without “Fortune themselves to Demand it, or Merit to deserve it.”

This passage reflects the sexist and classist nature of Moll's society. Marriage isn't an expression of love; it is an expression of one's wealth and place in society. Women are considered another piece of property owned by men, only it is the women who must pay, either in the form of a dowry or with their virtue, and always with the expectation of sex. A man can be poor and of little character, but a woman has no right to question him.

Get the entire Moll Women have much to gain, Moll explains, by holding their ground and saying no. There are few good men available these days, and women have good reason to be cautious. Those women who easily give themselves to marriage without questioning the fortune or character of their husbands place their entire lives in “a Lottery” with 1,000 to one odds. No good man will condemn a woman for enquiring about his character and wealth upon a proposal, Moll claims, and any man who does has a “very contemptible Opinion” of the woman he expects to take marriage on like a leap of faith. Moll is practical and reasonable in her approach to marriage, and her opinion here implies she respects herself, since she doesn't want to settle for just any husband; however, Moll's sexist society doesn't allow Moll such control, not even over her own life and future. Moll has a better chance of winning the lottery than finding a good man, but she is expected to take whoever will have her, which reflects the “contemptible Opinion” of women in Moll's society.

## ➤ Chapter 4: Moll Marries the Plantation Owner

It is nothing but cowardice and fear of being “an old Maid” that brings many women to marriage, Moll says, and this is “the Woman's Snare.” Still, in Moll's current circumstance, the thing she needs most in the world is a husband. Of course, she has next to nothing of value—only £460 in her bank, some expensive clothes, a gold watch and some jewelry, and £40 worth of linen. She moves in with the friends of an acquaintance, who start a rumor that Moll is their cousin from out of town and that she's worth at least £1,500. Moll soon has her choice of suitors,

and she picks out a handsome plantation owner without much difficulty.

The “Woman’s Snare” again highlights the sexist nature of Moll’s society. Women are forced to marry against their will to avoid being marginalized by society and downgraded to spinster status. Moll’s reasons for marriage, however, are financial. She’s running out of money, and she wants a rich husband. While Moll doesn’t start the rumor that she is rich, she doesn’t deny it either, and she secures the plantation owner through deceptive means.

The plantation owner courts Moll and frequently professes his love to her. He promises to love her forever, and Moll pretends to doubt his sincerity, claiming he only loves her for her fortune. One day, the plantation owner visits Moll in her room. He takes off his diamond ring and uses it to write upon the windowpane: “You I Love, and you alone.” Moll takes the ring. “But Money’s Virtue; Gold is Fate,” she writes. He takes the ring back. “I scorn your Gold, and yet I Love.” She writes again: “I’m poor: Let’s see how kind you’ll prove.” The plantation owner promises to love Moll even if she is poor, but Moll can tell that he doesn’t really believe she is poor. Writing sonnets and confessions of love on windowpanes with a diamond was a common courtship practice during the 17th century. Here, by writing on the glass, Moll tricks the plantation owner into promising to love her even if she doesn’t have any money. He assumes she is just joking to make him prove his love; he has no idea that Moll is deceiving him and really is poor.

One day, Moll asks the plantation owner how and where they will live if they are married. She has heard he owns an estate in Virginia, but Moll does not wish to be “transported.” He openly and easily speaks to Moll of his affairs and finances. He has three Virginia plantations, he says, which provide him a comfortable living of about £300 a year. But, he says, that number will obviously go up if they are married. As for Virginia, he would not dream of making Moll live there unless she freely chose to.

Moll equates going to the American colonies with criminal behavior, which is why she calls moving there being “transported”; deportation was a common punishment for criminals at the time. The plantation owner is obviously wealthy, and he seems to be a decent and honest man. He isn’t trying to hide anything (like Moll is), and he doesn’t wish to force her into anything against her will.

Moll tells the plantation owner that she has learned the actual value of her fortune, and it is not quite £500. He seems unconcerned. It is true he expected more, but he does not regret his “bargain.” The only difference, he says, is now he won’t be able to keep Moll as well as he had hoped. They get married, but the plantation owner says nothing of Moll’s fortune and does not ask for the money, until Moll decides it is time for her to bring it up herself. The plantation owner asks Moll to tell him plainly if she has nothing; he will not feel cheated if she is poor. After all, she did write on the glass that she was poor, so he should expect it.

The plantation owner’s description of Moll as a “bargain” again reflects the sexism of the time. He is clearly fond of Moll, but he refers to her as an object to be bought, not as a feeling person equal to himself. Moll is honest here about her money, although she is vague and says no more about it for some time. Society expects Moll to turn her money over to her husband, and the law



says it legally becomes 100% his from the moment they are married.

Moll gives the plantation owner £160, and a few days later, she gives him about 100 more in gold. A week later, she gives him £180 and £60 in linen. At last, Moll tells him that is all she has—her entire bank. The plantation owner is so relieved that Moll has any money at all that he never complains about the sum. “And thus,” Moll says, “I got over the Fraud of passing for Fortune without Money, and cheating a Man into Marrying me on pretence of a Fortune.” However, Moll adds, a fraudulent marriage is the most dangerous thing a woman can do, and it opens her up to a host of problems and ill treatment.

This passage again speaks to Moll’s lack of morals, as she openly admits to cheating the plantation owner into marriage. But Moll also slips in a warning as to her poor moral choices, which supports Defoe’s initial claim that Moll’s story is morally instructive.

In short time, the plantation owner begins to talk of returning to Virginia alone. Life there is pleasant and inexpensive, he says. Moll is thankful that he accepted her fortune, and she knows that he is only looking to save money because of her, so she agrees to go to Virginia. The plantation owner is overjoyed. He may be disappointed with his wife’s fortune, he admits, but he isn’t disappointed with his wife. He promises that his house in Virginia is very nice and well furnished. His mother lives there, as well as his sister, and they are his only living relations. The plantation owner’s claim that he is disappointed in Moll’s fortune but not in Moll is meant in good humor, but it subtly highlights the fact that Moll has not lived up to expectations, and that she is somehow considered less because she doesn’t have much money. This again reflects the sexist and classist nature of the times, as Moll’s worth as a woman and a wife is directly related to her wealth.

Moll and the plantation owner’s trip to Virginia is long and dangerous. Their ship is hit with two big storms, and they are even robbed by a pirate. Finally, they arrive in Virginia, and Moll finds the plantation owner’s mother delightful. She often tells Moll stories of the Colonies and their people, and she even tells old stories of England. Mother claims that very few people come to the Colonies of their own accord as Moll did. Most people are brought to the Colonies by shipmasters and are as “Servants, such as we call them,” Mother says, “but they are more properly call’d Slaves.” Other people are transported from Newgate Prison or other places after being found guilty of a felony that is otherwise punishable by death.

The trip from England to America during this time was extremely dangerous and often took well over a month to complete. Illness and weather often claimed lives, and pirates were common as well. Here, Mother means to differentiate between people of color sold as slaves and white people transported to the Colonies as criminals and sold as servants. Transported criminals were sold under similar conditions as slaves, but they often had the chance to better their lives, which was rarely the case with people of color sold as slaves.

No one thinks anything of a felon in the Colonies, Mother says. Felons are usually bought by planters, who keep them until their sentences expire. Afterward, felons are encouraged to stay in the Colonies and they’re even allotted land on which to plant and live. “Hence Child,” Mother

says to Moll, “many a Newgate Bird becomes a great Man.” In fact, some of the Colonies’ most important magistrates and officers are “burnt in the hand,” Mother adds. She shows Moll a small brand burned into the inside of her palm.

During this time, criminals were branded for easy identification, which is why they are described as “burnt in the hand.” When Mother shows her brand, she admits to Moll that she is herself a transported criminal. Transported criminals and indentured servants were common at the time and had opportunities to do well in America. Even Benjamin Franklin’s grandmother came to the Colonies as an indentured servant, and Mother notes here how common it is for people who were criminals in England to become “great” in the Colonies.

Mother begins to tell Moll terrible stories of Newgate Prison, which, she says, is a dreadful place that “ruin’d more young People than all the Town besides.” She claims more “Thieves and Rogues” are made by Newgate than by all the criminals in England. During one story, Mother has occasion to tell Moll her name, and Moll is instantly struck. Mother notices Moll’s change in demeanor and asks if she is all right. Moll assures her she is just overcome with sadness by her story, and Mother tells Moll not to fret. Her story may be sad, but she ended up in a good family. After her Mistress died, the Master married her, and together they had the plantation owner and his sister. Mother’s husband is dead now, but he gave her a good life.

Defoe again implies that society is to blame for criminal behavior, just as he previously implied that it is responsible for Moll’s destruction because she was abandoned and neglected as a child. It is Newgate, the very solution to criminality, that leads to crime in society. In this way, Defoe implies it isn’t wicked books and staged plays that cause depravity, but rather society itself. Obviously, Moll’s demeanor changes because she realizes the plantation owner’s mother is her mother, too—which means Moll is married to her own half-brother. Moll knows without a doubt that she is looking at her own mother. By now, Moll has two children with the plantation owner, and she has been sleeping with her half-brother the whole time. Moll has never been so unhappy, and she wishes Mother had never told her the story—it isn’t a crime to lie with one’s brother if one knows nothing about it. Moll fully expects to lose her husband; the plantation owner is a good man and will never agree to live with his sister as his wife. Moll doesn’t know what to do, and she takes a moment to remind the reader that she is in a foreign country with no way to return home. Moll’s little reminder that she is in a foreign country with no way to get home again underscores her restrictions in society as a woman. As far as the law is concerned, Moll is a married woman, and she can’t leave the Colonies without her husband’s permission. Furthermore, even if she does leave, she has nowhere to go and no money to support herself (she gave her bank to her husband/brother), so she is forced to stay and compromise her morals. Moll lives “in open avowed Incest and Whoredom, and all under the appearance of an honest Wife.” The sight of the plantation owner makes her sick to her stomach, but she thinks it is best to keep the truth hidden from him. Moll conceals the truth for three years, but she has no more children with the plantation owner. One cannot expect any good to come from “the worst sort of Whoredom,” and Moll’s life indeed becomes most difficult. The plantation owner grows unkind and frequently argues with Moll. She reminds him that he made a promise to return to England if Moll didn’t like Virginia, and says that she would like to go back as soon as possible. It is not a coincidence

that the plantation owner grows unkind once Moll stops having sex with him. As his wife, Moll is expected to have sex—sex is, so to speak, how Moll earns her keep. Sex is a form of currency for Moll, and, Defoe thus implies, for all women. Meanwhile, Moll is tormented because her marriage to the plantation owner isn't legal. He is Moll's brother, and Moll is still legally married to the linen-draper, which makes Moll guilty of "Incest and Whoredom"—though again, there's not much she can do about it at this point.

Moll complains frequently and openly that she wants to return to England, and even Mother tries to dissuade her, but Moll won't listen. She hates the idea of sleeping with the plantation owner, and she gives every excuse and illness not to. At last, the plantation owner grows so angry that he refuses to return to England as he promised. To do so would be death to their finances, he says, and no reasonable wife would ask a husband to do something that would harm their estate. Moll knows he is right; he knows nothing of the terrible truth, and her desire to return to England now must seem very unreasonable. Even though Moll stays so long and lives as her brother's wife, she clearly is not comfortable with the arrangement, which again suggests Moll is not an innately immoral and depraved person. She knows that lying and living as the plantation owner's wife is wrong, but she doesn't have another choice without subjecting herself to complete poverty and despair.

Even though Moll knows the plantation owner is right, she can no longer look at him as her husband, and she vows to be rid of him. Moll asks him to let her return to England alone; that way, he can remain on the estate and work. She brings the idea up repeatedly until the plantation owner explodes in anger, asking her what kind of "unkind Wife" and "unnatural Mother" looks to leave her family. Moll doesn't want to see the plantation owner or their children ever again, but she knows he will never let her go, and she cannot think of leaving without his consent—"as any one that knows the Constitution of the country I [am] in, knows very well," Moll says.

This passage, too, reflects the sexist nature of Moll's society, as she is immediately considered "unkind" and "unnatural" for not wanting to fill the traditional role of wife and mother. Of course, Moll has good reason for wanting to leave—she isn't trying to up and leave her family on a whim—but the law is against her for any reason. As a woman, Moll is not allowed to freely travel and needs her husband's permission to leave. Moll and the plantation owner fight all the time, and their life together grows increasingly tense. She refuses to go to bed with him, and he accuses her of being "mad." He tells Moll that if she doesn't change her behavior immediately, he will "put [her] under Cure; that is to say, into a Madhouse." Moll is terrified. If the plantation owner puts her into a Madhouse, she will never get back to England, and any word she speaks of the truth will not be believed. During the 17th and 18th centuries, it was not uncommon for husbands to place their wives in insane asylums, or madhouses, as an alternative to divorce or simply to be rid of them. Again, the plantation owner is angry because he is denied sex; he considers sex something Moll owes him as a woman and his wife.

Months pass, and Moll and the plantation owner find themselves in an explosive argument. He pushes Moll so far that she nearly tells him the truth outright, but she thinks better of it. The

argument begins with the plantation owner calmly pointing out Moll's urgent desire to return to England. She treats him more like a dog than a husband, he says, and she doesn't treat the children much better. While he isn't very fond of violence, he finds it is necessary now, and he will certainly resort to such means in the future to "reduce [Moll] to [her] Duty."

During this time, a husband legally had the same control over his wife that he had over his children, which made it legal for husbands to beat their wives. He threatens to beat Moll to force her to her "Duty," which is to say he will beat her if she doesn't start acting like his wife again—in the bedroom and everywhere else. In short, he tells Moll to shape up and consent to sex, or he will beat her and throw her in a mental hospital.

Moll is furious. She tells the plantation owner that she will be returning to England and that she has good reason to treat him and the children the way she does. Moll tells him he is not her lawful husband, and she says the children aren't lawful either. The plantation owner looks as if he has a stroke. He grows cold but sweaty, and then he vomits. He takes to his bed, where he burns all night with fever. The next day, Moll apologizes to the plantation owner for sending him into such a state and begs him not push her for an explanation, which, she says, will only make things worse. Moll's behavior here again calls her true sense of morality into question. Despite the dire situation, her brother and children are essentially innocent, and they surely don't deserve Moll's misplaced anger. The plantation owner's response to Moll's admission that their marriage and children aren't legal suggests that he deeply loves Moll despite their recent problems.

In the meantime, the plantation owner enlists his mother to get an explanation out of Moll. Mother presses Moll, who finally tells Mother that the secret "[lies] in [Mother] herself"; Moll has only suppressed it out of respect for her. It is in Mother's best interest, Moll says, not to insist. Mother, however, persists, and Moll agrees to tell her—provided she doesn't tell the plantation owner without Moll's permission. She agrees with hesitation, and Moll tells her the entire story, beginning with her own birth in Newgate Prison. She tells Mother that she is indeed her daughter, and Mother is shocked. Moll's story seems at first unbelievable, but she soon takes Moll in her arms. Mother laments Moll's unhappy circumstances and the horror of having three children—two living, one dead—with her own brother.

When the plantation owner enlists his mother to discover Moll's secret, it recalls the lady in Colchester and her efforts to persuade Moll to marry the younger brother. The circumstances are decidedly different, but both situations illustrate the dismissive way in which Moll is treated. Moll doesn't want to tell her secret, just like she didn't want to marry the younger brother, but no one respects what Moll wants. Moll's secret "lay in Mother herself" because Mother is the source of Moll's problem with the plantation owner. Mother promises not to tell Moll's secret to the plantation owner, but neither Mother nor Moll knows what to do. They don't know how the plantation owner will receive the truth, but they are both convinced that if the truth gets out publicly, it will ruin the entire family. Mother wants Moll to bury the secret and continue living with the plantation owner as husband and wife until a better opportunity arises to tell him the truth. She promises to provide for Moll and, upon her death, to leave money for Moll to separate from her son. Then, if Moll wishes to leave after Mother is dead, she will have the means to do so. Moll refuses; it is impossible to continue living as her brother's wife, and she can't believe

Mother is asking her to. As a woman, Mother stands to lose just as much as Moll if Moll's secret gets out. Mother's reputation will be ruined in society as well, and it is sure to cause an embarrassing scandal. Mother would rather have Moll live in misery and sin than face the devastation of their secret. Mother's willingness to live in such a way underscores the desperation of Moll's situation as a woman in a sexist society. Moll has no money and few options, other than to pretend she doesn't know her husband is her brother.

It is one thing, Moll argues, for Mother to confirm Moll is her daughter, but her secret will hardly be believed if it comes to light after Mother is dead. And, Moll adds, the plantation owner has already threatened her with the madhouse. Moll suggests Mother help her convince the plantation owner to send Moll back to England with an adequate amount of money and an understanding he will later join her. Then, in Moll's absence, Mother can tell him the truth in any way she sees fit. In the end, Moll and Mother can't reconcile their difference of opinions. Moll insists she cannot sleep with her brother, and Mother insists she cannot convince her son to allow Moll to return to England alone.

As a woman in a sexist society, Moll's word is considered less than a man, and if Moll is put in a madhouse, anything she says—especially the truth that her husband is really her brother—will appear to be the ranting of a madwoman. Mother and Moll agree to keep their secret for a time. Mother tells the plantation owner that she doesn't know Moll's secret, but she believes it is serious, and he shouldn't cause Moll undue stress with threats of violence and the madhouse until they can discover what the secret is. He agrees—he wasn't serious about the madhouse anyway—and he begins to treat Moll better. His kindness returns, and he doesn't quarrel with her. Moll begins to think she can live long-term this way, expect she can't stomach going to bed with him. She resists him as much as she can, and when she must relent, she is awkward and uncomfortable. Moll decides she must tell him the truth.

Moll is desperate for security and wealth, and she appears willing to live as her brother's wife—provided she doesn't have to have sex with him—which again reflects Moll's limited options as a woman in 17th-century society. Moll tells the plantation owner that she will reveal her secret if he will make her a few promises in writing. He immediately agrees and grabs a pen, and Moll tells him to write the following: that he will not blame her, insult or injure her, or make her suffer in any way. He agrees that is reasonable and writes it all down. She further makes him promise not to divulge her secret to anyone, except his mother, without Moll's consent or permission. Again, the plantation owner agrees that Moll's demand is reasonable and writes it down. She then makes him promise that he will receive her secret with composure, and after he agrees, she begins to talk.

This section, in which Moll makes the plantation owner put his promises in writing, mirrors the part of the novel when the plantation owner etches his promises of love on the windowpane. Just as she did then, Moll makes the plantation owner promise something before divulging the truth. In this way, Moll manipulates the plantation owner, but, as Moll always points out, she does it for a good reason, not because she is an inherently bad person.

Moll tells the plantation owner that they are brother and sister. Mother, Moll says, is her mother as well. The plantation owner grows pale, and Moll must get him a glass of rum to calm him. After he composes himself, he tells Moll that he has a solution that does not involve her going back to England. Moll says that isn't likely, since she can't see how she can possibly stay, but he promises to "make it easie." In the following days, the plantation owner grows depressed, and Moll thinks he is beginning to lose his mind. He even makes two attempts on his own life, and if not for Mother catching him and cutting the rope, he would be hanging dead. Presumably, the "easie" way in which the plantation owner plans to keep Moll from having to return to England is by killing himself. The plantation owner obviously can't live with such a taboo and morally reprehensible truth, suggesting that rigid moral strictures can be painful for men as well as women. Plus, he truly loves Moll as a wife, but now he must think of her as a sister, and he is clearly heartbroken.

The plantation owner falls into a long consumption, and Moll knows he is dying. She supposes she can stay in Virginia and marry again once he is dead, but she badly wants to return to England. Finally, the plantation owner and Mother both agree to send Moll back to England. They decide that in due time, the plantation owner can claim Moll has died in England, and he can marry again if he likes. In the meantime, he urges Moll to correspond as his sister. So, after eight years in Virginia, Moll leaves her brother—as she may now call him—and boards a ship to England. Moll behaves quite selfishly here. She thinks her brother is dying, but she only worries about herself and marrying again once he is gone. This self-interest again suggests that Moll's moral fiber really is lacking, which somewhat complicates Defoe's argument that Moll only makes immoral choices because her poverty and oppression force her to.

## ➤ Chapter 5: Moll and the Gentleman

Moll's return trip to England is smooth, and they reach the coast of England in 32 days, but a series of rough storms sends them off course to Ireland. After 13 days, they return to sea, but rough waters again blow the ship off course. The ship makes port in Wales, far from its intended destination, but Moll refuses to get back on the water. The ship sets sail for Bristol with Moll's belongings, and she heads for London. She arrives weeks later and is told the ship was tossed by considerable weather on its way to Bristol and lost much of its cargo. Without her belongings, Moll is reduced to around £300 in her bank with no hope for more. Moll is again destitute. She only has enough money to see her through the immediate future—if she stretches her money she may make it last a few years—and the only legal ways to increase her wealth are to get married or go into Service. Moll refuses to go into Service, so she will have to find another husband (even though she's still technically married to the linen-draper) or resort to other illegal means.

Moll decides to go to Bristol anyway, but she stops in Bath along the way. Bath is a "Place of Gallantry" and is "full of Snares," and since Moll is still a young woman, she decides to take her chances there. But, Moll says, Bath is where men go to find a Mistress, not a Wife, and she has little luck finding a suitable man. She befriends a landlady, who lets Moll lodge at her house. The landlady does not "keep an ill House," but she doesn't have "the best Principles" either. Moll is sad and a bit lonely living in Bath, but it is inexpensive, so she stays. Bath is a fashionable tourist

destination known for its public spas, but it is also known for its vice, which is reflected in Moll's description of the city as "full of Snares." There is much temptation in Bath—men, money, and likely alcohol and gambling. Moll implies that her landlady isn't running a brothel ("an ill House"), but she suggests the landlady herself is a prostitute, as she doesn't have "the best Principles."

Moll tells the landlady that she lost her fortune at sea, which indeed cost Moll nearly £500. She has written to her mother and brother in Virginia, Moll says, and she is waiting for them to send more goods for her to the port in Bristol. The landlady takes pity on Moll and reduces her rent to an even cheaper rate, and then she introduces Moll to a gentleman. The gentleman believes Moll is a widow, and she knows that he has a mad wife, whom he left under the care of her family so he wouldn't be accused of "mismanaging her Cure."

Again, it was common during this time for husbands to place their wives in mental hospitals just to be rid of them. The gentleman turns his wife's care over so it doesn't appear as if he had her committed just so he could see other women. This again reflects the sexist nature of society. The gentleman treats Moll with the utmost respect, honor, and virtue, and even though he occasionally visits her in her room, he never offers more than a kiss. One day, he asks Moll how she manages to live and cover her expenses, and she assures him that she manages well enough while she waits for goods from her family in Virginia. He tells Moll that he asks not because he is curious, but because he wishes to help her, if she needs it. Moll says she is not looking for his assistance, but he makes her promise that if she should find herself in need of money, she will ask him for help as freely as he has just offered it.

It was not uncommon for platonic friends to receive each other in their bedrooms, or in bed for that matter, and at this point the gentleman appears to be a genuinely respectful person. He treats Moll well and doesn't make any sexual advances toward her, even when he has the opportunity. He appears to want to help Moll with no strings attached, but she isn't interested. Moll likely denies him because the gentleman isn't free to marry, since his wife is still alive.

The next day, the gentleman calls Moll to his room while he is still in bed. He tells Moll to empty her purse. She has three and a half Guineas, and he asks if that is all she has. Moll says no, and he tells her to go to her room and fetch all her money. She returns with six more Guineas and some silver, which the gentleman places, without counting, into a drawer. Then he gives Moll a key and tells her to open a wooden box on the table. The box is full of gold, and the gentleman pushes Moll's hand into the box, forcing her to pick up as much as she can hold. Then he dumps the drawer with Moll's six Guineas into her lap and tells her to take her money to her room.

Even though it isn't uncommon for friends to receive each other while in bed, the gentleman's questions about Moll's wealth and the gift of money he gives her while lying in bed has sexual connotations, and it furthers the connection between money and sex within the novel. The gentleman could have easily talked with Moll and offered her money after he was up and dressed, but he doesn't, hinting that his motivations might not be so honorable as they initially appeared.

The gentleman begins to spend lots of money on Moll, buying her new clothes and lace, and he even hires her a maid. His kindness is a gift, the gentleman says, and he does not wish for Moll to pay him back. Soon, he falls ill, and Moll cares for him for five weeks with as much attention as a loving wife. Once he is better, the gentleman presents Moll with 50 Guineas for her care and tells her he has the sincerest affection for her. He claims he will always preserve her virtue as if it were his own, and even “if he was naked in Bed with [her],” he would not violate her virtue. While the gentleman does seem sincere, it is possible his sincerity is just a ploy to get Moll to let her guard down and invite him in, at which time he will more easily be able to take advantage of her. Like the older brother, the gentleman equates his affection for Moll with money, so it isn’t a stretch to imagine that he might equate sex with money as well.

Moll soon has reason to go to Bristol, and the gentleman offers to travel with her. When they arrive at the Inn, the innkeeper only has one room with two beds. When they’re alone in the room, the gentleman tells Moll that he has occasion to prove to her that he can lie with her without violating her virtue. He climbs into bed with her and holds her all night long, without the least inappropriate touch. They return to Bath and live together for two whole years, until, after a bit too much wine, Moll offers to give him her virtue for one night. He takes her immediately, and with that, Moll becomes, in her words, his “WHORE.” Again, Moll equates unmarried sex with being a whore, which reinforces the sexist nature of her society. Furthermore, the fact that the gentleman so quickly gives in to Moll’s desires suggests that he isn’t so concerned with her virtue after all. If he were, it is likely that he wouldn’t allow Moll to endanger it, no matter how badly he wanted her.

Both Moll and the gentleman regret their decision, but there is no going back, so they continue their sexual relationship. Moll is soon pregnant, and the landlady helps her to find a midwife and nurse. As Moll gets closer to giving birth, the landlady convinces the Parish Officers that there is a woman “Lying Inn” at her residence, but the woman’s husband is a wealthy man from London and has covered all expenses. The Parish Officers are satisfied, and Moll saves as much of the gentleman’s money as she can. She gives birth to a handsome boy, and the gentleman relocates both Moll and the baby to London. During the 17th century, the sight of pregnant women was considered obscene (pregnancy, after all, is evidence of sex), so women were expected to remove themselves from society in for a period of time that was called “lying in.” Churches would assume the cost of unmarried pregnant women and automatically take charge of them, but the landlady convinces them that Moll is married and covered financially. Both the need for “lying in” and the church’s interference further highlight how tightly constrained women’s rights are at this time.

Moll lives in London at the height of her wealth, and she wishes nothing more than to be the gentleman’s wife. Moll knows marrying the gentleman is unlikely, and she also knows that men only keep mistresses for so long, so she continues to hide money away in her bank whenever she can. Moll admits that from the moment she met the gentleman, she vowed to “let him lye with [her] if he offer’d.” She needed his help and “knew no other way of securing him.” So, “as Poverty brought [her] into it, so fear of Poverty kept [her] in it,” and she lives six years with him. During this time, Moll has two more children, but, sadly, both children die. While Moll doesn’t



explicitly state it here, she again implies that her relationship with the gentleman—in which he takes care of her and she has sex with him—makes her a whore. Moll again looks to sex as a sort of currency to give her security and wealth. She's terrified of poverty, so she trades her body and sex for security. Moll has limited options for making money on her own, and she doesn't know any other way to take care of herself.

One day, Moll comes home to a letter that says the gentleman has again fallen ill. He is at home with his wife's family, and it isn't appropriate for Moll to come to him. Time passes without word, so, out of curiosity, Moll disguises herself as a servant and goes to his house and inquires as to his condition. A maid tells her the gentleman is suffering with pleurisy and a fever, and he isn't expected to live. Moll returns home and soon learns that his condition is slowly improving. She writes him several letters, and after much time, he finally writes back. Pleurisy is a painful respiratory illness that was often fatal during Moll's time, and it further reflects how precarious Moll's situation is. Without the gentleman, Moll is destitute, and she won't be entitled to any money upon his death since they aren't legally married. Moll's life has been going well, but it is still just one disaster away from completely falling apart and leaving her on the street.

The gentleman writes that being so near death has made him genuinely reflect on the time he has spent with Moll, and he now sees the sin they have committed. He encloses £50 so Moll can return to Bath, and he says he can no longer see her. She is free to take their child or leave him; if she leaves the child, the gentleman says, he will care for the boy. Moll is heartbroken. She is aware of their sin herself, and she has often thought it would have been a lesser offense to stay in Virginia as her brother's wife. And all this time, Moll has been married to the linen-draper too, which means she has been living as a "Whore and an Adulteress" since he left. The gentleman's sudden attack of conscience underscores the immorality of his relationship with Moll, which aligns with Defoe's claim that Moll's story is useful moral instruction. By pointing out the sin Moll is guilty of, it warns readers away from making similar choices. In giving Moll money to go away, the gentleman again equates sex with money; it's as if this final sum is his last payment to her for the relationship they've had.

Moll has no intention of returning to Bath, but she doesn't know what to do about the child. The thought of leaving him causes her pain, but so does the thought of trying to care for him on her own and being unable to, so she leaves him. She again writes the gentleman and asks him to send her £50 more, so she can go back to her family in Virginia, even though she has no intention of leaving England. He agrees, and Moll again finds herself alone. With the additional £50 from the gentleman, she has nearly £400 in her bank, including some silver, clothes, and linen. Moll's son with the gentleman is just one of the 12 children Moll abandons, which makes her appear immoral; however, Defoe implies that Moll isn't entirely to blame for this awful situation. Birth control doesn't exist, and Moll has few options to support a child. Plus, she is forced into sexual situations in order to survive. In this way, children can't be avoided, and Moll can only do her best to take care of them for as long as she can.

Now, Moll isn't the same woman she was when she set out alone for the first time 20 years ago. She is 42 years old now, and the years have been hard on her. She has no friends and no one to

advise her, which is one of the worst conditions a woman can find herself in. Moll says “woman,” she points out, because men are their own advisers, and they don’t have to worry about “being wrong’d and deciev’d.” A woman alone with no adviser is like “a Bag of Money, or a Jewel dropt on the Highway.” Moll wants to settle down to a quiet life, and if she had a husband, she would be true and faithful. But, Moll says, vice comes in “always at the Door of Necessity, not at the Door of Inclination.” Moll changes as her life progresses, which illustrates the evolving nature of identity. Her comment that women are susceptible to deception because they lack advisers again underscores the sexist nature of society. Women are considered helpless and easy prey for men who are only looking for money, and a woman alone like Moll is a prime target. Moll again suggests that she only acts immorally (doing things like having sex and abandoning her children) because she is desperately poor and has no other options.

Moll lives as frugally as she can and decides to move to the North Country, where a neighbor talks her into moving again to Liverpool. There, Moll must decide what to do with her money. She considers the bank, but she has no one to help her, and she doesn’t trust “Bank Bills” and “Talleys.” Still, she worries she may be robbed or murdered for her gold, so she decides to go the bank anyway. Moll tells the man at the bank her situation, and he directs her to a second banker, who he is sure will be able to help Moll manage her money and affairs. During this time, paper money and bank receipts (now known as checks) were a relatively new concept, and Moll has a hard time trusting them. Plus, if Moll puts her money in a bank and it goes bankrupt, she will lose all her money. Keeping her money on her isn’t realistic either, it is heavy and bulky, and she might get robbed. Despite the risk, putting her money in a bank is her safest option.

## ➤ Chapter 6: Moll Meets the Banker

The banker is a kind man. Moll tells him she is a widow from America, and he quickly agrees to help her. He seems like an honest man, and he advises Moll as to her financial options, such as lodging her gold in the bank and drawing bills from a cashier as she sees fit Or, she can invest in stock, which will gather her interest and make her more money. As the banker advises Moll, he slips in details of his own life. He has “a Wife, and no Wife,” he says, whom he wouldn’t mind seeing hanged. “I am a Cuckold,” the banker says, “and she is a Whore.” The banker’s condition of having “a Wife, and no Wife” mirrors Moll’s own state with the linen-draper—she is legally married, but for all intents and purposes, she doesn’t have a husband. A “cuckold” is a word that describes a man whose wife is unfaithful, a point made clearer by the banker’s claim that his wife is a “Whore.”

The banker’s wife ran off and had two children with a linen-draper’s apprentice. The banker tells Moll that his wife “is a Whore not by Necessity, which is the common Bait of [Moll’s] Sex, but by Inclination, and for the sake of the Vice.” He asks Moll what he should do to get justice, and she suggests getting a divorce. It won’t be difficult, Moll says, if the wife has really done as the banker says. The banker admits that he would like to marry again, and then he asks Moll if she would have him. “No,” Moll replies sternly. She has come to him for help with her finances, and she is appalled that he has been so forward. Here, the banker, too, implies that women are

often forced into performing sex for money and security, which is why he calls it the “Bait” of Moll’s gender. His wife, however, is a “whore” because of desire and not need, which suggests she is innately immoral; whereas Moll, who is a “whore by necessity,” does it to survive and is thus not innately immoral. The banker’s forwardness is again evidence of their sexist society. He is more concerned with making Moll his wife than in helping her with her problem, proving her point about how vulnerable women without advisers are.

The banker takes to flattering Moll, which she rather enjoys, but she knows the best way to secure him is to appear standoffish. It is most important, Moll says, to “preserve the Character of [her] Virtue,” even if the virtue itself has already been sacrificed. Moll promises to come back the next day to conclude talking about her business, and when she returns, the banker professes his affection for Moll and promises to marry her as soon as he has obtained a divorce from his wife. He asks Moll to sign a contract obliging her to marry him after his divorce, but Moll refuses, as she will soon be leaving for Lancashire with a friend. Moll’s comment again reflects the importance of a woman’s virtue in a sexist society. Only virtue has worth (other than money, that is), so Moll must fake it, even though she has been married several times, has many children, and even trades sex for money and security. The banker is again forward with Moll—he barely knows her but wants her to sign a marriage contract. She seems virtuous and has a bit of money, and that is enough for him.

Moll tells the banker that she will leave her money in his hands while she travels, and he agrees. Moll has been in Lancashire for about six weeks when she meets the Irishman. According to Moll’s friends, the Irishman is very rich—his estate is valued at £1,000 to £1,500 yearly—and he is very handsome. He is tall and shapely, and he speaks often of his estate in Ireland. He never asks Moll about her own fortune, but he promises to give her a £600 dowry if she agrees to go with him to Ireland. With an income of 1,500 pounds per year, the Irishman is seriously wealthy, and he is willing to give Moll a dowry, instead of the other way around. The Irishman seems too good to be true, which suggests that he probably is. His fortune is in Ireland, and he can easily lure Moll to Ireland on the pretense of money, and by the time she discovers the truth, she’d be trapped there.

## ➤ Chapter 7: Moll Marries the Irishman

Moll thinks often of the banker and feels bad for disregarding him, but she soon marries the Irishman, and Moll’s new husband begins to arrange travel to Ireland. He asks Moll if she has any business in London that needs tending to, and she assures him that any business she does have can be settled by letter. He asks her about her money and banking. If anything needs to be transferred, he says, it may be necessary to see to it before going to Ireland. Moll tells the Irishman that she doesn’t know what he is talking about and says she doesn’t have any money in London. The Irishman is obviously fishing around about Moll’s money, which again suggests he isn’t as wealthy as he claims to be. He is trying to get his hands on Moll’s money, and since he doesn’t know that Moll is legally married to another man, he believes he is entitled to her wealth. Moll has a considerable amount of money with the banker, but she doesn’t appear willing to share.

That way, if Moll is again left alone, she is covered financially.

The Irishman is shocked to discover that Moll doesn't have any money, and she is quick to point out that she never led him to believe she had any wealth at all. He claims she looks like a "Woman of Fortune," and, he adds, he heard from mutual friends that Moll was very wealthy. Then, the Irishman admits that he, too, is poor and doesn't really own an estate in Ireland. It appears, Moll says, they have been married "upon the foot of a double Fraud," for she has no estate. Moll is incredibly disappointed. She knows the Irishman can make her very happy, but his finances are certainly a problem, and she can see nothing before them but ruin. She pulls a Bank Bill from her purse worth £20 and 11 Guineas, which, she says, is all the money she has in the world. Moll is lying about her money (she has over 400 pounds with the banker), which seems immoral; however, Defoe implies she doesn't have much of a choice. If the past is any indication of Moll's future, she will soon be alone and expected to support herself, and she can hardly be blamed for covering herself on her end. And unlike the Irishman, Moll doesn't openly lie about having money; he just assumes she's wealthy, and she doesn't initially correct him.

Despite her disappointment, Moll is not willing to be without money, and she tells the Irishman as much. They spend the evening together and he still tries to make the best of it, so he orders a bottle of wine with dinner. The Irishman apologizes for deceiving her, and Moll asks what he was planning on doing once they arrived in Ireland. He never intended to go Ireland, he admits, but was going to feign a reason for staying in London after Moll secured her fortune from the bank. Clearly, Moll is fond of the Irishman, and he is fond of her; however, marriage is a business arrangement, not a statement of love, so they can't be together. Despite his deception, the Irishman is a pleasant and agreeable man, which suggests that, like Moll, he only behaves immorally because of poverty and the need to survive.

Moll and the Irishman spend the night together, and once Moll falls asleep, the Irishman slips out. He leaves her a letter, in which he begs for her forgiveness and claims he has left money in her pocket to cover her expenses back to London. When she wakes, Moll is devastated. She looks in her pocket and finds 10 Guineas, along with a gold watch and diamond rings. She begins to weep, calling him by his name. "James, O Jemy!" Moll cries, wishing he would return to her. Moll spends the whole day crying, and near nightfall, James returns. Presumably, Moll and the Irishman have sex, and he too pays her for it, albeit in a more indirect way. This is the first time Moll uses James's real name. James's identity as, variously, the Irishman, Jemy, and Moll's Lancashire husband again underscores Defoe's argument as to the fluid nature of identity.

When James arrives, he goes directly to Moll and takes her in his arms. When their "Extasies" are over, James tells Moll that he didn't get 15 miles away before he heard Moll calling to him. Hearing her voice in his head, he knew he had to be near her for a bit longer. There is no need for her to travel back to London alone, James says. He can accompany her to the city, or close to it, at least. Moll is miserable without him, so she agrees. His good nature and manners—and the fact that he left Moll what little money he had—make him quite attractive to Moll. Referring to their "extasies" is a polite way of saying Moll and James have sex, and it is an example of the modest language Moll was forced to write her story in. James's connection to Moll, and his ability

to sense her calling for him, again suggests that James truly loves her. But because of his poverty, he is forced to deny his feelings and keep looking for a wealthy woman, just as Moll must look for a rich man.

James and Moll travel as far as Dunstable, about 30 miles outside London, and James refuses to go on. Circumstances, which James doesn't explain, won't allow him to go on to London. Moll convinces him to stay a week or so in Dunstable to delay their inevitable parting, and they rent rooms in a private house. Moll asks James to live with her in Dunstable until her money runs out. She will not let him spend a bit of his own money. If she isn't likely to see him again, Moll says, it will be money well spent. Moll only offers to spend all her money on James because she knows she has more money with the banker in London. While Moll clearly likes James, she is careful to still ensure her own security. James's refusal to go to London is suspicious and implies he is hiding from something or someone, and it further suggests he isn't exactly who he says he is.

Living together in Dunstable, Moll tells James all about Virginia. Her mother is still living there, Moll says, but her husband has been dead many years now. She tells him all about the quality of the land and the money to be made. Moll says that a sum of £300 can get them established in the Colonies, and after seven years or so, they will be able to leave their plantation under the care of another and live comfortably on the profits in England. James says he has the same idea about Ireland. Farming land in Ireland can secure one a life that £3,000 a year wouldn't buy in England, James maintains. He suggests he go on to Ireland, and she to London, and in a year, if things are as good as he supposes they will be, he will send for her.

James's suggestion that he go to Ireland and Moll to London to wait for him again underscores the sexist nature of their society. Moll wants to go to the Colonies, but James wants to go to Ireland, and he completely disregards Moll's desires in favor of his own. He doesn't give what she wants equal thought before simply deciding to act on his own desires, which leaves Moll in a position in which she must act against her own will and desires. James is so insistent on his plans for Ireland that Moll finally agrees to go to London and wait. They part at last—with great reluctance on Moll's part—and she heads off to London. Moll takes lodging near Clerkenwell and discovers after a short time that she is pregnant. Moll isn't pleased with this unexpected interruption, and she isn't quite sure how to handle her lying in. She has kept up correspondence with the banker during her time away, but she hasn't had the need to remove any money from the bank. She knows from his letters that he has started divorce proceedings; they are going well, but they are also difficult and long.

Moll is still scheming to get the richest husband possible, which is why she continues corresponding with the banker even when she is with James. Again, this implies Moll is of loose morals, since she strings one man along while pregnant with another's child; however, she can't very well go out and get a respectable job and support herself in the manner she is accustomed to, which again reflects Moll's limited options as a woman in the 17th century.

## ➤ Chapter 8: Moll Meets the Midwife and Marries the Banker

Moll knows she isn't in any condition to see the banker. She isn't foolish enough to marry one man while pregnant with the child of another, but she still doesn't want to fully let the banker go. So, she vows to have him, if his interest holds, as soon as she is able. After all, Moll isn't likely to ever see James again. Her belly grows, and people start noticing Moll's condition. She knows she must remove herself from society, but again, Moll is without friends or anyone to advise her. She grows depressed and ill, and she hopes her illness causes her to miscarry. Of course, Moll clarifies, she would never make herself miscarry. Moll clearly isn't happy about being pregnant, but this sequence of events makes it clear just how few options she has. Moll's plan to hide her pregnancy from the banker and go to him once she has, presumably, gotten rid of the baby may seem despicable, but again, Moll has few chances to ensure her future stability and no way to take care of a child.

In short time, the lady of the house where Moll boards sends a midwife to see her. The woman seems to be an experienced midwife, and she has a different calling as well, "in which she [is] as expert as most women, if not more." Moll's "Mother Midnight" begins to explain. She knows Moll needs assistance for her "Lying Inn," and she can help. The Midwife tells Moll that Moll's circumstances are of no concern to her—in other words, she doesn't care if the baby's father is Moll's husband—and Moll understands that she is a "Whore" here.

A "midwife" during Moll's time is often used as an umbrella term for women who deliver babies and are also prostitutes. The midwife is an "expert" more than "most women," and she is a "Mother Midnight," both of which imply prostitution. Moll understands she is a whore in the midwife's house because the midwife is literally operating a brothel. The midwife tells Moll that she has an agreement with the local Parish to handle such cases, and she runs a house where many women go to "Lye-Inn." Moll understands perfectly, she says, and tells the midwife that she doesn't have much, but she can afford the cost of her keeping. The midwife returns the next day with details—she has three different care packages to choose from—and presents them to Moll. The three options range from £13 to £53 for three months' service, and Moll selects the least expensive. But, Moll says, she still has a few months to go and might need to stay longer than three months. The midwife assures Moll she never puts anyone out before they are ready. The midwife's business and her detailed plans to care for woman who are lying in again connects sex and money. The midwife makes a living from sex directly as a prostitute, and indirectly from caring for pregnant women. Again, local churches often assume the care of needy pregnant women, but the midwife's agreement with the church means they will stay out of Moll's business. The midwife sees Moll as a way to bring in more money, but she is also kind and likely won't turn her away, which suggests it's possible for seemingly immoral people like the midwife to be virtuous and compassionate at the same time.

Moll soon moves to the midwife's house, where Moll is pleased to find the house clean and quite luxurious. The midwife has several businesses and one such business is finding people who, for a bit of money, will take children after they are born and provide for them. Moll questions what happens to the children after they are gone, but the midwife assures her she takes great care in all her business. Furthermore, the midwife says, she has saved the lives of countless children, who otherwise might have been destroyed by their desperate mothers. The midwife also offers to provide Moll with something to make her miscarry, if she wants to be rid of the problem that

way, but Moll refuses. The midwife's business of selling babies is certainly an immoral practice, but she views it through more moral terms. She says the babies would likely have been aborted or neglected had she not found them appropriate homes, which makes her work seem more morally sound. She still offers Moll an abortion, though, which suggests she isn't looking to judge Moll regardless of her decision.

During Moll's time with the midwife, Moll is comfortable and well cared for. It is obvious to Moll that the midwife has a thriving business, which is clearly a "whoring Account." The Midwife has 12 "Ladies of Pleasure" and a number of other women "Lying Inn." Living in such a place "shock'd [Moll's] very Senses," and she feels sick to her stomach. However, Moll admits, she never sees anything indecent take place there. Before long, Moll receives a letter from the banker. He has divorced his wife, and Moll is pleased, but she writes back and claims to doubt the lawfulness of such a decree. If Moll wasn't sure before that the midwife is a prostitute and her house a brothel, Moll certainly knows now. Moll's morals are clearly offended by being in the brothel, as being there makes her sick to her stomach. Moll's response to the brothel again implies that she isn't innately immoral; she is simply a poor woman in a sexist society and is without other reasonable options. Moll doesn't really doubt the legality of the banker's divorce; she simply must string him along for a little longer until her lying in is over.

By mid-May, Moll gives birth to another son. Soon after, she again receives a letter from the banker. He has obtained a divorce from his wife, and after she was served with the papers, she committed suicide. With his cheating wife out of the picture, the banker invites Moll to come to London and be with him. Moll is pleased, but she isn't sure what to do with the child. In search of advice, Moll tells the midwife all about her predicament—her marriage to James, his inability to go to London, and his blessing for Moll to move on—and she says that she has found a good offer in the banker. The problem, Moll says, is the child. If she returns to the banker with the boy, the banker will know that Moll has been with another since she left London for Lancashire.

Moll is again scheming to ensure she gets the banker and she is willing to give up her child to do it, which again suggests Moll has rather loose morals. Furthermore, both the banker and Moll seem r pleased that his wife is dead. This rather heartless response is likely in response to the wife's status as a whore, but since Moll considers herself a whore too, this makes her appear even more heartless and immoral. But still, Moll remains motivated by concerns for her own safety; Defoe implies that she probably wouldn't do or feel any of these things if she weren't desperately trying to avoid poverty.

However, the thought of giving up her child deeply pains Moll. The midwife reassures Moll and tells her that the children she places are cared for just as their mothers themselves would care for them. If she knew for sure that her baby would be well cared for, Moll says, she would happily agree to place the child in the midwife's hands. The midwife arranges—for an added fee, of course—for Moll to have the option of seeing the child whenever she wants. Moll agrees, and the next week, a woman arrives from the country. She will take the child off Moll's hands for £10, and for an additional £5 a year, she will allow Moll to see him whenever she desires. Moll clearly loves her child and giving him up isn't easy for her, which again indicates that she's not simply an uncaring person. Defoe implies Moll is simply faced with difficult choices and limited options.

In this way, it is again society that is truly to blame for Moll's decisions. If she had a reasonable way to support herself and her children, she likely wouldn't be looking for an alternative.

Afterward, Moll begins to write the banker in a more friendly tone, and she tells him that she will be in London come August. The banker suggests instead that they meet in Brickhill, a town just outside London. They find lodging and go to dinner, and Moll gets the feeling that the banker is going to propose to her. She knows that she will not deny him. The innkeeper asks to speak to the banker alone, and Moll overhears the men talking about a minister, who is willing to serve them as discreetly as they like. After dinner, the banker begins kissing and sweet-talking Moll, and then he takes out several official documents and places them before her.

Presumably, the banker wants to meet Moll in Brickhill because he wants to marry her before taking her back to London. That way, when he brings Moll home, she is already his wife, and he won't appear to be fooling around with a woman he isn't married to, which, in the eyes of society, would reflect poorly on his own morality. However, the banker makes his plans without consulting Moll, which again illustrates how little agency women have in their society. The banker presents Moll with documentation of his divorce from his wife and proof of her crime as a "Whore," and he further presents Moll with proof of his wife's death and burial. Moll can see he has yet another document, and she asks him what it is. "Ay," he says slyly. He then produces a box, which contains a very nice diamond ring. Moll is so happy that she can't refuse. The other document, the banker says, is a marriage license, and he begins to "violently" kiss her. He knocks Moll to the bed, all the while kissing her and professing his love, and he refuses to let her up until she agrees to marry him. She won't refuse him, Moll says, so he might as well let her up.

The banker's "violent" kisses and his refusal to let Moll up until she marries him again implies that he has control over her as a man and she is powerless to resist him. He doesn't know that Moll has no plans to resist him, and he is willing to force her, which is evident in both his violent force and his preparation. He goes to a lot of trouble securing documentation to ensure their marriage because he has no intention of taking no for an answer.

The banker is so happy that Moll has accepted him, there are tears in his eyes as he stands. Moll must turn from him, because there are tears in her eyes, too, and she begins to feel remorse for the wicked life she has led. She briefly wonders how her life would have been had she met a nice, loving man like the banker earlier. She starts to feel bad that she has deceived him as to the full truth of her past. Little does he know, Moll thinks, he has gotten rid of one "Whore" just to take up with another. What will the banker think if he ever finds out that Moll is the daughter of a thief, born in Newgate Prison?

Since Moll is still legally married to the linen-draper, Moll is technically a whore, just like the banker's first wife, and Moll's guilt over this fact again reflects her sexist society. Moll's husband left her through no fault of her own, yet she is supposed to take a vow of chastity and wait for him to come back—which is unlikely to ever happen. Moll's question as to how her life would have been had she not been poor again suggests that her immorality is a product of her poverty,



not of some innate depravity.

Before long, a minister arrives, and the banker presents him with the marriage license. Satisfied, the minister asks where the bride is, and the banker goes to fetch Moll. She is shocked that he means to be married now—at an inn and so late at night, far from the sacred church. The minister convinces Moll that a marriage performed at an inn is just as legal and binding as one performed in a church, and she finally agrees to marry the banker now. Again, the banker doesn't consider Moll's feelings and preferences for getting married. He wants to marry her now because it is better for him, and he cares very little how Moll feels about it. The banker's indifference to Moll's desires again mirrors the overall oppression of women in 17th-century England.

Moll and the banker's marriage is kept completely secret, and they return to their room as husband and wife, where they "enjoy'd [themselves] that Evening compleatly." The next morning, they remain in bed until nearly noon, at which time Moll rises and goes to the window. She looks outside, and to her absolute surprise she sees James go into a house across the street with two other men. She panics. The banker cannot see her so undone, and she quickly thinks about her options. She wants to know what James is doing there, but she doesn't want to see him—running into him could ruin her life with the banker. Two hours later, Moll watches as James and the two men exit the house and head out of town.

The banker keeps their marriage a secret, which implies that he is ashamed in some way. Likely, the banker isn't ashamed of Moll per se, but he does seem to be ashamed that he wasn't married before. This shame reflects the importance of marriage in society, and it also implies that he doesn't want to be seen with a woman who isn't his wife. Moll's claim that she and the banker enjoyed themselves completely again suggests sex and is another example of the modest language Moll must use to tell her story.

The next day, as Moll and the banker are getting ready to return to London, excitement breaks out all over town. Three highwaymen robbed nearly £560 in money and goods from travelers, and three strange men have been seen in the area. Moll tells the constable that she indeed saw the men in question, and one of them she knows very well from Lancashire. He is an honest and good man, Moll says, and he can't possibly be one of the highwaymen. The constable tells his men they are mistaken; the three men seen in town have nothing to do with the robberies. The excitement delays Moll and the banker's departure, and they finally head back to London four days later.

Obviously, James is a highwayman—a thief who robs travelers and stagecoaches—which is likely why he can't return to London. The reader can infer that James is wanted in London for some sort of crime, probably robbery, which also implies James has loose morals himself—but again, that may just be because he's impoverished and has few options. Moll and the banker don't leave for London right away because with known highwaymen in the area, they stand to be robbed on their way back. Moll returns to London a married woman and she moves directly into the banker's house, which she finds well-furnished and more than adequate. There, Moll lives a very happy life. She has "landed in a safe Harbour," and she "sincerely" repents her wicked past.

But Moll points out, as “Covetousness is the Root of all Evil, so Poverty is, I believe, the worst of all Snares.” Moll lives an easy life for five years, until the banker loses a large sum of his money to a dishonest business associate. The banker grows depressed and lethargic after losing so much money and promptly dies, leaving Moll alone with two children.

The “safe Harbour” of Moll’s marriage and her subsequent financial security again imply that Moll only resorted to the wickedness of her past out of desperation and a need to survive. This implication underscores the connection between poverty and vice, and it suggests vice isn’t necessarily a choice that is freely made. Poverty is “the worst of all Snares,” in which one is bound to break the law and commit other immoral acts just to survive—especially as a woman with few options otherwise.

After the death of the banker, Moll isn’t left in debt, but she doesn’t have enough money to support herself either. She is again without friends or anyone to advise her, so she sits and cries, lamenting her miserable existence. Moll lives this way for two years, and then she decides to leave her house and move on. She sells everything she owns and lives on that sum for nearly a year, but she has no hope of bringing in any additional money. Moll interrupts her story and begs the reader not to continue without “seriously reflecting on the Circumstances of [her] desolate state.” And, Moll adds, it is best to remember the adage: “Give me not Poverty lest I Steal.”

Moll’s interruption and her insistence that the reader consider her state of absolute poverty before continuing suggests that Moll is going to make some immoral choices in the upcoming pages, and that her poverty is directly the cause of these choices. The biblical quote Moll references (Proverbs 30:9) implies that people wouldn’t steal if not for poverty, and Moll likewise wouldn’t behave in immoral ways if not for her “desolate state.”

## ➤ Chapter 9: Moll’s Life of Crime

One day, as Moll is walking through the shopping district in London, she looks in the window of an apothecary’s shop. On a stool sits a package wrapped in white cloth. The apothecary’s apprentice is standing on the counter, reaching for something on a high shelf, and his servant is beside him, her back to the shop. Moll slips in the door, snatches the package with little thought, and exits without being seen. She walks quickly through the streets without stopping, and feels “Horror” fill her soul. She rests for a bit, and then continues walking, not returning to her lodgings until nearly nine o’clock at night. Presumably, Moll steals the package because she doesn’t have any money. She takes the package with little thought, as if she is compelled to do it because she knows she may starve otherwise. Moll resorts to shoplifting in a moment of absolute desperation, which suggests she is not innately immoral or depraved; she is simply poor and likely hungry.

Back in her room, Moll opens the package and finds it full of valuable linen and lace, various silver mugs and spoons, and money totaling 18 shillings and six pence. As Moll goes through the contents of the package, she is struck with fear. She is a thief, and such things can get her sent to Newgate and hanged. Moll goes to bed, but she can’t sleep. She reflects on her sin, but she knows

that she won't starve now. Still, she has sincerely repented the sins of her life only to be "driven by the dreadful Necessity of [her] Circumstances" to thievery. Moll falls to her knees and prays to God for deliverance. Moll seems sincerely remorseful for stealing the package, and she also appears to regret the way she has been forced to live in the past—multiple illicit affairs, "whoredom," and abandoned children—which all point to Moll's moral fortitude. Sinning and vice aren't easy for Moll, and she truly regrets her choices, but she has had to choose between staying moral and staying alive.

The next day, Moll goes out walking in the street and encounters a young girl walking home alone. Moll notices a handsome gold necklace around the girl's neck, so she offers to see her home safely. The girl agrees, and Moll leads her into an empty alley, where, pretending to fix the girl's shoe, Moll slips the necklace from the girl's neck without her noticing. Moll turns the girl in the direction of her house and leaves her. As she walks, Moll reflects on her crimes. She isn't too concerned with the girl. After all, Moll didn't hurt her, and she indeed taught the girl's parents a valuable lesson about leaving their daughter unattended. The fact that Moll steals indiscriminately even from children complicates her claim that she isn't innately immoral. Moll could choose to target an adult, but she steals whatever is available, even if she must take from a child. Moll rationalizes her choice to steal from the child, and even tries to tell herself that she is helping the child in the long run by teaching the parents a lesson. Moll's rationalization suggests that she is morally bothered by her decision to rob a child.

As Moll walks, a man runs past her and throws a package into the street. He tells her to leave the package in the gutter and continues running. Within moments, a second man runs by yelling: "Thief!" and Moll watches as the first man is caught, arrested, and carried off. When the commotion dies down, Moll retrieves the package from the street and goes back to her room. Inside the package, Moll finds pieces of expensive silk and velvet, along with various pieces of gold and diamond jewelry. Days later, Moll finds occasion to steal two more diamond rings from a shop window, but she doesn't know how to turn her loot into money. Much of what Moll has stolen is too expensive to simply sell on the street, so she decides to go see the midwife for advice. The arrest of the thief right in front of Moll underscores the danger she is in of going to Newgate and being hanged if she continues to steal. Just as the threat of immorality isn't enough to keep Moll from stealing, neither is the threat of death, which further emphasizes just how desperate Moll is. She isn't stealing for the fun of it; she does it to survive.

Luckily for Moll, the midwife happily receives her and reveals that she also works as a pawn broker, so she can help Moll turn her goods into money. Moll moves into the midwife's house and tries to survive on only quilting work, but it isn't long before Moll steals again. While having a drink in a bar, Moll steals the silver cup she drinks her ale from. When she returns home to the midwife and tells her what she has done, the midwife begs her not to take the cup back. The punishment for theft is harsh, the midwife reminds Moll, and they will hang her without thought. The midwife melts down the silver cup so no one will recognize it, and Moll tells her that she is running out of money and isn't a very good thief. Unlike Moll, the midwife is a hardened criminal. In addition to being a prostitute, the madame of a brothel, and a procuress, the midwife is also a pawn broker who can turn jewelry and silver into spendable money. The midwife has

clearly been at her life of crime for a long time, and this again illustrates the limited options of women in society. The midwife isn't married, and she certainly isn't independently wealthy, so she must piece together several illegal jobs to provide for herself.

The midwife sets Moll up with a "Comrade" and experienced thief, who teaches Moll to shoplift and pickpocket without getting caught. Moll puts her new skills into practice, and it isn't long before she grows rich. At one point, Moll and her comrades have 120 gold watches between them. Moll has over £200 saved in her bank, but she continues to steal. "As Poverty brought me into the Mire," Moll says, "so Avarice kept me in." Before long, two of Moll's comrades are arrested and sent to Newgate Prison, where one is sentenced to death and hanged. The other comrade is granted a reprieve, but watching a comrade hang is traumatic for Moll, and she vows to stop stealing. Moll and the midwife refer to their criminal acquaintances as "Comrades." They aren't exactly friends, and they never have names, which helps them to maintain their anonymity. With 120 watches and 200 pounds saved, Moll is no longer stealing just to stay alive; now Moll is stealing to get rich, which again suggests she isn't as moral as she pretends to be. Moll decides to stop stealing because she's scared of being hanged and isn't as poor as she once was—her decision seems to have nothing to do with morals.

Not long after, Moll wakes in the middle of the night to sounds of yelling and distress. Part of the neighborhood in which she lives is engulfed in flames, and the midwife tells Moll that the commotion of the fire is the perfect opportunity to rob the surrounding houses without notice. Moll agrees and manages to steal some silver from a nearby house, and when she returns to the midwife with their booty, she tells Moll to go out and get more. She runs out to a new house, which she finds even more lucrative, and she returns with a considerable amount of gold jewelry and a purse containing £24. Moll's stealing spree during the fire again suggests that her moral compass is faulty. She doesn't need the money to survive, and she preys on fire victims, who are already under stress and in danger of losing all their valuables. In Moll's defense, however, she only seems to run into the fire to steal because the midwife tells her to. Still, Moll doesn't at all object to stealing from victims, and she appears to relieve them of their goods easily enough and with no thought as to the moral implications.

Moll admits the "inhumanity" of her actions during the fire and tears spring to her eyes; however, she can't force herself to make amends. Moll is quite a bit richer than she was before, and she quickly forgets all about her vow to stop stealing. Moll enjoys great success as a thief, but since the hanging of her comrade, she is leery of shoplifting, which is incredibly risky. As such, Moll sticks mostly to pickpocketing and lives with the midwife, who encourages Moll to keep stealing and introduces her to new comrades, including a couple. The couple isn't married, but they work together and sleep together, and Moll pulls off a few jobs with them. While Moll does admit her actions during the fire are immoral, she doesn't admit this until after the fire, when she has had time to reflect on what she has done. Even then, she doesn't repent or feel remorse. She knows stealing is wrong because society tells her it is wrong, but she doesn't seem to innately appreciate this. Moll's primary worry is getting caught, not behaving morally. Again, Moll is no longer stealing just to stay alive; she is stealing to get rich.

One day, the comrade couple asks Moll to break into a house with them, but she refuses. Breaking into houses is something Moll won't do, so they go ahead without her. The couple are arrested and hanged, and Moll, having so narrowly escaped joining them, again grows hesitant to continue as a thief. The midwife tries to talk Moll out of quitting and tells her about a nearby house where she knows some illegal lace from Flanders can be found. If Moll were to tell the police about the fabric, the midwife says, they would certainly give her a reward. Moll clearly doesn't think her actions during the fire count as breaking into a house. In Moll's mind, her crime is worse if she forces her way in; however, if she just wanders in and doesn't break a window or a door, she considers the crime less immoral—or at least less risky. While the midwife's plan to call the police about the illegal lace isn't stealing, it is still immoral, as she is willing to give up someone else just to make a little money.

Moll goes to the police and tells them about the illegal lace, which is indeed valued at nearly £300. Moll negotiates a £50 reward and steals a piece of lace worth about eight or nine pounds when no one is looking. Moll divides her profits with the midwife and goes back to work. She decides to lift a gold watch off a woman on a crowded street, but as Moll grabs the watch, it doesn't at first release from the woman's arm. Moll is worried the woman will discover her attempt, so, just as the watch breaks free, Moll screams at the top of her lungs that someone has tried to pick her pockets. Someone tried to grab her watch, Moll lies. The woman, standing nearby, is shocked to discover that she has been robbed. Her watch is missing, the woman says. Again, Moll's behavior is far from moral. Moll's neighbors will likely get into trouble for having illegal lace, and since the punishment for stealing a even bit of fabric is death, the consequences are probably severe. Moll easily gives her neighbors up for 50 pounds and a piece of lace, which isn't the behavior of an innately moral person. Moll claimed earlier that she wasn't a good thief, but that is obviously changing. Her quick thinking helps her pull off a robbery and avoid being caught. Moll is officially becoming a seasoned criminal.

Suddenly, there are cries from elsewhere in the street, and as the crowd parts, Moll watches as a young man is arrested as the alleged pickpocket. Moll continues down the street, the woman's watch in her pocket, and decides it is best not to steal anymore for a while. In the meantime, the midwife tells Moll a bit of her own story. The midwife was born a pickpocket, but she was arrested and ordered to be deported years ago. She bribed officials to send her to Ireland instead of the Colonies, and she lived there for years, working as a "Midwife and Procuress." She left Ireland before her sentence was up, and upon returning illegally to England, she thought it best if she didn't return to pickpocketing. The young man who is arrested as the pickpocket is obviously innocent, but he will likely be sent to Newgate and hanged. Moll knows this, and she lets it happen without a thought. Again, Moll's actions don't seem like those of a moral woman, since at this point she doesn't need to steal to survive. Defoe seems to suggest that small, necessary acts of immorality (like the ones Moll once committed out of desperation) can grow into larger ones over time. According to the midwife's story, she began working as a prostitute (a "Midwife and Procuress") because it wasn't safe to steal, which again underscores the limited options available to women.

Moll marvels at the midwife's history. Moll herself has been a thief for over five years and

Newgate doesn't even know her name. By this time, Moll is well known among the other thieves in town, and they give her the name Moll Flanders. This new name has nothing in common with Moll's former name, except that she once went by the name Mrs. Flanders years earlier while hiding at the Mint. Moll's success as a thief means that she is the envy of the other thieves, and she worries they may inform on her to the officials at Newgate. To ease Moll's fears, the midwife helps Moll to disguise herself as a man and introduces her to a new male comrade. Moll's new name and identity as a man illustrate Defoe's argument that one's identity evolves over time. Moll's name is again associated with sex and money, which underscores the intricate connection between sex and money, and it also identifies Moll as a prostitute herself. Moll isn't a prostitute (yet) quite in the same way the midwife is, but Defoe implies that Moll's past behavior with men essentially makes her a prostitute all the same.

Moll and the male comrade work several jobs together. They stick mostly to robbing distracted shopkeepers, and Moll's comrade never once suspects that she isn't a man. One day, Moll's comrade notices a preoccupied shopkeeper turn his back on several pieces of valuable silk. Moll tells him it isn't a good idea, but the comrade won't listen. He snatches the fabric and runs down the street with the police in hot pursuit. Moll runs back to the midwife's house and slips inside, a group of concerned citizens chasing her. When the citizens bang on the door and claim a male thief has run inside, the midwife assures them there is no man there. If they want to come in and look, she says, they will have to bring the constable. Obviously, Moll is dressed as a man, so her comrade and the concerned citizens looking to turn her in as an accomplice all believe they are looking for a man. Moll's slick actions and ability to disguise herself are more evidence that she is becoming a hardened criminal. She isn't just stealing to survive anymore. For Moll, theft is now her career, and she is very good at it. Or, she is very lucky, which means her luck will have to run out at some point.

Soon after, a constable knocks on the midwife's door, and she allows him inside. He looks the house up and down for the man the citizens witnessed running in, but he finds nothing. When he gets to Moll's door, he finds her inside, wearing only her nightclothes and surrounded by mounds of embroidery and quilting. Assuming Moll has been hard at work all day, he closes the door and goes downstairs. There is no man, the midwife says again, and if there was, he is long gone now. The constable agrees and leaves. Presumably, Moll is in her underclothes because she has just ripped off her male disguise. Again, it is Moll's quick thinking—evidence of her skill as a thief—that keeps her out of Newgate and in business. Moll appears to easily lie and deceive her way out of trouble, which further indicates that her long history of immoral behavior has made it easier and easier for her to continue acting immorally.

After the excitement with the constable, Moll refuses to let the midwife dress her up as man again. The male comrade is arrested and agrees to inform on Moll for a reduced sentence. He tells the police his accomplice is a man named Gabriel Spencer, which is the false name Moll gave him at their first meeting. The police look everywhere for Gabriel Spencer but come up emptyhanded. The authorities accuse the male comrade of lying about his accomplice to get his sentence reduced, and they punish him severely. While it isn't explicitly stated, the reader can infer that the male comrade is hanged for his crimes. Just as she did with the young man in the crowd, Moll must know her comrade is going to die, but it doesn't even seem to cross her mind.

This selfishness implies that Moll's moral character is continuing to deteriorate.

The male comrade's arrest makes Moll increasingly uneasy, so she decides to leave town for a while. She goes back to Lancashire, where she stays for over a month at a boarding house. Moll tells the landlady there that she is waiting for her husband to arrive from Ireland, and after some time, she pretends to receive word that his voyage has been delayed. Moll returns to London, where the midwife promises not to make her dress up as a man anymore. Plus, the midwife points out, Moll works best alone. Moll isn't uneasy because her comrade is dead; she's uneasy because she doesn't want to join him. Moll's trip to Lancashire underscores her oppression as a woman in a sexist society. As an unmarried woman, Moll must come up with an elaborate story just to get out of town for a few days. A single woman is bound to draw negative attention.

Moll has almost £500 in her bank, which she could live on for quite some time, but she has no intention of retiring just yet. She goes on a job with a new comrade and manages to lift a large piece of quality damask fabric from a shop and hand it off to her comrade without drawing any attention. They leave the store and go in opposite directions, and Moll watches as this comrade is arrested, too. Moll sneaks into a nearby shop and even buys some fabric to look like a regular shopper. The comrade is taken to Newgate, where she claims the damask was originally stolen by a woman named Moll Flanders.

The fact that Moll won't retire even when she has the means to again proves she isn't stealing just to survive. If Moll were truly concerned about her morality, she would steal only the bare minimum, but instead she goes to excess. With the arrest of her latest comrade, the authorities at Newgate now know her name. Ironically, Moll was just bragging that no one at Newgate even knows her name. Moll was arrogant, and now she is paying the price. In time, Moll's name is known at Newgate and Old-Baily, but they don't know her face. Moll's comrade is eventually deported, and Moll again grows paranoid. Soon, however, another fire breaks out, and Moll attempts to rob another house in the chaos. Just as Moll is about to enter a house, a featherbed comes flying out of a window overhead and falls directly on top of her, pinning her to the ground. Her bones are not broken, but she is bruised and banged up, and she must wait for someone to lift the bed before she can limp away. Again, it is remarkable that Moll won't "break" into a house, but she will walk in through an open door in the middle of chaos. Moll appears to think the crime is somehow less if she doesn't have to use force, which may be a symbolic echo of the way she didn't originally choose to be a criminal; she just did it because it was the only door open to her. The featherbed, meanwhile, seems to be a sign that Moll should stop breaking into house.

## ➤ Chapter 10: Moll and the Drunk Man

Much later, during the Bartholomew Fair, Moll meets a drunk man, and he is clearly very rich. Since the man is so intoxicated, he talks freely and flirts with Moll, offering her drinks. Moll refuses the man's drinks, but he says he is an honorable man, and he convinces Moll to return to his room with him. There, the drunk man has his way with Moll, and she lets him do what he wants. Then, after he passes out, Moll takes his watch and his purse of gold and slips out the door. Presumably, Moll has sex with the drunk man with the intention of robbing him after, and

she it does it with such ease that it is likely she has done something like this before. Moll's actions further underscore the connection between sex and money in the novel; Defoe implies that because Moll has long been forced to trade sex for money, it no longer even occurs to her that her behavior might be immoral.

Now, Moll says, she certainly didn't go out looking to do what she has done, but the drunk man seemed like a nice enough guy. As for taking his money, Moll feels bad about that, too, since she thinks he probably has a nice wife and family. Moll goes home to the midwife and tells her the story. The midwife is very pleased to hear the story and laughs so hard, she nearly cries. The next day, the midwife tells Moll that she thinks she knows who the drunk man is. Moll begs her not to look for him—after all, Moll has caused him enough pain already—but the midwife promises not to do him harm. Moll frequently makes excuses and claims to feel guilty for what she has done, but it is hardly believable at this point. Still, Defoe paints Moll as a desperate woman with few options in life, which doesn't excuse her behavior, but it certainly makes it more understandable. Moll takes it to quite an extreme, though, which suggests that even one sin is a slippery slope that will likely lead to more sin.

The midwife goes to a friend and asks about the drunk man, and the next day, the midwife's friend finds him. The friend says the man is very ill and has recently been violently robbed. He has been beaten up, too, she says, and he suffered several injuries. The midwife says she is sure the man just got drunk and found a whore, who probably took advantage of him, but the friend claims that is unlikely. The man, she says, is an aristocrat and of the finest moral standing. The midwife takes word of the drunk man's condition back to Moll, who assures her that he was just fine when she left him. Obviously, Moll didn't beat up the drunk man. Presumably, he made up a story that he was beaten and robbed so no one will think he was robbed by a prostitute, like the midwife says. As a married man looking for a prostitute, the drunk man clearly has loose morals as well and is another example of the "moral instruction" Defoe speaks of in the preface.

Ten days later, the midwife goes to visit the drunk man. Even though she is a stranger, the midwife says to him, she has come to do him a service. She promises that their dealings will remain a secret, and he is at first shy and says he knows nothing that requires such secrecy. The midwife tells him that she knows all about the misfortune that befell him recently, and he looks suddenly angry, claiming not to know what she is talking about. The midwife promises that she wants nothing from him and did not come to bribe him or reveal his secret. Obviously, the midwife has some sort of angle. She isn't visiting the drunk man out of the goodness of her heart to console him—she wants something from him. The drunk man is angry because he doesn't want anyone to know he was robbed and humiliated by a prostitute, which would likely be bad for his own reputation and his marriage.

The drunk man tells the midwife it is very unfortunate that a stranger should know all about the worst day of his life. As for the woman, the man says, whoever she may be, he takes full responsibility for what transpired between them. "She prompted me to nothing," he adds. He doesn't know for sure if the woman is the one who stole from him, but what he lost is the least of his present concerns. The midwife begins to understand what the man is hinting at and assures



him the woman is a “Gentlewoman,” and she has been with no man since the death of her husband eight years ago. When the man says Moll didn’t “prompt” him, what he means is that Moll didn’t proposition him, so he takes full responsibility for their sin. Presumably, the man is mostly worried that Moll has given him a venereal disease, and the midwife tries to convince him that Moll is safe; however, her choice to refer to Moll as a “Gentlewoman” is less than convincing, since it is another word for prostitute.

The drunk man looks immediately relieved and again tells the midwife that he doesn’t care about his money. Perhaps the woman is poor, he says, and she needed the money. The midwife interrupts him. Yes, yes, she says. The woman would have never dreamed of robbing him had she not been in terrible poverty and in desperate need of money. The drunk man is pleased to hear it, and he hopes the woman was able to put the money to good use. He then asks the midwife if she can arrange a meeting between him and the woman who robbed him, but the midwife says such a meeting might be tricky. Again, Defoe implies that there is a direct connection between poverty and criminal behavior. Moll only robs and has illicit sex because she doesn’t have any other reasonable options as a woman. She has only two legal options: marriage, or going into Service and being little more than a slave. Moll doesn’t have a choice; if she doesn’t break the law and sin, she won’t be able to survive.

The drunk man tells the midwife that he very much wants to see the woman, as he would like his gold watch back. If the midwife can’t arrange a meeting for him, he asks if she might be able to get his watch back for him, at which point he will pay her what the watch is worth. The midwife promises to try and leaves. She returns the next day with the watch, and he pays her 30 Guineas, which is much more than they would have been able to sell it for. He asks the midwife how it is that she knows so much about his misfortune, and she tells him a long story about being a pawn broker and coming into possession of his watch, which she resolved to return to him as she has. Presumably, the midwife had no intention of giving the watch back, and she only does it because he offers to pay her. Of course, the midwife is pleased because he is generous, and her job as a pawn broker is little more than a convenient story to cover up her ill intentions. What exactly the midwife’s intentions are is never revealed, but it may be that she is subtly offering her own services as a prostitute.

Moll has serious reservations about seeing the drunk man again, but the midwife goes to see him often. Each time she sees him, he is exceedingly kind and gives her money. On one occasion, he again asks the midwife to arrange a meeting between him and the woman who robbed him, and she promises to try. The midwife goes home and tells Moll all about her visit with the man, and Moll finally agrees to meet him. On the day of the meeting, Moll takes great care in readying herself, and when the drunk man arrives, she can tell he has again been drinking. Again, it isn’t stated that the midwife visits the drunk man as a prostitute, but since she always comes back with money, it is certainly implied. The drunk man is always drunk when he approaches a prostitute, which suggests he thinks it is wrong and needs some motivation and courage to go through with it. Such behavior goes against his own moral compass, so his story is again an example of the kind of moral instruction that Defoe claims to offer his readers.

The drunk man is very happy to see Moll. He apologizes for their last meeting and tells her that had it not been for the wine, he would have never taken such freedoms with her. He has been long married, the man says, and has not been with another woman since he met his wife. Moll tells him not to worry. She hasn't suffered any from their first meeting, and she, too, has not been with another man since her husband died some eight years ago. Yes, the man says, the midwife has already told him that Moll is a widow. Finally, the man tells Moll that since they have already committed the sin once, he doesn't see the harm in doing it again. The drunk man makes excuses for his sins and immorality and blames the alcohol, which further suggests he feels guilty. His suggestion that repeating their sin won't matter because it was already committed once underscores how, after time and repetition, a crime can become easier to commit. Moll's own experience as a thief underscore this as well—stealing was difficult at first for Moll, but now it is easy.

The midwife suspected the visit would come to this, as did Moll, so they had readied a room. Moll leads the drunk man to a chamber with an inner bedroom, and they spend the night there together. After committing a crime once, Moll explains, the regret wears off and makes it easier to do the thing a second time. When the drunk man goes to leave, Moll promises that she did not rob him this time, and he gives her five Guineas. Moll has not made money in such a way in many years, and she has several more visits with him that go the same way. One day, he asks Moll exactly how she makes her living, and she tells him that she works with embroidery and quilting. It is a tough life, Moll says, but she manages. This incident is the first time Moll explicitly talks about working as a prostitute, but she implies here that she has done it before. Subtle insinuations like Moll's comment here and the implied meaning of her name suggest that Moll has worked as a prostitute on more than one occasion, so the fact that this is just now being revealed to the reader is evidence of the modest language Moll is forced to use to tell her story.

Several months pass, and Moll continues to see the drunk man. He doesn't keep her as a mistress, but he pays her more than enough money, and she does not have to return to stealing. After about a year, the drunk man stops calling on Moll as often, and then he quits coming all together, without so much as a word. Moll lives on her savings for a few months, and when she begins to run out of money, she knows she must go back to work. Moll dresses herself up in various disguises—a widow, a woman in an apron and straw hat, a beggar, etc.—and goes out looking for opportunities to steal. Moll still doesn't openly admit that she is working as a prostitute. Instead of calling it what it is, she says only that she isn't the drunk man's mistress. Moll choice of words again reflects modest language, but it also suggests that Moll can't admit it because it she is ashamed; it seems that prostitution goes against her moral fiber. Moll calls herself a whore when she behaves promiscuously, but she doesn't when she works as a prostitute.

## ➤ Chapter 11: Moll's Crimes Escalate

One day, Moll dresses up in the apron and straw hat and stands in front of a local inn, where the carriages come and go. Travelers frequently come through with packages, looking for a carriage or coach, and Moll thinks it is the perfect place to work. A woman is standing nearby, and she

asks Moll if she is waiting for a carriage. Moll says yes and says she is waiting for her mistress. The woman asks Moll the name of her mistress, and Moll answers the first name that comes to her head, which, as luck would have it, is the name of a family in town. The woman knows them well, she says, and goes back to the inn. The various schemes Moll runs are again evidence of her skill and proficiency as a thief. She is experienced, and she knows the best places to go. Moll has come a long way from the novice stealing to stay alive, which again reflects how a repeated crime gets easier and easier. The first time Moll took something, she was a wreck, but now she is calm even under pressure.

Soon, a woman approaches with a small child. She is holding a large package, and she tells Moll that she is looking for a coach for two passengers. Moll shows her to an empty coach and helps the child in. Moll asks the woman if she would like to put her package in the coach, but the woman says no. She is worried that the package will be stolen out of the coach with only the child to watch it. Moll offers to hold the package for her, and the woman agrees, passing it Moll. The woman goes about loading the coach, and when she isn't paying attention, Moll quietly slips off with the package. Again, Moll steals indiscriminately. She doesn't care if she steals from women or children, and she is getting increasingly bold in her approach. Ironically, the woman is worried about her package getting stolen and unknowingly gives the package away to the thief directly.

Moll takes the package home to the midwife, and they find it full of fine clothing worth quite a bit of money. Given the success of Moll's latest adventure, she tries the scheme many more times, although never at the same inn, and she begins scoping out warehouses, too. One day, Moll goes to a warehouse by the waterside and, with a forged letter of ownership, is easily given a large box full of linen and glassware worth nearly 22 pounds. One day, Moll dresses in the disguise of a widow and goes to work. Suddenly, she hears someone cry: "Thief, stop Thief." A shopkeeper appears and claims a woman dressed as a widow has just robbed him.

Moll's schemes are becoming more elaborate and bolder. 22 pounds is about six months' salary for a working-class person, and Moll easily steals it in plain sight. Moll is getting way too comfortable and way too brave, which implies she will soon put herself into a situation in which she will get caught. Moll did not rob the shopkeeper in this case, but the reader can infer that she will be accused of it, which mirrors the way that she previously let others take the fall for her own crimes.

A mob gathers around Moll, and she finds herself seized and dragged back to the shop, where the shopkeeper confirms she is not the widow who robbed him. The shopkeeper tells the mob to let Moll go, but one man says it is best to detain her until a constable arrives. Moll grows increasingly angry. The shopkeeper has already said she is not the offender, and they have no right to detain her, Moll says. Two men arrive with the real offender, and a constable arrives, too. The shopkeeper tells the constable that Moll is not the offender in question, and he apologizes for any inconvenience. Moll, however, is furious, and she wants the men who detained her to go before the magistrate so she might be compensated.

Moll's treatment again demonstrates the sexist nature of 17th-century English society. The men have no reason to suspect Moll, other than her gender, and like Moll says, they have no right to detain her. The men assume power and control over Moll simply because she is a woman, and they hold her against her will. Moll has every right to be angry with her treatment; however, given her criminal history, going anywhere near the law seems ill advised.

A fight breaks out between the shopkeeper's men, the mob, and the constable, so they all head to see the magistrate. When they arrive, the magistrate asks Moll her name, and she says her name is Mary Flanders. Moll claims to be a widow whose husband was killed at sea. She says she went shopping this morning to buy new clothes for her "second Mourning," but before she bought a thing, she was accused of stealing by the mob. Even after the shopkeeper said she wasn't the offender, two men detained her and treated her very badly. The magistrate apologizes for Moll's poor treatment, but he tells her it isn't his place to award her reparations. He does, however, send one of the men to Newgate for assaulting Moll and the constable.

"Second Mourning" is a reference to the second year of a widow's mourning, in which a widow typically wore softer and lighter shades of black. Presumably, Moll is hoping to be rewarded money for her inconvenience, but it seems a terrible risk for little reward. Moll must have known she would have to give a name, and Flanders seems a poor choice, as one of her comrades has already informed on Moll to the authorities at Newgate. Moll is getting greedy and looking for money wherever she can grab it.

Moll goes home and tells the midwife all about her eventful morning, and the midwife laughs heartily. She asks Moll if she even realizes how lucky she is and tells her to sue the shopkeeper and make him pay her £500. Moll hires an attorney, who tells the shopkeeper that Moll is a wealthy widow with a great deal of resources at her disposal, that she and plans on suing him to the greatest extent. Moll's attorney demands £500 from the shopkeeper and he offers £50, so they make plans to meet and negotiate. The midwife again influences Moll to behave in an immoral way, but Moll agrees easily enough. Moll's lawsuit is further evidence that she is looking for money schemes everywhere. Her crimes and dishonesty are getting easier, and her greed is getting out of control.

Moll arrives at the meeting in a coach with a maid, and the shopkeeper proceeds to again tell her how sorry he is; however, the shopkeeper says, it hardly seems a reason for Moll to ruin his business. Moll admits that she isn't looking to put the man out of business, but she does want what is coming to her for enduring such terrible treatment. They finally agree on £150 and a suit made of black silk, and Moll goes home happy. She is in good financial shape indeed. She has over £700 in her bank, plus a good deal of valuable clothing, silver, and gold jewelry. Moll's bank is quite large, and she can no longer call herself poor. She doesn't need the shopkeeper's money at all, and she certainly doesn't need a suit made of black silk. Moll was wronged by the men in the shop, but that isn't necessarily the shopkeeper's fault. Moll's desire for more is dangerous and immoral, and the reader can infer that this greed will likely be her downfall.

After the ordeal with the shopkeeper, Moll decides to go back to work dressed as a beggar. The

first night she tries the disguise, she just wanders around without any opportunities to steal, but on the second night, she comes upon an adventure. Moll is standing outside a tavern dressed as a beggar, when a man approaches her and hands her the reins of his horse. He tells Moll to hold the horse awhile, so he can go into the tavern. As soon as he goes inside, Moll walks off with the horse. She takes the horse home to the midwife, who is very confused. She doesn't know what to do with a horse or how to sell it, so they decide it is best if Moll leave it at a stable. Moll doesn't need a horse—she doesn't even know what to do with a horse—but she steals it anyway. Moll's greed and increasingly bold actions (she can't hide a horse) seem certain to get her caught before long, but she doesn't appear to be slowing down. With Moll's bank at 700 pounds, she doesn't ever have to steal again in her life, and everything she does from here is just an unnecessary risk.

Moll again dresses as a beggar and goes out to work, and she meets two “Coiners of Money,” who offer to take her in on their enterprise. Moll refuses, wanting nothing to do with their business, for which the punishment is “to be burnt to Death at a Stake.” She meets other comrades, mostly those who break into houses. Moll doesn't like breaking into houses either, but she does it for a bit and quickly grows tired of it. The “Coiners of Money” are counterfeiters, and punishment for forging and counterfeiting money during Moll's time is death by fire, which is enough to deter Moll. But what few rules Moll had are fast disappearing: She used to refuse to break into houses, but now she occasionally does it, which further reflects the deterioration of Moll's morality.

The next day, Moll dresses as an upper-class lady and goes to the Mall at St. James Park, where many ladies are walking in the park. There, Moll sees two young girls, about nine and thirteen years old. The older girl is wearing a gold watch, and the younger girl has a gold necklace with pearls. Moll asks a footman who the girls are, and he tells her they are the daughters of wealthy aristocrats. Moll falls into step with the older girl as she walks and begins talking to her as if they are old friends. Suddenly, the king arrives to attend a meeting at the Parliament-House, and all the people clamor to get a look. Moll helps the girls get closer, and as she does, she steals the girl's gold watch. The Mall at St. James Park is a park in central London, and in Moll's day, it is fashionable for wealthy ladies to walk in the park. Moll goes to the park looking for high-class targets, and she again proves herself an indiscriminate thief when she targets children.

After the Mall, Moll goes on a new adventure to the Gaming-House at Covent-Gardens. Inside, a man offers Moll a chance to bet, but she declines, claiming not to know the game. He assures her there is nothing to it and gives her money to place a bet. When Moll sits down, she finds the gambling men extremely pleasant, and she takes to winning their money. She offers the man's money back and all the winnings, but he refuses and instead gives her more money to bet. She wins more, and after slipping a bit of the money into her purse, she again offers the man his money and winnings. He decides it isn't right to keep all the money, so he gives Moll half—about 73 Guineas. During Moll's time, gambling was considered an immoral vice, especially for a woman. Moll claims not to know how to play, but her ignorance is obviously a hustle. Moll is a skilled gambler, too, which suggests she is familiar with multiple forms of vice. She doesn't stop at prostitution or theft—Moll will do any scheme that brings her money, which is another indication of how greedy and immoral she has become.

Moll returns home and shares her winnings with the midwife, who is indeed happy to have them. She commends Moll on her ability to secure money, but she warns Moll about visiting Gaming-Houses. Moll understands the danger of “the Itch of Play” and decides not to place any more bets. The midwife suggests Moll stop stealing and be happy with what they have made so far, but Moll

has no intention of stopping. Moll's success grows and she becomes a notorious thief, and her name is now even more common at Newgate and Old-Baily. Moll is definitely getting too greedy; even the midwife is telling her to slow down and eventually stop. Moll is so greedy that she even disregards the rules of a successful criminal, like staying away from gambling, which, with "the Itch of Play," can quickly become addictive and rob her of all her money. Furthermore, Moll is drawing attention to herself, which suggests she will soon get caught.

Moll begins to travel under various disguises. She goes to the spas in Tunbridge and Epsom, and then she moves on to a fair in Suffolk. Moll secures a gold watch, and then she moves on to Cambridge, where she gets some new linen. She arranges for a linen shop to deliver goods to her rented room and after the delivery boy arrives, she skips out on the bill. From there she goes to Ipswich and on to Harwich, where she encounters many foreigners and little of value. She does manage to lift a large suitcase, which is too big to move, so she leaves it where she found it. Moll is expanding her area and stealing more and more. She goes to neighboring towns to steal and comes up with new schemes. Moll doesn't appear to have any moral reservations or difficulty in breaking the law so frequently and brazenly. Just like her "crime" with the gentleman, repetition makes Moll seemingly numb to the immorality of her career as a thief.

Back on the road, Moll is stopped by Custom-House officers in Ipswich, and they break open her suitcase when she claims not to have the key. Thankfully, there is nothing incriminating in Moll's suitcase, and the officers let her go. She moves on to Colchester, where she lived her early years as Robin's wife. Moll realizes she knows no one in Colchester anymore, and after a few days, she moves on. She returns to London and tells the midwife all about her travels. Moll claims her story is most useful to honest people, as it reminds them to guard themselves against the dishonesty of others. Moll leaves the moral of her story to be decided by the reader; she isn't qualified to make judgements or "preach."

Moll's realization in Colchester reflects her evolving identity. Moll is nowhere near the same person she was then, and anyone she knew is dead or gone. Lewd or promiscuous books were considered inappropriate and taboo in the 17th and 18th centuries, which is why Moll, and therefore Defoe, implies that her story is an example of how not to behave and a reminder to readers to arm themselves against the evil of the world. But of course, Moll isn't qualified to "preach" the moral of her own story, because she herself is immoral.

One day near Christmas, Moll enters a silver shop and is tempted by the spoons. A man across the street watches Moll enter, and since no one else is in the shop, he grows concerned. He runs into the shop and grabs Moll, accusing her of stealing. She tells him she simply came in to buy a half dozen spoons, but he isn't listening. A crowd gathers, including the owner of the shop and a city Alderman. The Alderman is also the Justice of the Peace, so he stops to see what the commotion is all about. Moll tells him she had simply stopped to buy six spoons when a man accused her of stealing. The situation is easily resolved, and Moll goes home. The man's suspicion of Moll is further evidence of their sexist society. Of course, Moll is going to rob the shop, but he doesn't know this for sure. The man simply sees an unattended woman in an empty shop and assumes she is up to no good. He could just quietly watch her and see what happens, but he immediately stops her and accuses her of being a thief.

Three days later, Moll walks by a house and notices the door is open, so she goes inside. She picks up two pieces of silk, and as she is walking out the door, two women run from across the street and detain her. A constable arrives, and when Moll can't bribe him, he takes her before the Justice. Moll pleads with the Justice and tells him that she didn't break anything to get into the house and she has taken nothing, so there is no harm done. The Justice is about to let Moll go, but then he learns that she was detained with fabric in her hands, which she would have stolen had she not been stopped. Moll is immediately sent to Newgate Prison. Again, Moll seems to think that walking into an open house is less of a crime than breaking into a locked house. Moll has never liked breaking into houses, and the featherbed that dropped on her head the last time she tried should have served as a warning to her, but Moll's greed is her downfall. She walks into the house without thinking, almost like it is a compulsion, which again reflects her deteriorating morals; theft is now like second nature to her.

## ➤ Chapter 12: Moll in Newgate Prison

Alone and miserable in Newgate Prison, Moll repents her past crimes, but doing so gives her no satisfaction. She knows she is only repenting because the ability to continue her sins has been removed. Moll doesn't sleep for days, and the other women give her a hard time and try to take advantage of her. Soon, the midwife comes to visit Moll and offers her much comfort, but she can't help Moll any other way. She has tried to bribe the witnesses, but Moll is most likely to be sentenced to death. The prison chaplain comes to visit Moll and give her spiritual counsel, but he brings her little comfort. Moll can't repent for her crimes because she isn't genuinely remorseful. Moll began a moral woman, but her crimes of necessity have snowballed and made her a full-blown criminal. Plus, if Moll had to do it all over again, she would likely make the same choices. Moll had little choice but to turn to crime. Her crimes have obviously gotten out of control, but Defoe implies that is to be expected of someone with options as limited as Moll's.

Soon, word spreads around the prison that three highwaymen were brought in the night before. Out of curiosity, Moll goes to investigate and discovers that one of the men is James, Moll's husband from Lancashire. She is shocked and doesn't at first know what to do. He doesn't seem to recognize Moll, and she is thrown into deep thoughts about her love for him. She grieves for him, as he will surely be hanged, and Moll soon learns that she will certainly be tried for her own life. Learning of her impending death, Moll again tries to repent, but she is still unable. Moll seems to be more concerned with James's sentence than her own. She is a hardened criminal, and she expects to die for her crimes. Moll has committed a slew of crimes—prostitution, incest, adultery, fraud, robbery—and she doesn't think she deserves to repent now, after all this time and all her crimes. Moll's inability to repent highlights just how deeply her life of crime has affected her.

The midwife tries to bribe the jury, but she is unsuccessful, and they indeed will try Moll for felony burglary. When Moll learns of her fate, she cries with the midwife, and that night, Moll begins to pray. Moll hasn't prayed since the death of her last husband, but she repeatedly begs the Lord to have mercy on her. The midwife seems even more concerned than Moll—and she seems a great deal more penitent, too—and she gets to thinking about all the comrades she has seen hanged over the years. For years, the midwife has sat back and let others steal for her, and

now she will be forced to watch Moll die. The midwife is much more remorseful than Moll, but Moll also appears to be moving closer to true penitence and remorse as she moves closer to death. The midwife and Moll are more than just “comrades”; they are friends, and Moll’s impending death has thrown the midwife into a penitent state, which is making her reflect critically on her own criminal past.

Moll is arraigned on Thursday for stealing two pieces of silk worth £46 and tried the next day. She pleads not guilty, but she isn’t optimistic. The witnesses testify first and maintain that Moll entered the house and would have stolen the fabric had she not been detained at the door. Moll listens as they all recount the truth, and then it is her turn to plead her case. She insists she broke nothing and stole nothing. She did not break a door to enter, and it cannot be positively concluded that she intended to steal the fabric. The Justice is unconvinced, and Moll is found guilty and sentenced death. Moll is sentenced to death for stealing fabric just like her mother was, which reflects the harsh punishment of the time but highlights how disadvantage (and hence criminality) can run in families. Moll’s mother was a thief, and so is Moll. This connection again highlights the role of poverty in their lives and the lack of legal and reasonable opportunities for women to make a living. Moll’s mother had few choices, just like Moll, and so they suffer the same fate.

Upon hearing her sentence, Moll begs for her life and reiterates that she broke nothing and took nothing. The Justice says nothing, and Moll’s sentence stands. The midwife is inconsolable. She vacillates between anger and mourning, and she appears to be “as any mad Woman in Bedlam.” The midwife again repents for the sins she has committed, and she is devastated by their misfortune. For Moll, there is nothing before her but death. The names on the death warrant will come soon, and the execution will take place soon. “Bedlam” is a reference to Bedlam Royal Hospital, a psychiatric hospital in London that was built in 1247 and still exists today. The term “Bedlam” has long since been synonymous with insanity and chaos. The description of the midwife as a “mad Woman in Bedlam” further reflects the sexism and misogyny of the time, as it employs popular stereotypes of women as innately hysterical and insane.

The midwife sends a minister to see Moll, and he begs Moll to repent and see the error of her ways. He praises Jesus and quotes scripture, and then he kneels before Moll and prays. For the first time, Moll is moved to repent. She thinks back on her life with disgust and hate, and she thinks about Eternity. With the highest sincerity, Moll asks forgiveness for her sins and reflects upon her life of crime. Moll interrupts her story and tells the reader that she is not fit to read “Lectures of Instruction,” but she hopes her story causes others to “make just Reflections” on their own lives. Moll’s story suggests that even the most hardened criminal can repent if they turn to the Lord, which reinforces Defoe’s message of morality and moral instruction. Moll again addresses the reader directly. She admits that giving lectures on morality would be hypocritical for her, but she still reinforces the importance of reflecting on one’s own morals, and this also aligns with Defoe’s aim of moral instruction.

The minister asks Moll to confess as much as she is able or willing, and he promises to comfort her and assures her that what she says will remain in secrecy. Moll tells him everything, and she repents and begs for mercy. The minister visits again the next day and explains to Moll what it



means to be forgiven. Divine forgiveness and mercy occur when one who is sincerely repentant and desirous of forgiveness asks for it. If they are willing to accept that forgiveness, they shall have it. Moll again expresses her remorse and desire for mercy, and the minister is so moved by her sincerity that he promises not to leave her until the very end. This passage suggests that Moll is finally remorseful and that she is sincere, but Defoe leaves enough doubt that the reader can never be sure that Moll's repentance is genuine. It takes her years to come to this point, and many of her crimes suggest that she has little, if any, morality left. It may be the fear of impending death that leads Moll to atone, not a sudden return to morality and God.

On Wednesday, Moll's name is on the death warrant. The minister tries to comfort her, but he leaves that night and does not return until late the next day. When he finally arrives at the door of Moll's cell, she is overjoyed to see him. The minister immediately tells Moll that he has received a good report from the Justice serving on Moll's case, and he has obtained her a reprieve. Moll will be transported instead of executed. The minister reminds Moll not to let her happiness and relief remove the "Remembrance of [her] past Sorrow" from her mind. Moll again interrupts her story. She understands that readers who are "pleas'd and diverted" by the "wild and wicked" parts of Moll's story will be dissatisfied with this part of her story; however, the reader must know that this is the best part of Moll's life and is "most Advantageous" to her and "most instructive" to readers. This part is "most Advantageous" and "most instructive" to readers because it is the exact moment Moll is redeemed and returns to moral living again. Moll is careful to reiterate that her story of vice isn't meant to be entertaining; it is meant as moral instruction. Readers who are reading Moll's story for the wrong reasons, or as Defoe says, in the wrong way, are drawn to the "wild and wicked" parts, but both Moll and Defoe remind readers that this is not how Moll's story is intended to be read. The minister's warning suggests that surest way to avoid sinning again is to remember the pain and disgust she feels for her sins now.

It is 15 weeks before Moll is ordered to a ship for deportation. In the meantime, she learns that James has been moved to the other side of the prison. James found a way to bribe the witnesses in his case and there is little evidence to convict him. Moll disguises herself and tells the authorities she can provide evidence against the highwaymen in question because they robbed her in Dunstable. Soon, rumor spreads that Moll Flanders will turn in the highwaymen to reduce her own sentence, and she is taken to identify them. When Moll is brought into the room with James, she throws back her hood and reveals her face. She weeps, as does James, and he asks her how she can betray him so. Obviously, the highwaymen didn't rob Moll in Dunstable, and she has no intention of turning James in for anything. Identifying James is just an excuse to see him. Moll is still disguising herself, even in prison, and while her lies here are harmless, she is still guilty of dishonesty and is technically sinning. Moll's instant return to lying again suggests she isn't as remorseful and penitent as she claims.

James listens closely to Moll's story, and when she gets to the part in Brickill, where she lied to the police about seeing him leave town with the highwaymen, he is incredibly thankful. He has always wondered who saved his life in Brickill, and he is very glad that it was his very own wife. He says he is now greatly indebted to her and will do whatever he can to deliver her from her current circumstances. James tells Moll a little about his own history, including crimes he pulled

in West Chester and Lichfield, and Moll suddenly understands why James wouldn't go to London with her years earlier. James knows Moll isn't trying to betray him when he discovers she was the one to save him in Brickill. James's crimes in West Chester and Lichfield make it clear that James couldn't go to London with Moll because he has been a wanted criminal for many years.

James says he wrote Moll letters over the years, which she knows to be true. She saw the letters, but she never read them or responded for fear her husband, the banker, would find out. James then tells Moll about his case. They only have one witness against him, which isn't enough to convict, and he has it on good authority that if he volunteers to be transported, he will be allowed to do so. However, James admits, he would rather be hanged than deported. James's letters suggest that he is truly in love with Moll and not just stringing her along for money or taking advantage of her in any other way. Criminal cases during this time required two witnesses to convict, and since James was able to bribe one, his life will likely be spared.

Moll attempts to persuade James using "Womans Rhetorick," which is to say she cries and pleads with him to volunteer for transportation. There is a great deal of money to be made in the Colonies, Moll says, and he can later buy his freedom. James says he doesn't have much money, and Moll assures him he can start over in America with very little. She claims their shared troubles are enough to convince them both to leave this part of the world and start new. James agrees, and they part with love, just as they did years earlier. Moll's reference to "Womans Rhetorick" again underscores the sexism of her time, which even Moll herself perpetuates here. This reference relies on popular stereotypes that women are hysterical and over-emotional, and she uses this trope to try to manipulate James's feelings.

## ➤ Chapter 13: Moll and James in America

Meanwhile, the midwife tries to get Moll's case pardoned, but the cost is way more than they can afford. Even the minister goes on Moll's behalf to try and argue her case again, but the authorities tell the minister that he should be happy Moll's life was spared. In February, Moll is taken with seven other convicts and placed on a Merchant's ship headed to Virginia. The ship set sails and begins up the coast, but the Merchant first stops at a place called Bugby's-Hole. Moll convinces an officer on the ship to mail a letter on her behalf, so she writes to the midwife and tells her to bring the goods she packed for Moll to the next port, and she also encloses a letter for James.

The fact that the midwife could have gotten Moll's case pardoned with enough money suggests the criminal system in England is corrupt—it is just as immoral as Moll was, which again indicates that Moll's behavior is a symptom of widespread social ills, rather than evidence of her personal failings.

Two days later, the midwife delivers Moll's goods to the ship at port. She brings a trunk full of things that will be useful and needed when Moll arrives in America, along with a portion of Moll's "Bank of Money." Once Moll is established in America, she will send for the rest of her money to be shipped to her. The midwife is heartbroken at the sight of Moll, and she hates the idea of being separated from her. The midwife also brings with her a response from James, in which he

says he has voluntarily asked to be transported. Unfortunately, James says, it is impossible to get on the same ship, and he will have to meet Moll in Virginia. Again, Moll claims to be penitent, but she is already scheming to get money and goods to America, which is obviously prohibited. It is part of Moll's punishment that she must go to America with nothing and work off her debt to society in the form of indentured servitude, but Moll clearly has no intention of sticking to her punishment. If Moll were truly penitent, she would likely accept her punishment, but she doesn't.

Moll is concerned that James won't be able to meet up with her at all, so she tells the midwife all about their relationship—except that they were married—and she tells her about their plans to start a new life in America. The midwife is so happy to hear Moll's story that she promises to make sure James gets on the boat before it sails. She succeeds, and when the ship sails, both Moll and James are on board. Moll's sentence will last for five years, but James is not allowed to return to England for the rest of his life, and he is quite upset. What's worse, since James voluntarily transported, he is made to pay for his passage. Unlike Moll, James clearly doesn't want to leave London. For Moll, going to America isn't so much a punishment as it is a new opportunity for her to make money and increase her wealth. She is still very much tempted by greed and the prospect of making more money, which again suggests Moll hasn't learned her lesson and isn't as remorseful as she claims. On the other hand, she may simply be making the best of the situation, since, as usual, she has few other options.

Moll and James pool their resources. James had a fair amount of money when he went to prison, but the cost has been considerable, and he is down to £108 in gold. Moll puts in the money she has on board—£246 and a few shillings—but she doesn't tell him about the £300 bank she left safe with the midwife in London. Their main problem at present is that their stock is all in money, except for the clothes and linens Moll has in the trunk from the midwife, which is useless in the Colonies. Moll bribes a member of the crew, and for 15 Guineas, she and James are allowed a nice room and a seat at the captain's table. Moll seems to be back to her old ways. She doesn't tell James about all her money, and she continues to keep her secret bank in case she is left alone and destitute. Again, Moll's limited opportunities and vulnerability as a woman are the source of her dishonesty; however, she is back to bribing and scheming, which implies Moll's morals are still flexible.

Before the ship sails, however, the midwife finds occasion to befriend the captain and inquires what kind of equipment one would need to become a planter in America. He lists off goods totaling around £100, and the midwife quickly secures them. She boards the goods on the ship in her own name and endorses them over to James to be collected when the ship gets to America. By the time the ship sails and all expenses are covered, Moll and James have £200 in money and the contents of two trunks secured by the midwife—more than enough to start a good life in America. Despite getting caught for her crimes and technically being punished, Moll is right where she wanted to be years ago—on a ship with James on her way to America. In this way, Moll's punishment isn't much of a punishment at all. In a roundabout way, Moll is getting exactly what she wants, which makes Defoe's claim that her story is instructive seem a bit insincere.

It is in this happy state that Moll and James set sail from Bugby's-Hole. Their journey begins easy enough, but they are delayed by bad weather later in the trip. When they arrive in Virginia,

Moll and James are sold as servants to a planter, and he offers them their freedom for a large amount of tobacco. Moll and James immediately secure the tobacco, along with 20 Guineas for good measure, and settle in Virginia, near the Potomac River. Moll receives their goods from the ship and stores them in a warehouse, and they secure lodging in a small village. Again, Moll is right where she wants to be. She has purchased her freedom and is able to start a new life with James. Moll and James seem to be rewarded for their immorality and crime, not punished, which sends a conflicting message in a book supposedly aimed at “moral instruction.”

The first thing Moll does is inquire about her mother and her brother—or husband, depending—and she learns that though her mother is dead, her brother lives on a nearby plantation with one of his sons. Moll asks around town about the man living on her brother’s plantation, and she learns that he lives with his son, Humphry. Humphry is the name of her own son, and she has not seen or spoken to him in over 20 years. Moll also learns that the whole town knows their incestuous secret. Moll’s reputation is still vulnerable to her secret after all these years, and she fears that if others find out who she is, she will be ruined. Humphry is the only one of Moll’s 12 children whose name is mentioned, which suggests some level of importance compared to Moll’s other nameless children.

According to rumors, when Moll’s mother died, she left her estate to her Moll, to be collected if she ever made herself known. Moll is pleased to hear it but secretly laments her luck. Clearly, her secret is out, and if she makes herself known, she will be ruined. She debates her choices day and night for some time, until James notices her preoccupation. She tells James as much of the story as she must—that she has relations living nearby and that her mother has died and left her money—but she claims she is hesitant to reveal herself to them because she doesn’t want them to know she is a transported criminal. Moll is still misleading James because she thinks he won’t accept her when he finds out about her incestuous past. Defoe implies Moll has good reason for holding out on James—he might very well leave her if he knew—but again, this reason highlights how impossible Moll’s circumstance as a woman are. She’s forced to lie because society wouldn’t understand that the events of the past were never really her choice.

James tells Moll that he is willing to go and do whatever she wants. He will relocate to another part of the country or go to a whole new country if she wants, but Moll is torn. She wants her mother’s estate, but she doesn’t want James to know about her past with her brother. And, Moll says, she wants to at least see her brother and Humphry before relocating. Moll again interrupts her story and reminds the reader that the publication of her story is meant “for Instruction, Caution, Warning and Improvement to every Reader,” so they should not look too harshly on her for keeping secrets from James. Moll’s claim that her story is intended for the “Improvement to every Reader” again recalls Defoe’s argument that wicked stories can be put to good use through moral instruction. Moll’s desire to see Humphry after all this time further suggests that she loves and cares for him and didn’t abandon him because she is a heartless and immoral woman. Moll had little choice in abandoning her son, and she clearly regrets it.

Moll and James decide to relocate to a new part of the country, where they will be just a couple looking to farm, not transported criminals. Moll selects Carolina, the southernmost colony,

because she detests the cold, but she can't decide whether she should send James on without her and visit her brother's plantation first, or if she should settle in Carolina and then return to Virginia. She decides to first go to Carolina, and the trip is 200 miserable miles. Moll and James arrive at a place called Phillip's Point and learn that the ship to Carolina sailed three days earlier. Exhausted and unwilling to travel further, they decide to settle right where they are. It has already been established that it is not frowned on or considered taboo to be a transported criminal in the Colonies, but Moll and James are determined to conceal their identities as former criminals. This suggests that they are ashamed of their criminal past and don't want to appear immoral to others. The constant back and forth between Moll's remorse and her continued signs of immorality leave it ultimately unclear whether her penitence is genuine.

James and Moll buy two servants and the required goods and lodgings, and within two months, they buy a sizable plantation with nearly 50 acres of cleared land. They plant tobacco, and it isn't long before they have a thriving estate. Then, Moll tells James she must return to Virginia to see some friends, and she leaves for the east side of the Potomac River. When she arrives, Moll wants to walk up to her brother and tell him directly who she is, but she thinks better of it. She decides instead to write him a letter stating her case, in which she adds several warm remarks about Humphry, whom, Moll says, she knows to be her son. Again, this isn't much of a punishment for James and Moll. They live in luxury with servants and a private estate, and their success seems much more like reward. Furthermore, Moll continues to lie to James, which means she continues to sin and behave immorally, regardless of everything she has been through.

Moll sends the letter to her brother, and when it arrives, Humphry intercepts it. Soon after, Humphry arrives at Moll's lodgings in town. Moll is pleasantly surprised when she opens the door to Humphry, who is ready to receive her as his loving mother. He is overjoyed to know she still lives, and he goes on to say that he did not show his father Moll's letter. His father is old, he says, and quite senile. He asks Moll how she has come to be in the Colonies, and she tells him that she is staying on a friend's plantation across the bay. Humphry immediately insists that Moll live with him. His father won't even notice her, Humphry says, but Moll can't conceive of leaving James. Just as Moll lies to James, she lies to Humphry, and she is further rewarded by Humphry's willingness to forgive her and seek a future relationship as mother and son. Moll has little reason to lie to Humphry. It could be argued that Moll doesn't want her son to know she is living with a man in an unlawful marriage—such a thing reflects badly on her morals. But Moll's marriage to her brother wasn't legal either, and Humphry doesn't know about the linen-draper, so her marriage to James wouldn't necessarily appear inappropriate to Humphry.

Humphry comes to visit Moll again, and he brings with him the will of Moll's mother, which leaves Moll a plantation on the York River. The plantation has been kept in operation and maintained by Humphry, who visits a few times a year. There are a stock of cattle and several servants there, and Moll asks how much it is worth. Humphry says she would get £60 per year if she let the land out, but living on the plantation, she would likely garner upwards of £150. If she lives in England or across the bay and hires a steward to manage the land, she can expect somewhere around £100 per year. Moll is silently thankful for her good fortune, and she is never more ashamed of her wicked past. Moll's sudden shame over her criminal past implies she feels

guilty and doesn't think she deserves her sudden good fortune. But nonetheless, Moll's main concern is still money, and her shame over her wicked past seems to be secondary.

Moll tells Humphry that he is her only child and sole heir, and she says the plantation will go directly back to him upon her own death. Moll then gives Humphry the only thing she has of value—a gold watch—but she doesn't tell him how she got it. Moll signs the appropriate paperwork and takes possession of her land, and then she hires Humphry to live there and manage it. He draws up a contract promising Moll £100 profit per year, and since she has a right to the current year's crops, Humphry gives her £100 in gold. Moll stays for over a month, settling her affairs and visiting with her son, and then she returns to James. The watch that Moll gives Humphry suggests she hasn't left her criminal past completely behind her, and she is still benefiting from her stolen goods. What's more, Humphry isn't Moll's only child, and she has nothing to gain by lying to him and claiming he is. Humphry's honesty and willingness to pay Moll all the money she is owed makes her dishonesty appear all the worse.

## ➤ Chapter 14: The Conclusion

Over the next year, James and Moll build up their plantation with much success. They build a large house and buy more servants, and then Moll writes the midwife and asks her to take Moll's remaining bank in England—£250 or so—and spend it on supplies and send them to Moll and James's plantation. When the supplies arrive, James is caught off guard and is little nervous. How will they pay for all this, he asks, without running into debt? Moll smiles and tells him it is all paid for. "Who says I was deciev'd, when I married a Wife in Lancashire?" James asks. "I think I have married a Fortune, and a very good fortune too," he concludes. Moll finally spends her bank, which suggests she is finally secure in her life and no longer needs to worry about losing everything and being put out on the street. James's comment is clearly meant to be lighthearted, but it also carries an element of truth. James obviously loves Moll, but he still bases at least part of her worth on material wealth.

The next year, Moll goes to see Humphry on her plantation to collect her earnings, and she learns that her brother has died. She tells Humphry that she will likely marry her friend, who owns the plantation where she lives. Moll immediately tells James all about her past with her mother and her brother, as well as Humphry and her plantation. James responds with good humor and suggests they invite Humphry for a visit. They live an easy and pleasant life for the next several years, until Moll is nearly 70 years old. Her sentence is long over, so Moll and James return to England, where they vow to live "the Remainder of [their] Years in sincere Penitence, for the wicked Lives [they] have lived."

Moll seems to wait for her brother to die before she tells James and Humphry the truth. His death seems to release Moll from obligation in a way, and she is free to move on, even though their marriage wasn't legal; it's as if the change in her circumstances changes her ability to be truthful as well. However, while Moll's sentence is over, James isn't supposed to ever return to England. Moll claims they live their lives in "sincere Penitence," but they break the law the moment they go back to England, and this further casts doubt on the sincerity of Moll's remorse, leaving open

the question of her true moral character.

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### 3.9 Other Books Related to *Moll Flanders*

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Defoe's novels *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders* are seen by many as the earliest English novels. Defoe's novels, while not always received well in his day, paved the way for other major novels of the 18th century, such as Samuel Richardson's epistolary novel, *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* and Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*. Early English novels such as these influenced generations of English novelists, including Charles Dickens, who went on to write some of the Victorian era's most famous novels, like *Great Expectations*, *David Copperfield*, and *Oliver Twist*. Defoe's *Moll Flanders* is, above all, a critique of 17th- and 18th-century English society, a tradition that is well established in English literature. Other works that remark on the state of English society include *Down and Out in Paris and London* and *1984* by George Orwell, as well as Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. *Moll Flanders* also explores marriage and the role of women in society, a theme that is central to works including *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy, George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, and *The Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton.

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### 3.10 Summary

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The full title of *Moll Flanders* gives an apt summary of the plot: "The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders, Etc. Who was born in Newgate, and during a life of continu'd Variety for Threescore Years, besides her Childhood, was Twelve Year a Whore, five times a Wife (whereof once to her own brother), Twelve Year a Thief, Eight Year a Transported Felon in Virginia, at last grew Rich, liv'd Honest and died a Penitent. Written from her own Memorandums."

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### 3.11 Key Terms

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**Great Balls of Fire.** Defoe was just a boy during the Great Fire of London, which started at a bakery on Pudding Lane and burned through most of London from September 2 to September 6, 1666. The Fire was devastating, and of the 80,000 people living in London, 70,000 were left homeless. When the fire was finally out, Defoe's house and two others were the only homes left standing in Defoe's neighborhood.

**Multiple Identities.** During Defoe's career, in which he wrote hundreds of essays, pamphlets, and novels, he was known to have used at least 198 pen names, including T. Taylor, Andrew Morton, and Heliostrapolis, secretary to the Emperor of the Moon.

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### 3.12 Review Questions

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1. Discuss the plot of the novel *Moll Flanders*.
2. Justify the title of the story *Moll Flanders*.
3. Discuss the journey of marriages in Moll's life.

4. Elucidate Moll's experience as a woman.
  5. How is the plot of the novel related to the society of the age? Elucidate.
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### 3.13 References

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## UNIT 4: MOLL FLANDERS – NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES AND THEMES

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### STRUCTURE

- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Introduction
- 4.3 Picaresque Novel
- 4.4 Moll Flanders as a Picaresque Novel
- 4.5 Major Themes
- 4.6 Structure in Moll Flanders
- 4.7 Summary
- 4.8 Key Terms
- 4.9 Review Questions
- 4.10 References

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### 4.1 Objectives

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The learners shall know about the following:

- Details about the novel
- Studying the novel from different perspectives
- The various themes of the novel
- The narrative technique used in the novel Moll Flanders

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### 4.2 Introduction

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**Moll Flanders**, picaresque novel by Daniel Defoe, published in 1722. The novel recounts the adventures of a lusty and strong-willed woman who is compelled, from earliest childhood, to make her own way in 17th-century England. The plot is summed up in the novel's full title: *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders, &c. Who Was Born in Newgate, and During a Life of Continu'd Variety for Threescore Years, Besides her Childhood, was Twelve Year a Whore, Five Times a Wife (Whereof Once to her Own Brother), Twelve Year a Thief, Eight Year a Transported Felon in Virginia, at Last Grew Rich, Liv'd Honest, and Died a Penitent. Written from Her Own Memorandums.*

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### 4.3 Picaresque Novel

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**Picaresque novel**, early form of novel, usually a first-person narrative, relating the adventures of a rogue or lowborn adventurer (Spanish *pícaro*) as he drifts from place to place and from one social milieu to another in his effort to survive.

In its episodic structure the picaresque novel resembles the long, rambling romances of medieval chivalry, to which it provided the first realistic counterpart. Unlike the idealistic knight-errant hero, however, the picaro is a cynical and amoral rascal who, if given half a chance, would rather live by his wits than by honourable work. The picaro wanders about and has adventures among people from all social classes and professions, often just barely escaping punishment for his own lying, cheating, and stealing. He is a casteless outsider who feels inwardly unrestrained by prevailing social codes and mores, and he conforms outwardly to them only when it serves his own ends. The picaro's narrative becomes in effect an ironic or satirical survey of the hypocrisies and corruptions of society, while also offering the reader a rich mine of observations concerning people in low or humble walks of life.

The picaresque novel originated in Spain with *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554; doubtfully attributed to Diego Hurtado de Mendoza), in which the poor boy Lázaro describes his services under seven successive lay and clerical masters, each of whose dubious character is hidden under a mask of hypocrisy. The irreverent wit of *Lazarillo* helped make it one of the most widely read books of its time. The next picaresque novel to be published, Mateo Alemán's *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1599), became the true prototype of the genre and helped establish realism as the dominant trend in the Spanish novel. The supposed autobiography of the son of a ruined Genoese moneylender, this work is richer in invention, variety of episode, and presentation of character than *Lazarillo*, and it too enjoyed extraordinary popularity.

Among *Guzmán*'s numerous successors were several short novels by Miguel de Cervantes in the picaresque manner, notably *Rinconete y Cortadillo* (1613) and *El Coloquio de los perros* (1613; "Colloquy of the Dogs"). Cervantes also incorporated elements of the picaresque into his greatest novel, *Don Quixote* (1605, 1615). Francisco López de Úbeda's *La pícara Justina* (1605; "Naughty Justina") tells the story of a woman picaro who deceives her lovers just as the picaro does his masters. Francisco Gómez de Quevedo's *La vida del buscón* (1626; "The Life of a Scoundrel") is a masterpiece of the genre, in which the profound psychological depiction of a petty thief and swindler is underlain by a deep concern for moral values. After *Buscón* the picaresque novel in Spain declined gradually into the novel of adventure.

In the meantime, however, the picaro had made his way into other European literatures after *Lazarillo de Tormes* was translated into French, Dutch, and English in the later 16th century. The first picaresque novel in England was Thomas Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller; or, The Life of Jacke Wilton* (1594). In Germany the type was represented by H.J. von Grimmelshausen's *Simplicissimus* (1669). In England the female picaro was revived in Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722), and many picaresque elements can be found in Henry Fielding's *Jonathan Wild* (1725), *Joseph Andrews* (1742), and *Tom Jones* (1749) and in Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random* (1748), *Peregrine Pickle* (1751), and *Ferdinand, Count Fathom* (1753). The outstanding French example is Alain-René Lesage's *Gil Blas* (1715–35), which preserves a Spanish setting and borrows incidents from forgotten Spanish novels but portrays a gentler, more-humanized picaro.

In the mid-18th century, the growth of the realistic novel with its tighter, more-elaborated plot and its greater development of character led to the final decline of the picaresque novel, which came to be considered somewhat inferior in artistry. But the opportunities for satire provided by the picaresque novel's mingling of characters from all walks of life, its vivid descriptions of industries and professions, its realistic language and detail, and above all its ironic and detached survey of manners and morals helped to enrich the realistic novel and contributed to that form's development in the 18th and 19th centuries. Elements of the picaresque novel proper reappeared in such mature realistic novels as Charles Dickens's *The Pickwick Papers* (1836–37), Nikolay Gogol's *Dead Souls* (1842–52), Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* (1884), and Thomas Mann's *Confessions of Felix Krull* (1954).

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#### 4.4 Moll Flanders as a Picaresque Novel

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*Moll Flanders* is considered an example of a picaresque novel. These novels usually employ a first-person narrator recounting the adventures of a scoundrel or low-class adventurer who moves from place to place and from one social environment to another in an effort to survive. The construction of these novels, like that of *Moll Flanders*, is typically episodic, and the hero or heroine is a cynical and amoral rascal who lives by his or her wits.

As a picaresque novel, the main protagonist is a rogue and dishonest character. Moll is a female who was born to a convict mother. She has been declared by Defoe in the preface as “debauchery” and a criminal. For so many years of her life, she breaks many social codes and traditional norms of the society. She gets engaged to many marriages including incestuous marriage unconsciously. She also lived as a criminal for some time. This clearly reflects that Moll is a rogue and dishonest character which is a typical trait of a picaresque novel. Another picaresque element in the novel is the adventure of the main character. The main character goes through many adventures experiencing many fortunes and misfortunes in their lives. Moll goes through an adventure of many marriages where she decides to raise her social status by marrying off to a wealthy rich man. When she lives with the lady, she gets married to the younger brother despite having feelings for the eldest brother. Though she enjoyed privileges, she also falls into a misfortune after her husband dies. She married a linen draper but he leaves her using her money to France eventually reducing her money and a failure in marriage.

In addition to this, she then goes on to marry a rich plantation owner who actually is her own half-brother. She realises later and she already has children with him. He goes mad after realising the truth about Moll and her relationship with him. So, she was sent back to London where she meets the banker but she goes to Lancashire and she gets married to James. The misfortune happens here again where both realises that they are penniless. Moll marries the banker but he dies after some years and she falls into a poverty. This also reflects the fortune and misfortune of the main character who goes on an adventure falling into many fortunes and eventual downfall or misfortunes in life.

Moreover, the picaresque novel also projects the main character to be dangerous. The main protagonist seems to be emotionally detached while committing a crime. After falling into a poverty, Moll commits crime and thievery. She indulges in pickpockets and steals money from other woman. She even steals a horse and she doesn't know what she should do with it. These reflects that Moll is a dangerous character who has the potential to be a criminal with no regrets.

The most important aspect of the picaresque novel is the sexual liberation. The sexual liberation is a common theme in many of the picaresque novels. The main protagonist has many sexual affairs and many marriages in the novel. Moll as a character challenges the societal norms of the early English society. She gets into many marriages to raise her social status in the society and she uses her personality and charm as a way to attract man. She indulges in many sexual partners that highlights the sexual liberation the main protagonist indulges in.

### **Check in Progress**

#### **1. What are the elements of picaresque novels? Explain.**

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## **4.5 Major Themes**

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### **➤ Greed**

The major recurrent theme in the novel is that of greed — a greed which leads Moll to prostitution, thievery, and moral disintegration. Moll sees people as commodities, her relationships with them as business transactions. Although she is in love with the eldest brother, she has few qualms about taking money from him. She then accepts a bribe from him to marry his brother Robin. She easily consigns her children to the care of their grandparents and considers herself lucky. “My two children were, indeed, taken happily off of my hands by my husband’s father and mother, . . .” She chooses husbands on the basis of their affluence or social class. When the first one dies, she muses, “I had preserved the elder brother’s bonds to me to pay me £500, which he offered me for my consent to marry his brother; and this, with what I saved of the money he formerly gave me and about as much more by my husband, left me a widow with about £1200 in my pocket.” She takes money for prostitution. She steals from children and from people in distress. And only when she is too old to do otherwise does she repent.

## ➤ Poverty and Morality

At its core, Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* serves as a sort of cautionary tale and moral guidebook for readers. Protagonist Moll Flanders lives, for the most part, a life of crime. Moll is a thief and a prostitute, and when she isn't actively breaking the law, she is lying and deceiving nearly everyone she meets. She is married five times, has an incestuous relationship with her brother, and gives birth to several children, all of whom she abandons. Moll is born in London's Newgate Prison to a convict mother, and it seems as if she is destined to follow in her mother's criminal footsteps; however, this doesn't mean that Moll doesn't struggle with her morality. Each time she breaks the law or is otherwise dishonest, she feels appropriately guilty—at least until she breaks the law or lies again. As a member of the lower class, Moll has few opportunities or choices in life, and she is often forced to break the law or resort to dishonest means to survive. Defoe draws a direct parallel between crime and poverty in *Moll Flanders* and ultimately argues that morality, like many things, is a luxury that the lower class often cannot afford.

Whenever Moll behaves in an immoral way, she is quick to point out her own sins and express her guilt, which suggests Moll is often acting against her true moral compass. When Moll is young, she falls in love with the older brother, the son of the wealthy lady who takes Moll in, and they have a longstanding affair. He initially promises to marry her but later refuses to do so, and Moll is forced to marry his younger brother or be put out on the street. Moll never loves her husband, and she constantly thinks about his brother. "In short, I committed Adultery and Incest with him every Day in my Desires," Moll admits, "which without doubt, was as effectually Criminal in the Nature of the Guilt, as if I had actually done it." In this case, it is only Moll's thoughts that are immoral, but she still feels guilty. When Moll marries her third husband, she later discovers that he is also her half-brother; however, she lives with this secret for two whole years, because she has nowhere else to go. "I liv'd therefore in open avowed Incest and Whoredom, and all under the appearance of an honest Wife," Moll says, "and made my Husband, as he thought himself even nauseous to me." Moll knows her marriage is wrong, and it makes her sick to her stomach, but again, she can't do much to change the situation. After Moll's fourth husband, James, leaves Moll alone and pregnant, she is forced to "Lye-Inn"—women of Moll's time were expected to completely remove themselves from society during pregnancy—at a brothel. "This was a strange Testimony of the growing Vice of the Age, and such a one, that as bad as I had been myself, it shock'd my very Senses, I began to nauceate the place I was in, and above all, the wicked Practice," says Moll. Again, Moll is forced into an immoral situation that makes her makes her sick to her stomach.

Moll repeatedly reminds the reader of her poverty and implies that she wouldn't break the law or behave dishonestly if she had more money and opportunity. As Moll embarks on her life of crime, she begs the reader not to continue reading "without seriously reflecting on the Circumstances of a desolate State" and to remember "the wise Man's Prayer, give me not Poverty lest I Steal." Moll doesn't break the law and live an immoral life because she is an inherently immoral woman; rather, she breaks the law and lives an immoral life because she has few choices and little opportunity to do anything else. Moll admits that she regrets many of her immoral decisions. Her choices, however, are made with immorality on one hand and "the terrible prospect of Poverty

and Starving” on the other. “But as Poverty brought me into it,” Moll says of her immoral choices, “so fear of Poverty kept me in it.” Moll’s choice is clear, and she must resort to crime and dishonesty in order to survive. Moll explains that there are certain temptations that people are powerless to resist. “As Covetousness is the Root of all Evil,” Moll says, “so Poverty is, I believe, the worst of all Snares.” Moll is caught in a trap of poverty, and Defoe explicitly states that the only way for her to get out is by stealing and other dishonest means.

By the end of the novel, Moll is living comfortably with her ex-husband, James—who is also a reformed criminal—and they spend the rest of their days “in sincere Penitence” for their “wicked Lives.” Moll’s atonement may be genuine, but it is likely she would return to her life of crime and dishonesty if not for her newfound wealth. For Moll, “Vice [comes] in always at the Door of Necessity, not at the Door of Inclination.” It is poverty and limited opportunities that lead Moll to a life of crime, not a lack of moral fiber.

### ➤ Gender and Society

Just as Daniel Defoe draws a parallel between poverty and morality in *Moll Flanders*, he likewise implies that Moll’s circumstances and subsequent life of crime are closely related to her gender. As a woman in 17th-century England, Moll has very few options in life. She does not enjoy the same freedoms and privileges as men, such as access to education or the right to own personal property. A woman’s choices are limited to “going to Service” (working as a servant or maid) or marriage, and Moll quickly learns that marrying for love is another luxury she can’t afford. For Moll, marriage is simply a business arrangement—a way for her to secure social standing and wealth—and she is married five times throughout the course of novel. Moll’s marriages are mostly a series of disasters, and after they fail to secure her wealth or status, she turns to a life of crime. With his portrayal of gender and society in *Moll Flanders*, Defoe highlights the sexist nature of 17th-century English society and ultimately argues that women, especially women of the lower class, have few options for social mobility.

From a very young age, it is expected that Moll will eventually “go to Service,” which underscores the limited opportunities available to women of her socioeconomic status. Moll spends much of her childhood under the care of a nurse, who is funded by the church to keep orphans like Moll until “a certain Age, in which it might be suppos’d they might go to Service, or get their own Bread.” When Moll is just eight years old, the courts order her into Service. At such a young age, Moll can do little but run errands “and be a Drudge to some Cook-Maid,” so she begs her nurse to keep her. Moll promises to work instead for her nurse, and “Work very hard,” which she indeed does, giving the nurse every penny from her needlework and sewing. No matter what, it is expected that as a girl, Moll will be in the “Service” of another. Moll dreams of being a “Gentlewoman,” which to her means working for herself and earning enough to keep herself out of Service. “Poor child,” the nurse says, “you may soon be such a Gentlewoman as that, for she is a Person of ill Fame, and has had two or three Bastards.” A “Gentlewoman” turns out to be a polite term for a prostitute, and, the nurse thus implies, prostitution is the only way in which Moll will ever be able to work for herself.

As Moll has a “thorough Aversion to going to Service,” her only other (legal) option is marriage, which further highlights her limited choices as a woman. Moll quickly learns that marriages are “the Consequences of politick Schemes for forming Interests, and carrying on Business, and that LOVE had no Share, or but very little in the Matter.” In short, marriage (especially for women) is not about love; marriage is about securing the best possible social and financial status. After the death of Moll’s first husband, Robin—a man she didn’t love but was forced to marry to keep from becoming homeless—she is “resolv’d now to be Married or Nothing, and to be well Married or not at all.” In other words, Moll has accepted the fact that she must get married, but she will only marry a wealthy man. Moll is married a total of five times and gives birth to 12 children, but she is never able to secure herself any real wealth or social status through marriage, and she secures even less love and happiness. It is only after marriage that Moll takes her “Estate in [her] own Hands” and supports herself, but she must do so through dishonest means.

Moll does eventually manage to find financial security—and some happiness and love—and she even does it without marriage or breaking the law, but that security comes about through pure chance. After Moll’s biological mother dies, she leaves Moll a modest fortune, which allows Moll to live happily with her ex-husband James—Moll’s fourth and favorite husband, whom she only left because he didn’t have any money. Without the chance fate of her inheritance, Moll would be stuck in a cycle of loveless marriage, petty theft, and prostitution, which highlights the restrictions women face in 17th-century England; most women, Defoe implies, have little chance for such a happy outcome.

### ➤ Identity

In the preface to *Moll Flanders*, Daniel Defoe immediately draws attention to identity. He concedes that it may be difficult for readers to believe his story, as many of the characters’ names and circumstances are concealed, but Defoe offers no solution to this problem. In the opening pages, the novel’s protagonist, **Moll Flanders**, says she must conceal her identity because of her criminal history—“after which there is no Occasion to say any more about that,” Defoe writes. There is thus a sense of mystery surrounding identity in the novel, and Defoe neglects to give many of the characters names. Characters are often identified instead by the roles they fill in Moll’s life—such as **mother**, husband, or **brother**—and if their names are known, they are rarely used. Even Moll’s own name describes *what* she is, not *who* she is: “Moll” is 17th-century slang for a low-class woman of ill repute, and “Flanders” is a reference to the Women of Flanders, once known as the best prostitutes in England. Plus, that name matches only 12 years of her long and varied life. Identity in *Moll Flanders* cannot be boiled down to one’s name or even one’s role in society, and through the novel Defoe underscores the complexity of identity and ultimately argues that one’s identity is constantly changing and evolving.

Moll changes her name several times throughout the book, adjusting as her life changes, which suggests that identity is not static but rather changes with the circumstances of one’s life. Moll is an orphan, and after the **nurse** who cares for her dies, she goes to live with a wealthy **lady** and her family in Colchester, where Moll is known as Mrs. Betty. Betty, a reference to the chambermaid in Alexander Pope’s famous poem *The Rape of the Lock*, is a generic name used strictly by Moll’s Colchester family. After Moll’s second husband, the **linen-draper**, leaves her

deep in debt and without the means to obtain a legal divorce, she finds it necessary to again change her identity. “Upon these Apprehensions the first thing I did,” Moll says, “was to go quite out of my Knowledge, and go by another Name: [...] Mrs. *Flanders*.” Moll’s only choice, she realizes right away, is to move where no one knows her and assume a false name. After several failed marriage attempts, Moll is forced to enter a life of crime to support herself, and it is during this time that Moll’s criminal friends give her the name Moll Flanders. “For it was no more of Affinity with my real Name, or with any of the Names I had ever gone by, than black is of Kin to white, except that once, as before I call’d my self Mrs. *Flanders*,” Moll says. In other words, Moll’s new name has next to nothing to do with her previous identities, but because Moll is entering into a new life of crime, she likewise needs a new name to go with it.

Moll is not the only character whose identity changes throughout the novel, and many of the characters are not who they appear to be, which also suggests that identity is not static or easy to understand. For instance, Moll thinks her second husband, the linen-draper, is a wealthy gentleman, but he turns out to be just another poor merchant. “Well, at last I found this amphibious Creature,” says Moll, “this *Land-water-thing* call’d, a *Gentleman-Tradesman*.” Despite being of low social status, the linen-draper lives as Moll’s aristocratic husband for two years before finally exhausting much of Moll’s money. Her description of him as an amphibian highlights the way his identity shifts to match his environment, just as a creature like a frog can belong equally on both land and water. After Moll marries her third husband, a wealthy captain who owns land in Virginia of the American colonies, she finds out that he is really her half-brother, born after Moll’s biological mother was exiled to the colonies as punishment for petty theft. “I look’d upon him no longer as a Husband, but as a near Relation, the Son of my own Mother,” Moll says. Just like Moll’s second husband, her third husband turns out to be someone else entirely. Moll’s fourth husband, **James** from Lancashire, has “the Appearance of an extraordinary fine Gentleman; he was Tall, well Shap’d, and had an extraordinary Address,” Moll recounts; however, this is all just appearance. Like Moll’s, James’s real identity is that of a penniless fraud looking for a wealthy spouse.

The true identity of Defoe’s protagonist is never revealed, and she asks that readers refer to her simply as Moll Flanders. “[S]o you may give me leave to speak of myself under that Name,” Moll explains, “till I dare own who I have been, as well as who I am.” This explanation of Moll’s identity suggests that she isn’t the same person she was in her earlier years, and again implies that personal identity more generally is always shifting.

### ➤ Sex and Money

Much of Daniel Defoe’s *Moll Flanders* revolves around sex and money. In 17th-century England, personal wealth is the very foundation of social status and importance. In **Moll**’s experience, “if a young Woman have Beauty, Birth, Breeding, Wit, Sense, Manners, Modesty, and all these to an Extream; yet if she have not Money, she’s no Body.” That is, all the virtues in the world add up to nothing if they’re not accompanied by wealth. Of course, Moll is a poor orphan and doesn’t have any money, so she must find alternative means to security. Additionally, according to Moll, it is necessary “for all women who expect any thing in the World to preserve the Character of Virtue.” In other words, a woman’s worth is based on purity and virginity, which Moll finds difficult to feign after five marriages. Broke and without a husband, Moll turns to crime to



survive, and she spends 12 years as a “whore.” For Moll, sex is a sort of currency, both in her marriages and in her career as a prostitute, and she uses it to secure her place in society. Through *Moll Flanders*, Defoe highlights the intricate relationship between sex and money and ultimately argues that women like Moll can rarely separate the two—and that society’s expectations for women’s wealth and virginity are thus an impossible standard.

From the moment Moll falls in love for the very first time, there is a definite connection between sex and money, which suggests the two are inseparable. When the **older brother**, the son of the wealthy **lady** who takes Moll in, kisses Moll, he throws her down and kisses her “most violently.” He only stops when he hears someone coming, at which time he professes “a great deal of Love for [her], [...] and with that he put five Guineas into [her] Hand, and went away down Stairs.” This is one of Moll’s first romantic encounters with the older brother, and she is already, in effect, paid for it. Moll’s relationship with the older brother grows sexual and he promises that he will one day marry her, but Moll doubts it. By way of convincing her, “he pulls out a silk Purse, with an Hundred Guineas in it,” and gives it to Moll. “I’ll give you such another,” the older brother says, “every Year till I Marry you.” Again, there is a direct connection between money and sex implied in the older brother’s promise of marriage. Of course, the older brother has no intention of marrying Moll, and he gives her even more money when he finally admits it. “I here offer you 500 £, in Money, to make you some Amends for the Freedoms I have taken with you,” he says to Moll. He has taken Moll’s virtue by having a sexual relationship with her, and he makes it clear that the going rate is 500 pounds.

Later, after Moll turns to prostitution, sex becomes currency in a more literal way, which further highlights the connection between sex and money in the novel and in 17th-century England more generally. After the death of Moll’s first husband, **Robin**, she moves to a place where no one knows her and changes her name. Moll dresses up “in the Habit of a Widow, and call’d [herself] Mrs. *Flanders*.” In London, there is a long association between Flemish women (women from Flanders) and prostitutes, and Moll obviously knows this. By calling herself Mrs. Flanders, Moll implies that she is not opposed to prostitution as a way to secure herself wealth and status. Moll admits that her name is a nickname given to her by her “Comrades”—her friends in crime and, likely, other prostitutes. The name “Moll” is slang for a woman of ill repute, such as a prostitute, which is precisely why they give her that name. Again, in Moll’s case, it’s impossible to separate sex and money if she wants a stable, independent life. From the moment Moll meets the **Gentleman**, she knows he is just what she needs to lift herself out of her life of poverty. “I resolv’d to let him lye with me if he offer’d it,” Moll says, “but it was because I wanted his help and assistance, and I knew no other way of securing him than that.” Here, Moll explicitly says that without money, she has only her body and sex, which she must use to get what she needs; she literally doesn’t know of any other options for securing stability.

After Moll’s fifth and final husband, the **banker**, dies, she is ultimately left on her own again. Afterward, Moll works almost exclusively as a thief and a prostitute, until she is finally arrested near the end of the novel and thrown into Newgate Prison. For Moll, sex and money can never be separated, even though society might claim that it’s necessary for women to preserve their virginity. Through Moll’s story, Defoe implies that women like Moll are in an impossible double bind: they must have money and they must preserve their sexual purity, but in many cases, those two apparent virtues are in direct conflict with one another.

### Check your Progress

**1. How has the theme of Identity been exposed in the novel.**

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**2. How are sex and money related? Justify in reference to the novel.**

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**3. How has the novel exposed the society of the age in the novel.**

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## 4.6 Structure in Moll Flanders

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Defoe did not use chapter or section divisions to break up the work. The action moves chronologically, though, and is divided into close to one hundred different episodes. Defoe covers long periods of time with sweeping statements, as when Moll refers to her first marriage by saying, "It concerns the story in hand very little to enter into the farther particulars of the family, for the five years I liv'd with this husband."

Defoe begins the novel with a preface in which he claims that the story is more of a "private history" than a novel. He urges the reader to be more interested in the parts where Moll is remorseful about her crimes than in the crimes themselves, and he recommends the book "as a work from every part of which something may be learned."

### ➤ Point-of-View

Defoe wrote the novel in the first person, with Moll telling the story of her life. This form brings Moll close to readers, as if she is speaking directly to them. As well, Moll tells her story from the vantage point of being nearly seventy years old and being, purportedly, repentant. She pauses

occasionally in the action to speak from her position as a penitent seventy-year-old and cautions about particular behaviors and choices.

➤ **Hero/Heroine**

Moll is not a typical heroine because she is not someone whose behavior is admirable. Very often her actions are morally reprehensible and open to condemnation. Her integrity, at the very least, is suspect. But she is the heroine of her own story, nonetheless, because she does capture some of the qualities of the traditional heroine: one who is brave in the face of adversity, successfully challenges the status quo, and progresses through the novel with a certain amount of fortitude and purpose. Moll's life is victorious, in a way, because in the end she both gets what she wants *and* appears sorry for the damage she has caused.

➤ **Romantic Tone**

Defoe has written *Moll Flanders* in an exaggerated fashion, developing a protagonist in Moll who is, for example, not only a good thief but also the richest and most famous thief in the country. She marries not one or two men, but five, one of whom—almost beyond belief—just happens to be her long-lost brother. The novel is written with a romantic tone, meaning that actions are exaggerated and larger than life, not that people fall in love. The novel is almost soap opera-like given the amazing things that happen to Moll.

➤ **Foreshadowing**

Defoe occasionally uses foreshadowing, a writing technique that creates the expectation of something happening later in the work. When she looks for a husband after the draper leaves her, Moll encounters a group of hard-drinking and hard-living rogues who try to interest her in a bit of fun, but she responds, "I was not wicked enough for such fellows as these yet." When Jemy and Moll break up because they have no money, she makes it clear that he will show up again later, noting, "But I shall have more to say of him hereafter."

**Check Your Progress**

**1. Comment on the style and structure of *Moll Flanders*.**

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**2. How is the structure of Foreshadowing apt in this novel.**

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## 4.7 Summary

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According to Edward H. Kelly in his foreword to the Norton Critical Edition of *Moll Flanders*, "the novel was often dismissed by nineteenth-century critics and biographers as unimportant, 'secondary,' or immoral." Two critics of the nineteenth century found little to like about Defoe and his *Moll Flanders*. W. C. Roscoe in an 1856 issue of the *National Review* condemns Defoe for writing with little imagination and with too few attempts to delve into the interiors of his characters. Roscoe charges that Defoe "abides in the concrete; he has no analytical perception whatever. Never was there a man to whom a yellow primrose was less or anything more than a yellow primrose." Specifically, about Moll, Roscoe writes, "We must use our own insight and judgment if we wish to know what really was the interior character of Moll Flanders, just as we must have done had we met her in life—not altogether a pleasant sort of person." Leslie Stephen, writing in his book *Hours in a Library*, picks up on Roscoe's sentiments, writing that Defoe accumulates merely facts in many of his novels, and that the story of *Moll Flanders* should not claim "any higher interest than that which belongs to the ordinary police report, given with infinite fulness and vivacity of detail."

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## 4.8 Key Terms

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- **Syphilis:** Syphilis is an infection caused by bacteria. Most often, it spreads through sexual contact. The disease starts as a sore that's often painless and typically appears on the genitals, rectum or mouth. Syphilis spreads from person to person through direct contact with these sores.
- **Opera:** a play in which the actors (opera singers) sing the words to music; works of this kind performed as entertainment
- **Perseverance:** Continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition
- **Remorse:** A deep regret coming from a sense of guilt for past wrongs
- **Picaresque:** Relating to an episodic style of fiction dealing with the adventures of a rough and dishonest but appealing hero.
- **Gender roles:** **Gender role**, or **Sex role**, is a set of socially accepted behaviors and attitudes deemed appropriate or desirable for individuals based on their sex.
- **Sexism:** **Sexism** is prejudice or discrimination based on one's sex or gender. Sexism can affect anyone, but primarily affects women and girls.

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## 4.9 Review Questions

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1. Justify *Moll Flanders* as a Picaresque novel.
2. Discuss the different themes present in novel.
3. How does the fact that Defoe so often merges trade with crime complicate his overwhelmingly economic vision of human life?
4. What clues does *Moll Flanders* give us to the realities of life in the late 17th and early 18th centuries? How effective is the novel as a historical document?
5. Compare *Moll Flanders* with one or two other female protagonists with whom you are familiar.

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## **BLOCK-2: JANE AUSTEN**

UNIT 5: Jane Austen and Her Age

UNIT 6: Austen and Other works

UNIT 7: Persuasion – An Analysis

UNIT 8: Persuasion – Narrative Techniques and Themes

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## UNIT 5: JANE AUSTEN AND HER AGE

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### STRUCTURE

- 5.1 Objectives
- 5.2 Introduction
- 5.3 Georgian Society and Austen
  - 5.3.1 Georgian Timeline Era
- 5.4 Historical Context
- 5.5 Social and Economic Ranks
- 5.6 Women's Occupations
- 5.7 Daily Life
- 5.8 Jane Austen – Early Life
- 5.9 Austen's accomplishments and legacy
- 5.10 Summary
- 5.11 Key Terms
- 5.12 Review Questions
- 5.13 References

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### 5.1 Objectives

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The learners shall know the following:

- The age of enlightenment
- The life of Jane Austen
- Jane Austen as a literary writer
- Austen's accomplishments and legacy

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### 5.2 Introduction

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The Georgian Era spanned over the reigns of the first four Hanoverian kings of Britain, all of whom were named George. During this time, the country established itself as a global power at the centre of a turbulent empire. We take a look at these events and the revolutionary changes in the arts, science and literature, and war. Jane Austen released her first novel, *Sense and Sensibility* in mid-1811. The novel was published anonymously with “By A Lady” appearing on the title page. Austen continued to publish novels through 1815 and achieved notable success with her work, which often highlighted life among the gentry of the Georgian period.

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### 5.3 Georgian Society and Austen

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All of Jane Austen's novels are set against the background of daily life in English Georgian society at the turn of the 19th century. As the name indicates, the Georgian period covers the successive reigns of kings George I, George II, George III, and George IV. This was a period of considerable progress, and was the precursor to the Victorian era which followed. During Jane Austen's own life, Britain suffered first the loss of its American colonies, then anxiety about the French Revolution, after which it confronted and finally overcame the Napoleonic Empire,

and finally laid the foundations of the British Empire. From the social point of view, a new social order emerged at this time with the beginnings of industrialisation. This was followed in the early years of the 19th century by serious social unrest (such as the revolt of the Luddites) caused by the economic changes it gave rise to and the anxieties that accompanied it. The Arts also flourished at this time, with tremendous output in all fields. In architecture Robert Adam, John Nash and James Wyatt were active, and the neo-gothic style emerged. In painting Thomas Gainsborough and Sir Joshua Reynolds were the great names, and new painters such as J. M. W. Turner and John Constable were gaining recognition. In literature too there were a host of famous writers such as Samuel Johnson and Samuel Richardson, and poets such as Samuel Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats and Lord Byron. It was a time of progress in education for women, leading to the proliferation of novels written and read by women, women writers who included Jane Austen herself, and also predecessors such as Fanny Burney, Ann Radcliffe and Maria Edgeworth.

Finally, the Georgian period was a time of moral questioning and debate. The beginnings of feminism appeared at this time with Mary Wollstonecraft and her groundbreaking work *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Growing concern about slavery was another major development, which soon led to the abolition of the slave trade (1807), and ultimately to the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1833.

### 5.3.1 Georgian Era Timeline

1714 | *George I inherits the throne and the Georgian Era begins*

- When Queen Anne died in 1714, she left no male heir to the throne. With no direct successor, the crown passed to her nearest Protestant relative in Northern Germany, George of House of Hanover - a direct line of succession that continues to this day. While there were over 50 Roman Catholic relatives with stronger claims to the throne, George's right to inheritance was asserted by the Act of Settlement 1701. This law was designed by parliament to protect Protestant royals and prevent Roman Catholic royalty from becoming members of the monarchy. During George's coronation at Westminster Abbey on 20 October 1714, riots broke out in twenty towns across England. In addition to English political unrest, a Jacobean rebellion began in Scotland.
- In the same year of George's coronation, the British government established the Board of Longitude. The board was created to help solve the "longitudinal problem" required to work out a fixed point upon the Earth, and more particularly, to find a ship's location on a featureless sea. The board announced a prize of £20,000 for any person who could devise a method that could stand the test of a voyage from England to the West Indies. The membership of the Board consisted of scientists, naval officers, and government officials. Advisors included many notaries of the time, including Astronomer Royal, John Flamsteed and Sir Isaac Newton.
- George I mainly depended on parliament during his reign, and after 1717 he rarely attended any Cabinet meetings. When the South Sea Company, a government stock investment scheme crashed, the British people (including the monarchy and government) suffered a catastrophic loss of money and property. Robert Walpole, George's minister and member of the Whig



party, managed the crisis and divided the national debt. Walpole won favour with George I and became known as Britain's first de facto "Prime Minister." Walpole still holds the longest administration in British history (1721 - 1742). With Walpole, the Georgian period saw the beginning of the transfer of power from the monarchy to parliament.

- On the 11 June 1727, George I died of a stroke on a trip to Hanover. He was buried in the chapel at the Hanoverian residence of Leine Castle. He is the last British monarch to be buried outside of the United Kingdom. Following his death, he was succeeded by his son, George Augustus (9 November 1683 - 25 October 1760). The public knew George II as 'the king who wasn't there' due to his spending a large portion of his time in Hanover. It was George's wife, Caroline of Ansbach and Robert Walpole who presided over Britain for much of his reign, with Caroline maintaining popular support for the monarchy.
- A series of Jacobite uprisings threatened the Georgian kings from the beginning of their reign. Led by James Stuart and his son Charles Stuart (both known respectively as the Old and Young Pretenders, and Charles as Bonnie Prince Charlie), the Jacobite intention of reinstating a Catholic Stewart king to the throne met its conclusion on 16 April 1746. At Culloden, near Inverness in Scotland, British Government forces met the Jacobean armies. The battle lasted little over an hour, with the British troops overpowering the smaller Scottish army. Between 1,000 and 1,500 Jacobites were killed or wounded, and 200 to 400 British were killed or died of their wounds. The battle of Culloden led to the end of the Jacobite rebellion with many of the supporters exiled, imprisoned or executed for treason, and Charles escaping to France, never to return to Britain again.
- On the 23 June 1757, the British East India Company defeated the ruler Siraj-ud-daulah and his French allies at the Battle of Plassey in Bengal, India. This victory is seen as the beginning of the almost two hundred year-long British Rule in India. With political control in India, the British had the influence and power to extract wealth from the country and deindustrialize the nation, reducing India to a supplier of raw materials. India would also form the foundation for Opium Trade, which would have major implications for other developing countries such as China.
- On 25 October 1760, George II died, just before his 77th birthday. The throne was inherited by his 22-year-old grandson, George who was the first Hanoverian monarch to be born in England and to speak English as his first language.
- Beginning in 1756, the Seven Years' War is seen by some historians as the first actual world war, involving many of Europe's nations and influencing many events around the world, including Europe, India, Africa and North America. Britain effectively won the war in 1763 with the signing of the Treaty of Paris on 10 February, paving the way for the global dominance of the British empire in the 19th Century. However, Britain's substantial investment in the war caused massive amounts of debts. It was expected these debts would be recouped, in part, through heavy taxation of the Americas, which became a contributing factor in the American war of Independence.

- The Spinning Jenny was a multi-spindle spinning frame invented by James Hargreaves of Lancashire. It was one of the first and decisive inventions of the Industrial Revolution in Britain that powered the cotton textile industry.
- Fifty years after the Board of Longitude was established, John Harrison, a self-trained carpenter and clockmaker, solved the problem of accuracy and longitude with his H4 'sea watch.' Due to the changing rules and boundaries of the test, it wasn't until 1773, Harrison received a monetary award from Parliament for his achievement. He never received the official reward. Three years later, at the age of 83, Harrison passed away.
- On the 10 December 1768, George III founded the Royal Academy of Arts and provided the initial funding. The first significant exhibition of contemporary art, began the following year, presenting 136 works of art. This later became known as the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition and has been held annually to the present day.
- In 1769, Captain Cook made his first journey to New Zealand and Australia. Cook and his crew aboard the HMS Endeavour made landfall in September and spent six months charting the coastlines. Cook was the second European to visit New Zealand. In April 1770, Cook became the first European to reach the east coast of Australia. His ship reached the south-eastern coastline, and the crew disembarked at Botany Bay, several kilometres from what is now Sydney Harbour.
- After a decade of protest and civil disobedience, America claimed its national sovereignty and declared war against Britain on 4 July 1776. This became known as the American War of Independence or the Revolutionary War. Over the next eight years, other nations allied themselves with America such as France, Spain and the Dutch, leading to many conflicts and power struggles with the British in other parts of the world - such as India and Europe.
- After an expensive and drawn-out struggle against many countries, Britain entered peace negotiations with the US. The signing of the Treaty of Paris on September 3 1783, recognised the US as an independent nation and surrendered British-occupied lands to the American Congress.
- At the beginning of the 19th century, England was still at war with France, and there were fears in both Britain and Ireland that Ireland would once again resort to rebellion or fall to an invasion attempt by the French. Through a mix of bribery and diplomacy of the Irish parliament, on 1 January 1801, a legislative agreement came into effect which united England and Scotland with Ireland. The new title of the nations became the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. This union lasted for over two hundred years until 15 January 1922.
- After Napoleon Bonaparte seized power in France in 1799, Britain declared war on the nation, its long-time rival, in 1803. On the 21 October 1805, one of the most famous naval battles in history took place between British fleet opposing French and Spanish Napoleonic forces. Led by Vice-Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson, the British victory was one of its most famous naval triumphs and highlighted British maritime superiority.

- Following nearly twenty years of protest from abolitionists across Britain, on 25 March 1807, the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act was entered into the statute books. Although the Act made it illegal to engage in the slave trade throughout the British colonies, trafficking between the Caribbean islands continued until 1811.
  - Due to psychiatric illness, George III becomes mentally unfit to reign as king. His son, George rules in his stead as prince regent. While his George IV's formal rule lasted only from 1811 until his accession as George IV in 1820, the entire late Georgian period is often labelled Regency.
  - The Battle of Waterloo began on 18 June 1815 in South of Brussels in modern Belgium. The conflict was waged by Napoleon Bonapart's French army and a coalition of forces from across Europe and Britain (known by historians as the Anglo-allied army) led by the Duke of Wellington and the Prussian Field Marshal Blücher. The Anglo-allied victory concluded a war that had raged for 23 years and ended French attempts to dominate Europe and destroyed Napoleon's imperial power forever.
  - In George III's last years, his physical and mental powers deserted him, and he became blind. He died at Windsor Castle on 29 January 1820, after a reign of almost 60 years - the third longest in British history. His son, George IV - who had been Prince Regent since 1811 became King at the age of 48.
  - In 1828, George IV's eyesight began to fail, he also became breathless very quickly, and his legs became inflamed and painful with dropsy. Due to his heavy drinking and indulgent banquets, George had become obese, weighing in 1824 over 17 stone and 7 pounds with a corset made for a waist of 130cm. At the age of 67, he died at Windsor. With no heirs of his own, the throne passed to his next brother, William, Duke of Clarence, as William IV.
- King George IV (r. 1820-1830)** Known for leading an extravagant l

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## 5.4 Historical Context

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### ➤ George III

The reign of George III—if one includes in it the Regency period that took place during his final illness – encompasses all of Jane Austen's life, and even beyond, as it started in 1760, just before her parents married in 1764, and ended up in 1820, after the death of Austen in 1817 and the posthumous publication of her two novels, *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey* in 1818.

## ➤ French Revolution

It is through her cousin Eliza de Feuillide, married to a French aristocrat, that Jane Austen first heard of the French Revolution and of its violence. Eliza stayed in England in 1786 and 1787, and made several trips between France and England from 1788 to 1792. In January 1791, Eliza was in Margate, and was hoping that her husband, who had just joined a royalist group in Turin, could come back to her in June. After a brief stay in England during the winter of 1791, he then returned to France, as he wanted to come to the assistance of a friend, the Marquise de Marbeuf, accused of conspiring against the Republic. Unfortunately, he was unmasked while trying to suborn a witness, and duly arrested and guillotined.

The memory of Eliza de Feuillide can be seen in several of Austen's *Juvenilia*, such as *Love and Freindship* (sic)—dedicated, as it was, to "Madame la Comtesse de Feuillide"—or *Henry and Eliza*. At the same time, the French Revolution led in England to the *Revolution Controversy*, involving such thinkers as Mary Wollstonecraft and her groundbreaking book *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, William Godwin, Thomas Paine and Joseph Priestley. Austen, as the staunch Tory supporter she had always been, was herself in favour of the family as bringing stability in the midst of the turmoils of the times.

## ➤ Napoleonic Wars

The Napoleonic Wars are the series of wars that took place in Europe while Napoleon was France's head of state. They are the continuation of the wars that arose as a result of the French Revolution in 1789, saw France briefly dominate most of Europe, and continued until the final defeat of Napoleon in 1815. These were wars on a formerly unprecedented scale, largely as a result of mass conscription, and Britain remained at war with France throughout the period of 1803 to 1815, only two years before Austen died. Two of Jane Austen's brothers, Frank and Charles, made their careers in the Royal Navy.

This period of warfare accounts for the importance of the military in the novels, where some of the protagonists are officers, and the presence of officers at social functions is frequently a factor in the social life of a neighbourhood. Hence in *Sense and Sensibility* Marianne's suitor is Colonel Brandon, the dastardly Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice* is an officer in the militia, and the youngest Bennet girls are obsessed with the officers at the nearby training camp in Meryton. In *Mansfield Park*, Fanny Price's brother is a midshipman in the Royal Navy, and in *Northanger Abbey*, Frederick Tilney is an army officer and his father a retired general. *Persuasion*'s Frederick Wentworth is a naval officer whose career takes him from poverty to success and wealth.

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## 5.5 Social and Economic Ranks

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### ➤ Income spread

The income spread seen in Jane Austen's novels allows us to better determine the social status of her different characters. Except in the case of heiresses, where we talk about the total fortune, these revenues are always annual.

In any case, it is easy to calculate the income corresponding to a given fortune, since money invested in government funds pays 5% a year (or only 4% in the case of a small investment). Thus Caroline Bingley's fortune of 20,000 pounds (*Pride and Prejudice*) guarantees her an income of 1000 pounds a year, already a large sum which guarantees her a competence, that is, everything that can be considered necessary to lead a pleasant life, including a carriage.

Jane Austen's novels depict a whole income hierarchy which implies very different lifestyles.

One hundred pounds a year: in Jane Austen's novels, this is a very low income, that of a poor curate, for example, or of a civil servant working in a government office, or again of a small shopkeeper. However, it is rather satisfactory compared with that of a farm labourer which can be as little as twenty-five pounds a year including extra work at harvest time. With 100 pounds a year, the best one can expect is to have a maid of all work, as Mrs Jennings points out to Edward Ferrars and Lucy Steele (*Sense and Sensibility*) when they seem to be about to get married with only this level of income.

Two hundred pounds: this is the income of Jane Austen's parents four years after their marriage in 1764; even though it is double what they had at the beginning of their married life, it is barely adequate due to the birth of their children. Three hundred pounds would better meet their needs, even though that is the income of which Colonel Brandon says to Edward Ferrars that it is a nice sum for a single man, but "insufficient to permit him to marry". Four, or better, five hundred pounds: this is the level above which one can lead the life befitting a member of the gentry. It is the income enjoyed by Mrs Dashwood, which permits her to give her daughters a decent existence, with two maids and a serving man, but neither carriage nor horses.

Seven hundred to a thousand pounds a year make a carriage possible: when George Austen, Jane's father, reaches an income of 700 pounds he buys himself one, even though he realises that it is a pleasure that is slightly too expensive. Two thousand pounds a year might seem a very comfortable sum, even for a gentleman. It is, for example, Colonel Brandon's income in *Sense and Sensibility*. But it is also the income of Mr Bennet, who, with a wife and five daughters, has difficulty living well on this sum. It is, however, true that his abilities in household management are very poor. Four thousand pounds and above are the level above which even a gentleman ceases to need to do too much counting. It is the income enjoyed by Henry Crawford, Mr Rushworth (*Mansfield Park*), Bingley, and Mr Darcy (*Pride and Prejudice*) who actually has 10,000 pounds a year. At this level of income, one has a manor house or even a country estate, a carriage and everything that goes with it, and also no doubt a house in London to be able to make a comfortable stay in the capital.

But these incomes, large as they are, are exceeded by the real-life 100,000 pounds a year at the disposal of the owner of Chatsworth House, the Duke of Devonshire. The fact remains, however, that Jane Austen's universe is a privileged world which conceals the harshness of the living conditions of the vast majority of the rural population, a population which is impoverished, uneducated and brutal. Thus, common amusements include the omnipresent dog fighting and cockfighting. In the spirit of the times, this brutality is considered by many politicians as being necessary to get the British people accustomed to the sight of blood, and to forge "the true British bulldog character".

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## 5.6 Women's Occupations

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### ➤ Education

In Jane Austen's time, girls' boarding schools already existed, even if for the aristocracy a governess was the normal choice for the education of the girls in the family.

Thus in *Emma*, young Harriet Smith, whose origins are very modest, is placed in Mrs Goddard's boarding school to receive a minimal education. On the other hand, Emma Woodhouse, daughter of a good family with a fine fortune, has her own governess, Miss Taylor. And Lady Catherine de Bourgh (*Pride and Prejudice*) is scandalised to learn that the five Bennet girls, who belong to the minor gentry, have not benefited from the services of a governess. Jane Austen herself, whose family was no better off than the Bennets, got her education essentially through contact with her father and brothers, and through making good use of her father's well-stocked library.

### ➤ Women's employment

Slow progress in the education of girls needs to be seen in relation to the absence of suitable employment for women from good families, except, in fact, for a job as a governess or schoolmistress. The very idea that a woman might have a profession, with the attendant status and financial independence, was virtually inconceivable. As Mary Wollstonecraft wrote in 1792 in her famous *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*: "How many women thus waste away the prey of discontent, who might have practiced as physicians, regulated a farm, managed a shop, and stood erect, supported by their own industry, instead of hanging their heads?"

This state of affairs was well-known to Jane Austen, since being unmarried herself, she was seeking through the sale of her novels to contribute to earning her own living by her work. Her writing perfectly reflects her situation, even though she did not rebel against it directly, in that she almost never depicts women involved in anything other than domestic activities, except for those who teach either as a governess or at a boarding school. The situation of Jane Fairfax in *Emma* is the best illustration of this: of very humble origin, but intelligent, cultured, close to the ideal of the accomplished woman (she sings and plays the piano perfectly), her only prospect for the future is a post as governess in the home of people much inferior to her in terms of talent.

Lady Bertram (*Mansfield Park*), whose faults Jane Austen makes fun of, offers a perfect example of the ideal fashionable at the time of the elegant, leisured lady so strongly denounced by Mary Wollstonecraft.

## ➤ Legal rights

The situation of women appearing in Jane Austen's novels shows at times their inferior status, on a legal as well as a financial level. Thus, according to William Blackstone, in his *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (Oxford, 1765), man and woman become, by marriage, one and the same person: as long as the marriage lasts, the woman's legal existence is viewed as "suspended", and all her actions are done "under her husband's cover" (becoming herself a *feme-covert*). The rights and duties of the spouses derived from this principle. Thus, a man could not donate any piece of property, nor enter into any agreement with her, as her separate legal existence would be required for such deeds. On the other hand, he could bequeath property to his wife by will, since his wife's "coverture" would cease with his death. A woman who had been wronged—either herself or through her property—could not sue whoever had wronged her without the agreement and legal involvement of her husband. Conversely, no one could sue a married woman except through prosecuting her husband. This lack of any legal existence for married women was at the heart of the long and sensational divorce case that opposed, starting in the 1830s, Caroline Norton and her brutal, drunkard husband.

Indeed, after years of conjugal misery, she finally left her husband, who retained total custody of her children; on top of which she came to realise that all her earnings as an author belonged to him (since he legally represented her), while at the same time he did not pay her the allowance he had agreed to. In spite of this much-publicized case, it was only in 1882 that, through the Married Women's Property Act, the legal rights of married women became equal to those of unmarried women (called 'feme sole') in that they gained the right to retain full control of their own property.

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## 5.7 Daily Life

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### ➤ Women's fashions

By the 1780s, hairstyles with the hair piled high and decorated with ostrich feathers were falling out of fashion and being replaced by a style consisting of long curls hanging loose, that could occasionally be powdered for greater formality. It is this new fashion that makes it possible for Willoughby to cut a lock of Marianne's hair in *Sense and Sensibility*. As at the French court, where Marie Antoinette was setting the fashion for a "pastoral" style of clothing, women were wearing broad-brimmed hats decorated with ribbons. This is what Eliza de Feuillide, Jane Austen's cousin who is familiar with the receptions at Versailles, explains to Phyllis Walter, another cousin, when she inquires after the latest fashions in France. This same Eliza complains in turn about the stiff fashions still being worn at the Court of St. James's where, she says, "she had to stand for two hours on end wearing a pannier dress whose weight was not negligible". At the same time as dresses with hoop skirts were becoming unfashionable, heavy brocade and embroidered silk fabrics too were disappearing, replaced by muslin dresses worn with petticoats to give them volume. This volume, and the vaporous appearance it gave these muslin dresses, were considered to give women a more natural silhouette. This natural fashion soon also became much more revealing, to an extent bordering on scandalous, as Eliza de Feuillide gleefully noted during a stay in Bath in 1798. For it was Bath, and still more London, that was the fashion leader.

When Jane Austen's characters talk about buying a dress, it means in fact that they are going to buy the necessary fabric, which they will then give to a specialised dressmaker who will make a dress to their specifications, based on the latest fashion in the capital. This is the case for Harriet Smith (in *Emma*) when she wants to obtain a pattern-gown (a dress from a pattern), to be made of the muslin she has just bought. Patterns for dresses in the latest London fashion were found in all the women's fashion newspapers, and based on these, the customer could explain to the dressmaker the particular adjustments she wanted made.

## ➤ Homes

The homes in which Jane Austen's novels are set are all situated in the southern half of England, and with the sole exception of *Mansfield Park*, in counties and towns she knew personally. It is characteristic of Jane Austen's period that all sorts of houses exist there side by side, houses of very different origins, periods and status, and that the characters in her novels are sensitive to these differences. This diversity is the reflection of the successive strata of the English habitat.

Jane Austen's heroines thus occupy cottages (Barton Cottage in *Sense and Sensibility*), abbeys converted into vast residences (the titular *Northanger Abbey*, or Donwell Abbey in *Emma*), parks (mansions surrounded by a vast park, like Mansfield Park in *the novel of the same name*, or Rosings Park in *Pride and Prejudice*), courts (another type of mansion, in theory approached via a vast courtyard, like Sotherton Court in *Mansfield Park*), halls (*manors*, like Uppercross Hall in *Persuasion*), and finally simple houses, like Longbourn House, the home of the Bennet family in *Pride and Prejudice*. This is why Catherine Morland is so delighted when she discovers Northanger Abbey, thinking, "With all the chances against her of house, hall, place, park, court, and cottage, Northanger turned up an abbey, and she was to be its inhabitant."

The mansions referred to above can have so many works of art worth seeing that some of them receive visitors who come simply as tourists. In Jane Austen's novels, however, this is the case of only two of them, Pemberley and Sotherton Court, since even Mansfield Park does not possess an art collection fit to interest a tourist.

The layout of these traditional grand residences is not necessarily very rational: Sotherton Court, as well as Northanger Abbey, are laid out *en suite*, that is, each room opens into the next. On the other hand, much more modest but "modern" homes, like Longbourn in *Pride and Prejudice*, are organised in a way that is much better suited to their use: the public rooms where visitors or guests are received, dining room, drawing room, etc., are located on the ground floor, while the private rooms such as bedrooms are upstairs.

## ➤ Interiors

In Jane Austen's England, interiors are very varied, both as a function of the wealth of the home, of course, and also as a function of its age. The walls are often papered, paper having been a less expensive substitute for the tapestries of noble homes since the 16th century. But it is not until the 18th century that manufacturing processes become capable of producing wallpaper whose appearance can satisfy people of quality. At the same time, some very fine wallpapers are being imported from China by the *East India Company*. Wallpaper is thus the indoor decoration typical



of the well-off, and we see for example Edward Ferrars and Elinor, as soon as are they married and installed at Delaford, start looking for some to suit them. As for the impressive Gothic Northanger Abbey, Catherine Morland is very disappointed to find wallpaper on the walls of her room, which she was expecting to be much less prosaic.

In fine houses in the 18th century, however, the fashion is for wainscoting, with only the upper part of the wall papered. Paint, more expensive than wallpaper, is also preferred in sumptuous residences such as Rosings Park or Mansfield Park, since it permits contrasting colours, sometimes highlighted with gilding.

As for the floor, it is left bare if it consists of beautiful tile or paving; in the 18th century this is the case too for handsome parquet floors, which may be set off by a small Turkish rug placed in the centre of the room. At the same time, progress in the textile industry now makes it possible for companies in towns such as Kidderminster to produce carpets to cover the entire floor in the reception rooms.

The windows that let light into the rooms can be very different, going from leaded glass to modern sash windows, a style imported from France. When Catherine Morland arrives at Northanger Abbey, she is devastated to find that the reception rooms have been modernised, and that the gothic frames hold only large panes of glass allowing the light to flood in: "To be sure ... — the form of them was Gothic ... — but every pane was so large, so clear, so light! ... To an imagination which had hoped for the smallest divisions, and the heaviest stone-work, for painted glass, dirt and cobwebs, the difference was very distressing."

### ➤ Meals and food

In Jane Austen's time meals are eaten late. Breakfast, in fact, is never eaten before ten o'clock, leaving time for various activities before this first meal: Edward Ferrars (*Sense and Sensibility*) walks to the village of Barton to inspect his horses, and Edmund Bertram (*Mansfield Park*) has a long conversation with Fanny Price, then a tense discussion with his brother Tom, and only afterwards does he go to breakfast.

After breakfast, there is no regular meal before dinner, which is never taken before three o'clock in the afternoon. It is however appropriate to offer light refreshments (cold meats, cakes and fruit in season) when a visitor arrives between these two meals.

After dinner, tea is taken at about six or seven o'clock in the evening, actually a high tea including a light meal. It is not until still later, about nine o'clock, that people sit down for the last meal of the day, supper. But these times, late as they are, are the ones in use at the beginning of the 18th century. Towards the end of the century, times get even later. It is, moreover, good form (socially advantageous) to eat late, and Jane Austen's characters affirm, if not their actual social status, at least their concerns about it, by eating later still. At Barton Cottage, in fact, the home of Marianne's and Elinor's mother Mrs Dashwood (*Sense and Sensibility*), dinner is eaten at about four o'clock in the afternoon, as it is at Hartfield, the home of Emma Woodhouse's father. General Tilney, on the other hand, in *Northanger Abbey*, dines at six o'clock, while the rich and snobbish Caroline Bingley (*Pride and Prejudice*) does not dine until half past six, and her supper is not until about midnight.

At table, during a sit-down meal as opposed to light refreshments, the guests are offered two or three courses served *à la française* as it is called, that is, with all the dishes on the table at the same time, with each guest helping themselves only to what they want. These dishes, which can number from five to about twenty per course, include soup, large pieces of meat or fish served whole, poultry, vegetables, seasonal game, sauces and condiments, cakes, etc. When the first course is finished, the table is cleared and the second course brought in, with just as many dishes, sweet as well as savoury. Finally, after the second course, comes dessert, including pastries, fruit in season, dried fruits, nuts, ices, and dessert wines.

Such a large number of dishes – and the wealthier the home the more of them there are – requires the housekeeping to be of a very high standard, and costs a considerable amount of money. This abundance upon others' tables makes the miserly Mrs Norris (*Mansfield Park*) jealous, but she consoles herself with the "conviction of its being impossible among so many dishes but that some must be cold." Similarly Frank Churchill and Emma Woodhouse (*Emma*), seated beside each other at the time of the meal at the Coles' house, have to interrupt the lively conversation they are engaged in "to share in the awkwardness of a rather long interval between the courses".

### Check Your Progress

#### 1. Comment on the gender roles played by the women during Georgian Era.

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## 5.8 Jane Austen – Early Life

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Jane Austen was born in the Hampshire village of Steventon, where her father, the Reverend George Austen, was rector. She was the second daughter and seventh child in a family of eight—six boys and two girls. Her closest companion throughout her life was her elder sister, Cassandra; neither Jane nor Cassandra married. Their father was a scholar who encouraged the love of learning in his children. His wife, Cassandra (née Leigh), was a woman of ready wit, famed for her impromptu verses and stories. The great family amusement was acting.

Jane Austen's lively and affectionate family circle provided a stimulating context for her writing. Moreover, her experience was carried far beyond Steventon rectory by an extensive network of relationships by blood and friendship. It was this world—of the minor landed gentry and the country clergy, in the village, the neighbourhood, and the country town, with occasional visits to Bath and to London—that she was to use in the settings, characters, and subject matter of her novels.

Her earliest known writings date from about 1787, and between then and 1793 she wrote a large body of material that has survived in three manuscript notebooks: *Volume the First*, *Volume the Second*, and *Volume the Third*. These contain plays, verses, short novels, and other prose and show Austen engaged in the parody of existing literary forms, notably the genres of the sentimental novel and sentimental comedy. Her passage to a more serious view of life from the exuberant high spirits and extravagances of her earliest writings is evident in *Lady Susan*, a short epistolary novel written about 1793–94 (and not published until 1871). This portrait of a

woman bent on the exercise of her own powerful mind and personality to the point of social self-destruction is, in effect, a study of frustration and of woman's fate in a society that has no use for her talents.

In 1802 it seems likely that Jane agreed to marry Harris Bigg-Wither, the 21-year-old heir of a Hampshire family, but the next morning changed her mind. There are also a number of mutually contradictory stories connecting her with someone with whom she fell in love but who died very soon after. Since Austen's novels are so deeply concerned with love and marriage, there is some point in attempting to establish the facts of these relationships. Unfortunately, the evidence is unsatisfactory and incomplete. Cassandra was a jealous guardian of her sister's private life, and after Jane's death she censored the surviving letters, destroying many and cutting up others. But Jane Austen's own novels provide indisputable evidence that their author understood the experience of love and of love disappointed.

The earliest of her novels published during her lifetime, *Sense and Sensibility*, was begun about 1795 as a novel-in-letters called "Elinor and Marianne," after its heroines. Between October 1796 and August 1797 Austen completed the first version of *Pride and Prejudice*, then called "First Impressions." In 1797 her father wrote to offer it to a London publisher for publication, but the offer was declined. *Northanger Abbey*, the last of the early novels, was written about 1798 or 1799, probably under the title "Susan." In 1803 the manuscript of "Susan" was sold to the publisher Richard Crosby for £10. He took it for immediate publication, but, although it was advertised, unaccountably it never appeared.

Up to this time the tenor of life at Steventon rectory had been propitious for Jane Austen's growth as a novelist. This stable environment ended in 1801, however, when George Austen, then age 70, retired to Bath with his wife and daughters. For eight years Jane had to put up with a succession of temporary lodgings or visits to relatives, in Bath, London, Clifton, Warwickshire, and, finally, Southampton, where the three women lived from 1805 to 1809. In 1804 Jane began *The Watsons* but soon abandoned it. In 1804 her dearest friend, Mrs. Anne Lefroy, died suddenly, and in January 1805 her father died in Bath.

Eventually, in 1809, Jane's brother Edward was able to provide his mother and sisters with a large cottage in the village of Chawton, within his Hampshire estate, not far from Steventon. The prospect of settling at Chawton had already given Jane Austen a renewed sense of purpose, and she began to prepare *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* for publication. She was encouraged by her brother Henry, who acted as go-between with her publishers. She was probably also prompted by her need for money. Two years later Thomas Egerton agreed to publish *Sense and Sensibility*, which came out, anonymously, in November 1811. Both of the leading reviews, the *Critical Review* and the *Quarterly Review*, welcomed its blend of instruction and amusement.

Meanwhile, in 1811 Austen had begun *Mansfield Park*, which was finished in 1813 and published in 1814. By then she was an established (though anonymous) author; Egerton had published *Pride and Prejudice* in January 1813, and later that year there were second editions of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*. *Pride and Prejudice* seems to have been the fashionable novel of its season. Between January 1814 and March 1815, she wrote *Emma*, which appeared in

December 1815. In 1816 there was a second edition of *Mansfield Park*, published, like *Emma*, by Lord Byron's publisher, John Murray. *Persuasion* (written August 1815–August 1816) was published posthumously, with *Northanger Abbey*, in December 1817.

The years after 1811 seem to have been the most rewarding of her life. She had the satisfaction of seeing her work in print and well-reviewed and of knowing that the novels were widely read. They were so much enjoyed by the prince regent (later George IV) that he had a set in each of his residences, and *Emma*, at a discreet royal command, was “respectfully dedicated” to him. The reviewers praised the novels for their morality and entertainment, admired the character drawing, and welcomed the domestic realism as a refreshing change from the romantic melodrama then in vogue. For the last 18 months of her life, Austen was busy writing. Early in 1816, at the onset of her fatal illness, she set down the burlesque *Plan of a Novel, According to Hints from Various Quarters* (first published in 1871). Until August 1816 she was occupied with *Persuasion*, and she looked again at the manuscript of “Susan” (*Northanger Abbey*).

In January 1817 she began *Sanditon*, a robust and self-mocking satire on health resorts and invalidism. This novel remained unfinished because of Austen's declining health. She supposed that she was suffering from bile, but the symptoms make possible a modern clinical assessment that she was suffering from Addison disease. Her condition fluctuated, but in April, she made her will, and in May she was taken to Winchester to be under the care of an expert surgeon. She died on July 18, and six days later she was buried in Winchester Cathedral.

Her authorship was announced to the world at large by her brother Henry, who supervised the publication of *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*. There was no recognition at the time that regency England had lost its keenest observer and sharpest analyst; no understanding that a miniaturist (as she maintained that she was and as she was then seen), a “merely domestic” novelist, could be seriously concerned with the nature of society and the quality of its culture; no grasp of Jane Austen as a historian of the emergence of regency society into the modern world. During her lifetime there had been a solitary response in any way adequate to the nature of her achievement: Sir Walter Scott's review of *Emma* in the *Quarterly Review* for March 1816, where he hailed this “nameless author” as a masterful exponent of “the modern novel” in the new realist tradition. After her death, there was for long only one significant essay, the review of *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* in the *Quarterly* for January 1821 by the theologian Richard Whately. Together, Scott's and Whately's essays provided the foundation for serious criticism of Jane Austen: their insights were appropriated by critics throughout the 19th century.

### Check Your Progress

#### 1. Discuss on the early life of Jane Austen and her contribution towards literature.

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## 5.9 Austen's accomplishments and legacy

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Although the birth of the English novel is to be seen in the first half of the 18th century primarily in the work of Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, and Henry Fielding, it is with Jane Austen that the novel takes on its distinctively modern character in the realistic treatment of unremarkable people in the unremarkable situations of everyday life. In her six major novels—*Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, and *Persuasion*—Austen created the comedy of manners of middle-class life in the England of her time, revealing the possibilities of “domestic” literature. Her repeated fable of a young woman’s voyage to self-discovery on the passage through love to marriage focuses upon easily recognizable aspects of life. It is this concentration upon character and personality and upon the tensions between her heroines and their society that relates her novels more closely to the modern world than to the traditions of the 18th century. It is this modernity, together with the wit, realism, and timelessness of her prose style, her shrewd, amused sympathy, and the satisfaction to be found in stories so skillfully told, in novels so beautifully constructed, that helps to explain her continuing appeal for readers of all kinds. Modern critics remain fascinated by the commanding structure and organization of the novels, by the triumphs of technique that enable the writer to lay bare the tragicomedy of existence in stories of which the events and settings are apparently so ordinary and so circumscribed.

The enduring popularity of Austen’s books can be seen in the numerous film and television adaptations of her work. These include Ang Lee’s *Sense and Sensibility* (1995), which starred Emma Thompson (who also wrote the Academy Award-winning screenplay) and Kate Winslet. *Pride and Prejudice* was notably adapted into a 1940 movie starring Greer Garson and Laurence Olivier and a 1995 TV miniseries with Jennifer Ehle and Colin Firth. Other film adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* include *Bride & Prejudice* (2004), directed by Gurinder Chadha and starring Aishwarya Rai Bachchan; a 2005 film featuring Keira Knightley and Matthew Macfadyen; and *Fire Island* (2022), starring Joel Kim Booster. *Mansfield Park* was covered in a 1983 miniseries, a 1999 film, and a 2007 TV movie. Treatments of *Emma* include a 1996 TV movie, a 1996 film starring Gwyneth Paltrow, and a 2020 movie. In addition, *Bridget Jones’s Diary* (2001) was based on *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Clueless* (1995) was inspired by *Emma*.

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## 5.10 Summary

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As a novelist, Jane Austen draws at large on the literature of her century. She uses the insights and techniques of many earlier writers, not all of whom are by any means conservative. Poets of a philosophical temper, like Thomas Gray and William Cowper, historians like David Hume and Edward Gibbon, admire the wise man who stands aside from events both because he cannot influence them, and because they are not worth influencing. Austen's novels contain central characters more given to reflection than fictional heroes and heroines of the first part of the century, and she makes it clear how much she values the probings of the rational moral

intelligence. Even the sentimentalists, whom she criticizes both for their opinions and for their execution, presumably bequeathed to her a new awareness of the reader's special relationship with the hero, and an example of how it might be influenced.

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### 5.11 Key Terms

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- **Scrupulous:** Characterized by extreme care and great effort
  - **Vex:** Disturb, especially by minor irritations
  - **Deign:** Do something that one considers to be below one's dignity
  - **Venture:** Proceed somewhere despite the risk of possible dangers
  - **Surpass:** Be or do something to a greater degree
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### 5.12 Review Questions

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1. Discuss the Georgian age in details.
  2. How has Jane Austen been a part of this age? Explain.
  3. Comment on the role of women in this era.
  4. Discuss on Austen's accomplishments and legacy.
  5. Elucidate the early life of Jane Austen.
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## UNIT 6: AUSTEN AND OTHER WORKS

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### STRUCTURE

- 6.1 Objectives
- 6.2 Introduction
- 6.3 Perspective of Austen's Writing
- 6.4 Gentry
- 6.5 Country houses and parks, and their owners
- 6.6 Clergy
- 6.7 Austen's novels: an overview
- 6.8 Austen and her contemporaries
- 6.9 Summary
- 6.10 Key Terms
- 6.11 Review Questions
- 6.12 References

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### 6.1 Objectives

The learners shall be able to know the following:

- More about Jane Austen as a novelist.
- Prominent works of Jane Austen.
- Genres written by Jane Austen.
- Summarizing of all the stories of the novels

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### 6.2 Introduction

**Georgian society in Jane Austen's novels** is the ever-present background of her work, the world in which all her characters are set. Entirely situated during the reign of George III, the novels of Jane Austen describe their characters' everyday lives, joys, sorrows, and loves, providing insight into the period.

Jane Austen's novels deal with such varied subjects as the historical context, the social hierarchies of the time, the role and status of the clergy, gender roles, marriage, or the pastimes of well-off families. Without even the reader noticing, many details are broached, whether of daily life, of forgotten legal aspects, or of surprising customs, thus bringing life and authenticity to the English society of this period.

Nevertheless, the point of view from which Jane Austen describes England is that of a woman of the English gentry (albeit from its lower fringes), belonging to a reasonably well-off family, well connected and remarkably well educated for the time, and living in a very small village of rural England around the late 1790s or early 19th century. Thus, some essential aspects of the Georgian era are virtually absent from her novels, such as the American Revolutionary War and the loss of the Thirteen Colonies, the French Revolution, the beginning of the Industrial Revolution and the birth of the British Empire. Indeed, rather than a depiction of the history of English society at large, Jane Austen's novels provide an understanding of the way of life of the lowest level of

the gentry in rural England at the turn of the 19th century.

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### 6.3 Perspective of Austen's Writing

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Jane Austen's purpose never was to write historical or social novels, nor to provide a balanced and objective picture of late 18th century England. Her stories—considered as "comic", because of their happy endings— all take place in the society she knew, that of a small rural gentry family, rather well-off though without fortune, around the 19th century. As she wrote in one of her letters to niece Anna Austen: "three or four families in a Country Village [is] the little bit (two Inches wide) of Ivory on which I work". Consequently, some aspects of Georgian society, despite their importance, are ignored, or, at most, hinted at, in Austen's novels: thus, the loss of the Thirteen Colonies, as the Declaration of Independence took place when she was barely one year old, as well as the war with the former colonies itself and the ensuing Treaty of Paris in 1783, when she was eight, do not have any part in her novels.

Similarly, the French Revolution does not find its way into her work, except as regards her cousin Eliza Hancock, comtesse de Feuilleide and her French husband, Jean-François Capot de Feuilleide, who was guillotined in 1794. Even the birth of the British Empire is largely absent from her world. However, the owners of Mansfield Park have a plantation in the Caribbean, and the Austen's had a connection with India, since that is where Eliza and her mother, Philadelphia Austen Hancock, had arrived from around 1786. Indeed, the Austen's were warm supporters of Warren Hastings, Philadelphia's long time friend (and possibly Eliza's father),<sup>[N 1]</sup> when he was sued for serious misdemeanor in India before being cleared in April 1795.

Though the Industrial Revolution had started in England as early as the 1750s, it is not apparent in the way she lived as well as in her novels.<sup>[N 2]</sup> Life in the small rural village of Steventon, Hampshire, where the family rectory was, kept her quite far from this new world. Besides, she belonged to the local gentry, in a reasonably well-off family whose head was the village parson, nurtured by the reading of Samuel Johnson's works; as such, a Tory at heart, she lived in unison with her position in society. But her point of view was that of a woman of her times: clever and perceptive, very well read, she lived however in a society organized by men for men; this meant for a woman considerable difficulty to become financially independent through her own trade, and the fact that social status as well as economic security had to be expected from marriage; these themes are consequently ubiquitous in her novels.

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### 6.4 Gentry

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Jane Austen's novels are set in the social context of the gentry, to which Jane Austen herself belonged. Some of her heroines have no fortune (*Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*), others on the other hand are very well off (*Emma*), but the social class remains the same.



## ➤ The gentleman

The concept of gentleman in England is more flexible than that of nobleman in France. A gentleman is distinguished by his personal qualities as much as by his status as a member of the landed gentry. He does not need to be of noble lineage, like his French counterpart the *gentilhomme*, or to have a noble name. As the successor to the franklin, the free landed proprietor, who occupied the lowest rank of the nobility in the Middle Ages, the simple gentleman therefore comes after the Esquire (title derived from Squire, the chief landed proprietor in a district), who in turn is inferior, in ascending order of precedence, to the Knight, the Baronet, the Baron, the Viscount, the Earl, the Marquess, and finally to the Duke. Only the titles of Baron or higher belong to the peerage, to which simple knights or baronets do not therefore belong.

It is the gentleman of the Georgian period who is the precursor to the gentleman of the Victorian period in that he establishes a code of conduct based on the three Rs: Restraint, Refinement and Religion. During the reign of George III, the British begin, by their reserve and emotional control, to distinguish themselves from the peoples of southern Europe who are of a more hot-headed temperament. The literature of the 19th century does nevertheless privilege emotion, often to the point of pathos, as in Dickens.

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## 6.5 Country houses and parks, and their owners

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The differences in income and fortune reflected in Jane Austen's novels are considerable. In real Georgian society, the Duke of Devonshire maintains a household of 180 people in his magnificent country house, Chatsworth House. Just to feed that number of people, five cattle and fifteen sheep are slaughtered each week. In return for this wealth, it is customary for the proprietor to use his huge kitchens to have thick soups prepared and distributed to the most needy villagers during the winter, when bad weather sets in and fuel becomes scarce.

In Great Britain, the 18th century is a period of considerable wealth generation; the nobility therefore live in sumptuous country houses, among them Blenheim, Knole House, Castle Howard, and of course Chatsworth, all of which are comparable with the royal family's most beautiful homes. The style of the great houses and manors constructed at the beginning of the century is almost always Palladian, with the great architect William Kent. This strict Palladian style becomes freer with Robert Adam. It is possible to imagine that Rosings Park, Lady Catherine de Bourgh's house, and Mansfield Park, both of which Jane Austen describes as modern, belong to the style of houses constructed by Robert Adam.

During the same period, rich owners devote a lot of time and money to beautifying the grounds surrounding their house, and to making the approaches and the views from the windows more impressive. The famous English landscape artist "Capability" Brown is in fact active during the Georgian period; his nickname is based on his favourite declaration that certain grounds offered "a great capability of improvement". The beauty of English estates at this time also becomes a symbol of national identity when in 1780 Horace Walpole contrasts their natural style, an expression of freedom, with the geometrical layout of French gardens, which according to him bears witness to the authoritarianism of France's political régime.

We find this preoccupation with landscaping aesthetics reflected in *Mansfield Park*, during the long discussion where Mr Rushworth speaks of his ambition to improve the grounds of his Sotherton house and the views it offers.

Following Capability Brown but going even further, Humphry Repton softens the transition between the houses themselves and their surroundings, where Brown had simply extended lawns right up to the house. This too is in reaction against French-style gardens. It is Repton who at Adlestrop in Gloucestershire, where Jane Austen's cousins the Leighs live, remodels the vast grounds of Adlestrop House to combine them with the garden of the adjoining vicarage, and diverts a watercourse to compose a lovely landscape which can be admired equally well from the manor house and from the vicarage.

The memory of the beauty of English parks is a constant in Jane Austen's novels, and she associates it with the poems of William Cowper, the poet of the English countryside. And in perfect keeping with the aesthetic principles promoted by Thomas Whately in his *Observations on Modern Gardening* in 1770, the description of the grounds of the houses she depicts is as important as that of the house itself, for the beauty of the place consists of the harmonious and natural union of the two:

*[Pemberley] was a large, handsome, stone building, standing well on rising ground, and backed by a ridge of high woody hills – and in front, a stream of some natural importance, was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance. Its banks were neither formal, nor falsely adorned. Elizabeth was delighted. She had never seen a place for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste.*

—Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

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## 6.6 Clergy

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### ➤ The clergy in Jane Austen's novels

The clergy occupy an essential place in Jane Austen's work, even more than the Royal Navy, because Jane Austen's father himself was a clergyman, as were her brother James, and briefly her brother Henry. The moral principles taught by her father are found in the moral precepts sprinkled throughout the novels.

The position of clergyman at the time was a special one from several points of view. Firstly, being a clergyman was a profession like any other. Any well-educated, well-spoken man of sound morals could enter it, and no particular religious vocation was called for. And as Mary Crawford points out in *Mansfield Park*, the living attached to the post of vicar guaranteed a good income for work that was not onerous. Moreover, thanks to the living, a clergyman was in a position to start a family earlier than a naval officer, who might have to wait for years before raising enough money to do so.

Nor do clergymen in the novels benefit from any special consideration on the part of the author. On the contrary, they are frequently depicted in a very unflattering light, although there are others who are shown as more sympathetic and admirable characters.

Mr Elton, in *Emma*, demonstrates an excessive social ambition in proposing to the eponymous Emma Woodhouse, and once he is married later in the novel, he and his wife Augusta patronise the villagers and disgust Emma with their pretentiousness.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr Collins is an example of what a clergyman ought not to be. He is obsequious towards the powerful, arrogant towards the weak, sententious and narrow-minded. In spite of his faults, however, he seems to be more involved in his job than an Edward Ferrars or a Henry Tilney. Henry Tilney, in fact, in *Northanger Abbey*, is absent from his parish half the time and takes holidays in Bath, so that in spite of his intellectual and moral qualities, he bears witness to the lack of commitment of certain clergymen towards their flock. As for Edward Ferrars in *Sense and Sensibility*, he does give evidence of a more definite vocation when he insists that he has "always preferred the Church" as his profession, even though his family consider a career in the army or the Royal Navy "more appropriate", or the law more worthy of a gentleman. Edmund Bertram alone, in *Mansfield Park*, shows an unshakeable vocation that all Mary Crawford's charm and seductiveness never succeed in weakening. Try as she may, incessantly praising the superior merits and prestige of a military career, the solidity of his principles and his deep conviction prevent him from doubting.

### ➤ Revenues of the clergyman

The income of a clergyman varied a great deal depending on the living assigned to him. A small, poor, rural parish like Steventon might be worth only about £100 a year, while a good parish could be worth nearly £1000. The allocation of the living, and therefore of the benefits attached to it, was often in the hands of the local lord of the manor, though a number were held by the diocesan bishop and even some university colleges. (This right was called the right of advowson and could be bought and sold or donated like property.) The two components of the living were the tithe and the glebe of which the incumbent was the beneficiary.

### ➤ The tithe

The tithe in theory guaranteed the clergyman one tenth of the product of all the cultivated land in the parish; it constituted a sort of tax which had existed in England since the 9th century, with the clergyman himself as the tax-collector. Legally, however, the beneficiary of the tithe was not the clergyman (who might find that only part was allocated to him), but the rector. Thus when Colonel Brandon in *Sense and Sensibility* informs Edward Ferrars that "Delafield is a rectory", he is also informing him that if he were awarded the parish, he would receive the whole of the corresponding tithe. Jane Austen's father was himself rector of Steventon. Once collected, the revenue had to be managed, since in a poor rural economy the tithe was often paid in kind. This led to a clergyman's needing to have the use of a tithe barn in which to store what he had collected. He also had to negotiate with his parishioners to get all that he was owed. The parishioners did not always react well to his role as tax collector, which took up a large part of a clergyman's time, so much so that Mr Collins, at the Bingleys' ball (*Pride and Prejudice*), lists it as the first of his duties, ahead even of writing sermons, which comes in second place. The patron of the living also

of course had an interest in increasing the revenue raised by the incumbent since this raised the value of the charge he could sell or bestow. The curate or rector's protector is a major personage in the region, as for example are Lady Catherine de Bourgh, Mr Collins' patron in *Pride and Prejudice* and Colonel Brandon in *Sense and Sensibility*. Moreover, this patron may want to reserve a living for a younger son, as does Sir Thomas Bertram with respect to Edmund in *Mansfield Park*, or General Tilney in favour of Henry in *Northanger Abbey*.

### ➤ The glebe

The glebe was a parcel of land donated to the church, often in the distant past, whose produce was designated for the incumbent of the corresponding parish. This necessarily made the clergyman into a farmer, a job which therefore took up a large part of his time. Thus Parson Trulliber, in Henry Fielding's 1742 novel *Joseph Andrews*, spends six days out of seven on his farming activities, and Parson Adams, when he visits him at home, finds him "with an apron on and a pail in his hand, just come from serving his hogs". Even when it didn't go that far, this necessary farm work further reduced the time actually spent on religious tasks as such.

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## 6.7 Austen's novels: An Overview

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Jane Austen's three early novels form a distinct group in which a strong element of literary satire accompanies the comic depiction of character and society.

*Sense and Sensibility* tells the story of the impoverished Dashwood sisters. Marianne is the heroine of "sensibility"—i.e., of openness and enthusiasm. She becomes infatuated with the attractive John Willoughby, who seems to be a romantic lover but is in reality an unscrupulous fortune hunter. He deserts her for an heiress, leaving her to learn a dose of "sense" in a wholly unromantic marriage with a staid and settled bachelor, Colonel Brandon, who is 20 years her senior. By contrast, Marianne's older sister, Elinor, is the guiding light of "sense," or prudence and discretion, whose constancy toward her lover, Edward Ferrars, is rewarded by her marriage to him after some distressing vicissitudes.

*Pride and Prejudice* describes the clash between Elizabeth Bennet, the daughter of a country gentleman, and Fitzwilliam Darcy, a rich and aristocratic landowner. Although Austen shows them intrigued by each other, she reverses the convention of "first impressions": "pride" of rank and fortune and "prejudice" against the inferiority of the Bennet family hold Darcy aloof, while Elizabeth is equally fired both by the "pride" of self-respect and by "prejudice" against Darcy's snobbery. Ultimately, they come together in love and self-understanding. The intelligent and high-spirited Elizabeth was Jane Austen's own favourite among all her heroines and is one of the most engaging in English literature.

*Northanger Abbey* combines a satire on conventional novels of polite society with one on Gothic tales of terror. Catherine Morland, the unspoiled daughter of a country parson, is the innocent abroad who gains worldly wisdom, first in the fashionable society of Bath and then at Northanger Abbey itself, where she learns not to interpret the world through her reading of Gothic thrillers. Her mentor and guide is the self-assured and gently ironic Henry Tilney, her husband-to-be.

In the three novels of Jane Austen's maturity, the literary satire, though still present, is more subdued and is subordinated to the comedy of character and society.

In its tone and discussion of religion and religious duty, *Mansfield Park* is the most serious of Austen's novels. The heroine, Fanny Price, is a self-effacing and unregarded cousin cared for by the Bertram family in their country house. Fanny emerges as a true heroine whose moral strength eventually wins her complete acceptance in the Bertram family and marriage to Edmund Bertram himself, after that family's disastrous involvement with the meretricious and loose-living Crawfords.

Of all Austen's novels, *Emma* is the most consistently comic in tone. It centres on Emma Woodhouse, a wealthy, pretty, self-satisfied young woman who indulges herself with meddlesome and unsuccessful attempts at matchmaking among her friends and neighbours. After a series of humiliating errors, a chastened Emma finds her destiny in marriage to the mature and protective George Knightley, a neighbouring squire who had been her mentor and friend.

*Persuasion* tells the story of a second chance, the reawakening of love between Anne Elliot and Captain Frederick Wentworth, whom seven years earlier she had been persuaded not to marry. Now Wentworth returns from the Napoleonic Wars with prize money and the social acceptability of naval rank. He is an eligible suitor acceptable to Anne's snobbish father and his circle, and Anne discovers the continuing strength of her love for him.

### Check Your Progress

#### 1. Discuss the other works of Jane Austen apart from *Persuasion*.

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## 6.8 Austen and Her Contemporaries

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Three of Jane Austen's contemporaries thought of her novels: Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), the inventor of the historical novel, nick-named the '*the Wizard of the North*' for his spell-binding stories; Princess Charlotte (1796-1817), daughter of the Prince Regent, who died in childbirth; and Charlotte Brontë (1816-1855), author of *Jane Eyre*. Miss Brontë was one year old when Jane Austen died. But she has some interesting things to say, so I've allowed her to remain.

We are indebted to John Lockhart, Scott's friend and biographer, for an insight into what that best-selling novelist had to say about Jane Austen. On March 14, 1826, Scott wrote: *Also read again, and for the third time at least, Miss Austen's very finely written novel of 'Pride and Prejudice'. That young lady had a talent for describing the involvements and feelings and characters of ordinary life, which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with. The Big Bow-wow*

*strain I can do myself like any now going; but the exquisite touch, which renders ordinary commonplace things and characters interesting, from the truth of the description and the sentiment, is denied to me. What a pity such a gifted creature died so early!*

What did he mean by ‘the Big Bow-wow strain’? The 10<sup>th</sup> Earl of Pembroke wrote of Dr Samuel Johnson (he of the famous Dictionary), ‘*Dr Johnson’s sayings would not appear so extraordinary, were it not for his bow-wow way.*’ I also came across another 18<sup>th</sup> century reference to the ‘bow-wow’ sound of trumpets and drums. So I think we can take it to mean ‘a touch bombastic’.

Scott wrote stirring tales of battles and deeds of derring-do, which was not Jane Austen’s style. But it’s good to know that Scott was a real fan and appreciated and admired her qualities.

As he wrote in his diary, on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1827: *Smoked my cigar with Lockhart after dinner, and then whiled away the evening over one of Miss Austen’s novels. There is a truth of painting in her writings which always delights me. They do not, it is true, get above the middle classes of society, but there she is inimitable.*

Princess Charlotte, daughter of the prince Regent and his estranged wife, Caroline of Brunswick, was another Austen fan. She enjoyed what she called ‘*studdy*’ (her spelling was erratic) and read widely, perhaps borrowing books from her father’s library at Carlton House – and we know that he bought Jane Austen’s novels. Or, perhaps it was a birthday present for her sixteenth birthday on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Whichever it was, on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 1812, Princess Charlotte wrote to her friend, Miss Mercer Elphinstone: ‘*Sence and Sencibility (sic) I have just finished reading; it certainly is interesting, and you feel quite one of the company. I think Maryanne and me are very like in disposition, that certainly I am not so good, the same imprudence, etc., however remain very like. I must say it interested me very much.*’

It’s easy to sympathize with Charlotte’s identification with the passionate and impulsive seventeen-year-old Marianne, who is just the sort of character to appeal a lonely and romantic-minded girl, whose life, up to that point, had been pretty miserable. Perhaps Charlotte hoped that, like Marianne, she, too, would find love. Alas, her story ended tragically, for she died in childbirth aged only twenty-one.

Charlotte Brontë’s reaction to Jane Austen’s novels is very different. ‘*Why do you like Miss Austen so very much? I am puzzled on that point,*’ she wrote to the Victorian man of letters, George H. Lewes, who had been pushing them at her. ‘*And what did I find? An accurate, daguerreotyped portrait of a commonplace face; a carefully-fenced, high-cultivated garden with neat borders and delicate flowers; but no glance of a bright, vivid physiognomy, no open country, no fresh air, no blue hill, no bonny beck.*’

Elizabeth Bennet’s energetic walk to see her ill sister at Netherfield, ‘*crossing field after field at a quick pace, jumping over stiles and spring over puddles, with impatient activity; and finding*

*herself at last within view of the house with weary ankles, dirty stockings, and a face glowing with the warmth of exercise,* ' I find myself wondering if we're talking about the same author.

Marianne Dashwood's reaction on getting Willoughby's letter repudiating their relationship. *'Misery such as mine has no pride, I care not who knows that I am wretched. The triumph of seeing me so may be open to all the world... I must feel – must be wretched...'* Surely, Charlotte Brontë cannot interpret such a passionate outpouring as cool and unfeeling. Elinor notes that, *'No attitude could give her ease; and in restless pain of mind and body Marianne) moved from one posture to another, till, growing more and more hysterical, her sister could with difficulty keep her on the bed at all...'*

And what about Anne Elliot, in *Persuasion*; mentally comparing her cousin Mr Elliot with Captain Wentworth? She thinks: *'Mr Elliot was rational, discreet, polished, – but he was not open. There was never any burst of feeling, any warmth of indignation or delight, at the evil of good of others. To Anne, this was a decided imperfection.'* Charlotte would surely have agreed.

### **6.8.1 Susan Ferrier**

Susan Ferrier came from a family which was well-known in Edinburgh 'society' — the few hundred people who formed the social elite of the time. Some of her fictional characters were based on real and recognisable people of her acquaintance. It was perhaps sensible to keep her authorship a closely guarded secret!

Susan's Ferrier's identity as the author of her novels became more widely known, or guessed, during her lifetime, but she always denied it in public:

'I will never avow myself ... I could not bear the fuss of authorism!' ('Memoir', page 178)

#### **'Marriage'**

Susan Ferrier's first novel 'Marriage' was published in 1818. It tells the story of an English heiress, Lady Juliana, who elopes with an impoverished Scot, Henry Douglas, and has to adjust to living in a run-down castle in the Highlands.

#### **'The inheritance'**

Susan Ferrier is often seen as the Scottish counterpart to Jane Austen, but in this book she proves herself more of a Scottish Dickens. The young heroine Gertrude arrives in the Scottish estate of Lord Rossville to take up her position as his heiress, but finds herself in the middle of a gallery of humorous and eccentric characters — and at the centre of a mystery. What is the secret that terrifies Gertrude's mother and lies at the heart of her inheritance?

#### **'Destiny'**

The old Scottish clan system is collapsing around the Laird of Glenroy in the Highlands of the early 19th-century. Stubbornly he refuses to enter the modern world, with terrible consequences

for his estate and particularly for his daughter Edith. In this novel, Ferrier does not shrink from exploring the defects of the old system or the harsh realities of modern capitalism, but her focus is on the effects of both on the lives of the real people at the heart of the story.

### **6.8.2 Elizabeth Hamilton**

Elizabeth Hamilton was born in Belfast to an Irish mother and a Scottish father. There is some confusion about the exact date of her birth, but it is now believed to be 25 July 1756. Her father died while she was still a baby, and Elizabeth was sent to live with her aunt and uncle who owned a farm near Stirling.

She attended a day school from the age of eight, but her formal education finished in her early teens. Always a curious and eager reader, she continued to seek out serious books, developing the beginnings of her lifelong interest in moral and educational philosophy. She read all the Scottish thinkers of her day, including Lord Kames, Thomas Reid, and Dugald Stewart.

Her first biographer said that 'like many solitary thinkers, (she) was irresistibly compelled to become a writer'.

Elizabeth Hamilton became a well-known and respected author. Sir Henry Raeburn, one of the most important Scottish artists of the day, painted a portrait of Elizabeth Hamilton at the height of her fame, a few years after her best-selling novel 'The Cottagers of Glenburnie' was published. The engraving on this page was based on that portrait.

#### **'The cottagers of Glenburnie'**

The novel 'The cottagers of Glenburnie' tells the story of a retired servant, Mrs Mason, who seeks to improve the lives and morals of her distant relatives, the MacClartys, in the Scottish Highlands. This results in a number of comic moments, but the novel also had the more serious aim of highlighting the need for improvement in the Highlands at this time.

The illustration on the left shows a scene from chapter eight in the novel — 'Family sketches' — where Mrs Mason is talking to Mrs MacClarty's two teenage daughters, Meg and Jean. Jean decides not to go to school that day as she has not done her homework and 'cou'd na be fashed' (couldn't be bothered). Her mother does nothing to persuade her, much to Mrs Mason's disbelief. Mrs Mason is also alarmed by the general lack of cleanliness and hygiene at Mrs MacClarty's.

### **6.8.3 Mary Brunton**

Mary Brunton was born on Burray, one of the Orkney islands. Aged 20, Mary fell in love with the Reverend Alexander Brunton, tutor to her younger brothers. The family did not approve of the attachment, and so Mary and Alexander eloped by boat to the mainland where they married. The couple later moved to Edinburgh when Alexander became minister at the New Greyfriars Kirk, and later at the Tron Kirk.



## **'Self-control'**

Alexander supported his wife's interest in philosophy and history, and Mary began to write literature for her own amusement. Her first novel 'Self-control' was published in 1811, and was an immediate success. It went through four editions in its first year of publication. In a letter to another author, Joanne Baillie, Mary Brunton wrote:

'Till I began Self-Control, I had never in my life written anything but a letter or a recipe, excepting a few hundreds of vile rhymes, from which I desisted by the time I had gained the wisdom of fifteen years; therefore, I was so ignorant of the art on which I was entering, that I formed scarcely any plan for my tale. I merely intended to shew the power of the religious principle in bestowing self-command; and to bear testimony against a maxim as immoral as indelicate, that a reformed rake makes the best husband.' (['Emmeline' link pages xli-xlii](#))

## **'Discipline'**

Mary Brunton's next novel, 'Discipline', appeared in 1814 and was well received. Mary was half-way through writing this novel when [Sir Walter Scott's 'Waverley'](#) was published. She so admired his writing that she was tempted to abandon her own, convinced of her inferiority, but her husband talked her into continuing.

After 'Discipline', she planned a series of 'Domestic Tales', and also began work on a new novel 'Emmeline', but it was never finished. It was later published, with a memoir by her husband, after her death. Mary Brunton died in December 1818 after giving birth to a stillborn son, and is buried in the Canongate Kirkyard, Edinburgh.

### **6.8.4 Catherine Sinclair**

Catherine Sinclair was born in Edinburgh on 17 April 1800 and was one of 13 children. Her father was Sir John Sinclair, a prominent politician who played an important part in many aspects of public life at the time. Most notably, he originated ['The Statistical Account of Scotland'](#).

Catherine was educated at home and from the age of 14 worked as her father's secretary. This involved writing from dictation for long periods each day, but it gave her a good grounding in the craft of writing. Catherine Sinclair began her publishing career with a horror story in 'Blackwood's magazine'. She also began writing children's books to entertain her young nieces and nephews. The first of these books, 'Charlie Seymour, or, the good aunt and the bad aunt', was published in 1832. After her father's death, Catherine was able to devote more time to writing and 'Modern accomplishments', a novel of fashionable life, was published in 1836. This was followed by a sequel, 'Modern society' in 1837 and several later novels. From 1838, she also wrote a series of travel books beginning with 'Hill and valley, or, Hours in England and Wales'.

## 'Holiday house'

Catherine Sinclair wrote in a variety of genres, including novels, children's literature, travel writing, and devotional works. Her novels sold thousands of copies — the illustrated 'Modern accomplishments' title page was first used decades after the first edition, when the book was still popular. Her best-known book is 'Holiday house', a children's book published in 1839 which remained a nursery favourite for the next century. It was a landmark in children's literature — one of the first books to give a realistic picture of children who are naturally curious, mischievous, and argumentative.

### Check Your Progress

#### 1. Discuss the contemporaries of Jane Austen.

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## 6.9 Summary

Jane Austen's novels are not feminist in the way we mean it today. But they do hint at the need for equality between the sexes. Her heroines defy gender norms, and push for more agency in their own lives. The overarching theme that runs throughout all her novels is the inequality faced by women in Regency society. Scholarship on Jane Austen and her contemporaries remains in a surprisingly fledgling state, given the extensive body of work we have amassed on her novels. Despite early entrants into the critical field, such as Mona Wilson's *Jane Austen and Some Contemporaries* (1938) and Bridget G. MacCarthy's *The Female Pen: Women Writers and Novelists 1621-1818* (1944), criticism of Austen is unusual among studies of women writers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries for the extent of its single-author saturation.<sup>1</sup> A good portion of this work still displays a reluctance to look very far beyond her life and career to draw conclusions, or does so only cursorily. There are exceptions galore to this critical rule, of course, but it remains strange that so many monographs and articles put Austen so tentatively in conversation with her contemporaries, both well-known and obscure. Indeed, it is difficult to say which came first—our sense that Austen ought to be in a class by herself or our tendency to study her in a category of one. These enterprises have undoubtedly been mutually reinforcing.

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## 6.10 Key Terms

- **Rapture:** a state of being carried away by overwhelming emotion
- **Amends:** something done or paid to make up for a wrong
- **Ingenious:** showing inventiveness and skill

- **Surmise:** infer from incomplete evidence
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## 6.11 Review Questions

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1. Discuss Jane Austen and her contemporaries in details.
  2. Elaborate the texts and other works of Jane Austen.
  3. Compare and contrast the writing style of Austen to that of her contemporaries.
  4. Discuss the contribution of Jane Austen to literature.
  5. How are clergy and gentry presented in the novels of Austen.
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## 6.12 References

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## UNIT 7: PERSUASION: AN ANALYSIS

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### STRUCTURE

- 7.1 Objectives
- 7.2 Introduction
- 7.3 Background
- 7.4 Historical Context of Persuasion
- 7.5 Introduction to the Novel
- 7.6 Characters of the Novel
- 7.7 Plot of the Novel
- 7.8 Chapter – wise Analysis of the text
- 7.9 Other Books related to Persuasion
- 7.10 Summary
- 7.11 Key Terms
- 7.12 Review Questions
- 7.13 References

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### 7.1 Objectives

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The learners shall know the following:

- The textual analysis of Persuasion
- The other perspectives of the text
- The writing style of Austen
- The in – depth analysis of the characters

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### 7.2 Introduction

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Jane Austen was a major English novelist, whose brilliantly witty, elegantly structured satirical fiction marks the transition in English literature from 18th century neo-classicism to 19th century romanticism. Jane Austen was born on 16 December, 1775, at the rectory in the village of Steventon, near Basingstoke, in Hampshire. The seventh of eight children of the Reverend George Austen and his wife, Cassandra, she was educated mainly at home and never lived apart from her family. She had a happy childhood amongst all her brothers and the other boys who lodged with the family and whom Mr Austen tutored. From her older sister, Cassandra, she was inseparable. To amuse themselves, the children wrote and performed plays and charades, and even as a little girl Jane was encouraged to write. The reading that she did of the books in her father's extensive library provided material for the short satirical sketches she wrote as a girl. Jane's close relationship with her siblings and her family's relationship with the local gentry would provide her with material for her plots and influence her creation of the settings and characterizations in her novels.

At the age of 14 she wrote her first novella, *Love and Friendship* and then *A History of England by a partial, prejudiced and ignorant Historian*, together with other very amusing juvenilia. By the age of twenty-five, Austen had already written three novels, though *Sense and Sensibility*, Austen's first novel to be published, was not released until 1811. In the early nineteenth century, publishing was one of the few ways middle-class women could earn money, and Austen used her modest earnings to supplement her income. Two years later, her second novel, *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) was published and proved to be extremely popular, ending Austen's anonymity. Her next novel, *Mansfield Park* (1814), did not sell as well, and Austen followed it in 1816 with *Emma*, the last novel to be published before her early death. In failing health, Austen wrote her final novel, *Persuasion*, in under a year. *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey* were published posthumously in 1818, and together earned little over 500 pounds, a small amount by today's standards, but more money than Austen herself ever saw in her lifetime.

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## 7.3 Background

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*Persuasion* represents the maturity of Austen's work, and more than her other novels. It also provides evidence of Austen's comic yet biting satire of the titled upper classes. Austen's own social position, as the daughter of a parish clergyman, placed her firmly in the respected middle-class, but as an author she was free to step outside her sphere and write about the personal flaws and mistakes of the proud gentry. Such subtle criticism is especially apparent in her descriptions of the ridiculous and vain Sir Walter Elliot, who is forced to leave his family's house because of his lavish and imprudent overspending.

Austen's final novel also stands out for the nationalistic pride expressed by the characters throughout the work. The reverence which the female characters of *Persuasion* hold for the Naval officers reflects the esteem in which the Navy was held in Austen's day. At the height of the British Empire, amidst wars with both France and the United States of America, the Navy was admired as the defender of British interests throughout the world. Such Navy heroes in the novel introduce a new, rougher ideal of manliness into Austen's world, for which the feminized Sir Walter serves as the unfortunate foil.

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## 7.4 Historical Context of Persuasion

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Austen's novels are famous for the way they seem to exist in a small, self-contained universe. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Austen's depiction of life in the tranquil English countryside takes place at the same time when England was fighting for its life against the threat of Napoleon, and all of Europe was embroiled in war and political chaos.

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## 7.5 Introduction to the Novel

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When *Persuasion* was published posthumously in 1818, only a small circle of people knew of

and admired Jane Austen's novels. Since that date, however, Austen has come to be one of the world's most widely read and most beloved authors. *Persuasion* is Jane Austen's last completed novel. She began it soon after she had finished *Emma*, completing it in August 1816. She died, aged 41, in 1817; and *Persuasion* was published in December that year.

In *Persuasion*, her last novel, Austen continues to present in minute detail the daily lives of her characters, upper-middle-class men and women living in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This novel perhaps is her most romantic, centring on postponed but enduring love. Anne Elliot, the story's heroine, suffers from a decision that was forced upon her several years ago—to break off a relationship with the man she deeply loved. As Austen examines the causes and consequences of this action, she offers a penetrating critique of the standards of the British class system and the narrow-mindedness of those who strictly subscribe to them. The novel's witty realism helped guarantee Austen's position as one of the finest novelists.

*Persuasion* is also a novel that reflects the changing social order of England. Many of the peerage — not to mention baronets like Anne's father Sir Walter Elliot — could no longer maintain their extravagant lifestyles easily. Thus the novel opens with the premise that the Elliots must move to a smaller residence and let their mansion to Admiral Croft of the navy. The navy, incidentally, is highly praised by the third-person omniscient narrator, who reserves many satiric criticisms for the upper class. Given that Austen had brothers with careers in the navy, such praise is perhaps not so surprising.

*Persuasion* represents the maturity of Austen's work, and more than her other novels, evidences Austen's comic yet biting satire of the titled upper classes. Austen's own social position, as the daughter of a parish clergyman, placed her firmly in the respected middle-class, but as an author she was free to step outside her sphere and write about the personal flaws and mistakes of the proud gentry. Such subtle criticism is especially apparent in her descriptions of the ridiculous and vain Sir Walter Elliot, who is forced to leave his family's house because of his lavish and imprudent overspending.

Austen's final novel also stands out for the nationalistic pride expressed by the characters throughout the work. The reverence which *Persuasion's* female characters hold for the Naval officers reflects the esteem in which the Navy was held in Austen's day. At the height of the British Empire, amidst wars with both France and America, the Navy was admired as the defender of British interests throughout the world. Such Navy heroes in the novel introduce a new, rougher ideal of manliness into Austen's world, for which the feminized Sir Walter serves as the unfortunate foil.

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## 7.6 Characters of the Novel

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### ➤ Anne Elliot

The novel's protagonist, Anne Elliot, is the middle daughter of Sir Walter Elliot, a landed baronet from a socially important family. Quiet and reserved, yet clever and practical, Anne sees the foolishness in her father's lavish spending. Because she is neither the most beautiful nor the most

image-conscious of his daughters, Sir Walter often overlooks Anne, slights her, and dismisses her opinions. Though Anne seeks love, she is conscious of her duty to her position and the prudence of making a suitable match. Seeking to please those around her, in her youth, she was persuaded from following her true desires. In contrast to both of her two sisters and to the other young female characters in the novel, Anne is level-headed, considerate of others, and humble. She balances duty and passion in a composed and respectful way.

### ➤ **Captain Frederick Wentworth**

The object of Anne's affections, Captain Wentworth, is a gallant Naval officer who, well-educated and well-mannered, has made his own fortunes by climbing the Naval ranks. He values constancy, practicality, and firmness of mind in women, characteristics that will make a good Navy wife. Though Captain Wentworth is almost universally liked and respected for his gentle nature and kind attentions to others, Sir Walter disdains him for his "lower" birth.

### ➤ **Sir Walter Elliot**

The father of Anne Elliot, baronet, and owner of Kellynch Hall, Sir Walter is a caricature of the impractical titled upper classes. Extraordinarily vain, Sir Walter lines his dressing room with mirrors, and agrees to be seen in public only with attractive or well-born people. Conscious of keeping up grand appearances, Sir Walter spends lavishly, and brings his family into debt. A poor judge of character, he is easily fooled by those who would take advantage of him.

### ➤ **Elizabeth Elliot**

The eldest daughter of Sir Walter and the older sister of Anne, Elizabeth Elliot is her father's favorite. Like her father, she is vain and primarily concerned with keeping up appearances and associating with important people. At the end of the novel, Elizabeth is the only one of the Elliot daughters to remain single, there being no one of adequate birth to suit her taste.

### ➤ **Mr. William Elliot**

Anne Elliot's cousin, and heir to Kellynch Hall, Mr. William Elliot is a smooth talker who everyone agrees is "perfectly what he ought to be." Only six months after the death of his first wife, and at the end of a marriage that was generally known to be unhappy, Mr. Elliot is searching for a new bride. Good-looking and well-mannered, Mr. Elliot talks his way back into the good graces of Sir Walter, yet Anne questions his true motives.

### ➤ **Mary Elliot Musgrove**

The youngest Elliot sister, Mary, is married to Charles Musgrove and has two small boys. She is high strung, often hysterical, and always aware of the imagined slights others have done to her. A rather inattentive mother, Mary focuses on social climbing.

### ➤ **Charles Musgrove**

Mary's husband, and heir to the great house at Uppercross, Charles, is a relatively good-natured man who patiently endures his wife's trials. He would have preferred to marry Anne Elliot.

### ➤ **Louisa Musgrove**

Charles's younger sister, Louisa, is young, accomplished, and headstrong. She falls easily in love and admires the Navy excessively.

### ➤ **Henrietta Musgrove**

Younger sister of Charles and older sister of Louisa, Henrietta, is also young and fun-loving. Though she is not as decisive as Louisa, Henrietta sees the charms both of her cousin Charles Hayter and of the dashing Captain Wentworth.

### ➤ **Mr. & Mrs. Musgrove**

The parents of Charles, Henrietta, and Louisa, the Musgroves have provided a balanced, happy home for their children at Uppercross. They are a landed family, second in rank in the parish only to the Elliots. They are practical and want only happiness for their children.

### ➤ **Charles Hayter**

Cousin to the Musgroves (his mother is the sister of Mrs. Musgrove), the Hayter family is nevertheless enmeshed in a much lower social circle because of their "inferior, retired, and unpolished way of living." Charles Hayter, the eldest son, however, chose to be a scholar and a gentleman, and consequently has much more refined manners. He will one day inherit his family's land, and he hopes to court his cousin Henrietta and make her his wife.

### ➤ **Captain Benwick**

Once engaged to the Captain Harville's now-deceased sister, Fanny, Captain Benwick is a depressed naval officer who mourns the death of his lost love. He is a shy man and an ardent reader of poetry. When Anne meets him, he is on leave from his ship, and he is living with Captain and Mrs. Harville. He seeks a young woman to help him get over Fanny, and his attentions turn, surprisingly, to Louisa Musgrove.

### ➤ **Lady Russell**

The former best friend of Anne's deceased mother, Lady Russell is a woman of considerable birth and wealth who serves as advisor to the Elliot family. A practical woman, she is conscious of class interactions and finances. Anne is her favorite of the Elliot daughters and, though she means well, she sometimes gives Anne bad advice.

### ➤ **Admiral and Mrs. Croft**

The amiable couple that rents Kellynch Hall when Sir Walter can no longer afford to stay there. The Admiral is a decorated Naval officer and his devoted wife travels with him when he is at sea.



The Crofts are one of the few examples of an older happily married couple in any of Austen's novels.

### ➤ **Mrs. Clay**

The daughter of Mr. Shepard (family advisor to Sir Walter), Mrs. Clay soon becomes the friend of Elizabeth Elliot. Though she is of much lower birth, freckled, and not so very attractive, Mrs. Clay is a well-mannered widow. Anne, however, sees danger in the way she endears herself to Sir Walter, and suspects she may seek to marry in a class far above her own.

### ➤ **Mrs. Smith**

The girlhood friend of Anne Elliot who is currently living in Bath, Mrs. Smith, has fallen on hard times. After her husband went into debt and left her a widow, Mrs. Smith was left with nothing. Now disabled by an illness, Mrs. Smith rekindles her former friendship with Anne and provides her with information that helps Anne learn more about Mr. Elliot. Mrs. Smith functions in the story to highlight Anne's high value on friendship and disregard for maintaining appearances at all cost.

### ➤ **Lady Dalrymple and Miss Carteret**

The Irish cousins of the Elliots, Lady Dalrymple and her ugly daughter, Miss Carteret, come to Bath. Though they are uninteresting and unclever, Sir Walter seeks their renewed acquaintance because of their high social position.

### ➤ **Captain Harville and Mrs. Harville**

Friends of Captain Wentworth, this couple resides in Lyme and kindly cares for Louisa after her fall.

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## 7.7 Plot of the Novel

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The novel opens with the vain **Sir Walter**, baronet of **Kellynch** Hall, poring over the Elliot family history. His wife passed away fourteen years ago, leaving behind three daughters: the youngest daughter, **Mary**, is married to the wealthy **Charles Musgrove**. Proud and beautiful **Elizabeth** is the eldest and her father's favorite; **Anne** is gentle and sweet, but often overlooked by her father and sister. Their mother's best friend, **Lady Russell**, helped Sir Walter raise his children. She remains a close and trusted family friend and maternal figure for Anne. The Elliots are an aristocratic, land-owning family. They have fallen into debt due to Sir Walter's extravagant spending, and under the counsel of Lady Russell and **Mr. Shepherd** the family lawyer they rent their estate to Admiral and Mrs. Croft and move to Bath.

Admiral and Mrs. Croft are a respectable, well-off, and well-mannered **Navy** couple of good character. Despite Sir Walter's initial reservations about the Navy as a profession that socially elevates lowborn men, he is pleased to have tenants of respectable social standing. The arrival of Mrs. Croft stirs powerful memories for Anne, as she is the sister of Captain Wentworth. Eight years ago, Anne and Captain Wentworth fell in love and were engaged to be married; however,

Lady Russell, who believed the match to be foolish and unsuitable, as Captain Wentworth had no fortune or rank, persuaded Anne to break off the engagement. Anne anticipates seeing him in the country again.

While Sir Walter, Elizabeth, and **Mrs. Clay** (Elizabeth's close friend and a widow of lower rank) travel to Bath, Anne visits her sister Mary at Uppercross to help her out and keep her company. Mary is self-absorbed and complains frequently; her husband, Charles, is good-natured and patient. The rest of the Musgrove family live nearby at the Great House; Anne finds them refreshingly unpretentious, cheerful, and warm. Mr. and Mrs. Musgrove have two grown daughters, **Henrietta** and **Louisa**.

Captain Wentworth arrives to visit his sister, Mrs. Croft, and quickly becomes a favorite among the Musgroves. He treats Anne with cold indifference, leading her to the painful conclusion that he no longer loves her. He flirts instead with Louisa and Henrietta, who are quite smitten with him. The party meets **Captain and Mrs. Harville**, friends of Captain Wentworth, and **Captain Benwick** at Lyme. On one of their walks, they encounter a gentleman who openly admires Anne—he is later discovered to be **Mr. Elliot**, Sir Walter's estranged heir. When Louisa takes a bad fall because of her stubborn impulsiveness, Anne directs the others to care for her. The Harvilles kindly nurse Louisa over the next few months; Captain Wentworth feels responsible for the accident and stays for a time in Lyme.

Anne and Lady Russell join Sir Walter and Elizabeth in Bath. They learn that Mr. Elliot is in Bath and made great efforts to reconcile with the family. He is universally charming and continues to express great admiration for Anne, who finds him sensible and well-mannered though neither open nor warm. Admiral and Mrs. Croft arrive in Bath with the surprising news that Louisa is engaged to Captain Benwick and Henrietta to **Charles Hayter**, her cousin. Captain Wentworth is completely unattached; he arrives in Bath soon after, and it becomes evident that he is jealous of Mr. Elliot's attentions to Anne. Lady Russell believes Mr. Elliot to be a perfect match for her beloved Anne, but Anne remains suspicious of Mr. Elliot's past. She continues to harbor a steadfast and unwavering love for Captain Wentworth.

During her time at Bath, Anne reconnects with an old school friend, **Mrs. Smith**, who has fallen on hard times. The crippled, impoverished, and widowed Mrs. Smith informs her of Mr. Elliot's dark past: he betrayed Mrs. Smith's husband and wronged Mrs. Smith financially, and he now plans to marry Anne because he is fearful that he will lose the baronetcy if Mrs. Clay marries Sir Walter, and the marriage to Anne would ensure his inheritance. Anne is appalled that she was almost persuaded to marry Mr. Elliot by Lady Russell.

Captain Wentworth writes a letter professing his continued devotion for Anne. Anne is shaken and ecstatic; they renew their vows and engagement to each other. Eight years in the navy have elevated Captain Wentworth in fortune and social rank; he is now an eligible match for the daughter of a foolish and spendthrift baronet. Sir Walter poses no objection to their marriage, and Lady Russell also comes to accept and befriend Captain Wentworth. Mr. Elliot is shocked and disappointed; he leaves Bath with Mrs. Clay, whose affections he has turned away from Sir Walter. Anne and Captain Wentworth finally enjoy a mature marriage with an appreciation and tenderness enhanced by their long years apart.

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## 7.8 Chapter – wise Analysis of the text

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### Chapter 1

Austen opens her novel by introducing Sir Walter Elliot, the owner of Kellynch Hall, and a man for whom "vanity was the beginning and end of [his] character." His favorite book, the reader is told, is the *Baronetage*, a book which holds record of the most important families in England, and which, most importantly records Sir Walter's own personal history. In this passage, we learn that Sir Walter's wife, Elizabeth, has passed away fourteen years ago, and that he has three daughters: Elizabeth, Anne, and Mary. Of the girls, only Mary, the youngest, is married (to a Mr. Charles Musgrove). Having only three daughters and no sons, the Elliot family fortune will pass to William Elliot, the girls' cousin, upon the death of Sir Walter. Sir Walter has decided, "for his daughters' sake," not to remarry.

Sir Walter's deceased wife, the former Lady Elliot, had been an excellent woman, and had complemented her husband's flaws with her sensibility and good judgment. But in the years since her passing, Sir Walter has fallen in love with himself. Lady Russell, an old friend of Lady Elliot has helped Sir Walter raise his daughters and has become a trusted family advisor.

In this opening chapter, we are also introduced to the three Elliot daughters: Elizabeth, who is beautiful, yet vain like her father; Anne, who has a sweetness of character, but is often overlooked by her family; and Mary, who thinks herself very important since her marriage. Of the three, Elizabeth is the favorite of Sir Walter, and Anne is the favorite of Lady Russell.

The history of Mr. William Elliot is also recounted in this chapter. The family had hoped their heir would marry Elizabeth, yet he had slighted and disappointed them, opting for independence by marrying another woman of fortune and lower birth. Since this slight seven years ago, he has not been in the good graces of the Elliot family. Finally, we learn that the Elliot family is distressed for money. Sir Walter has spent lavishly on a lifestyle well beyond his means. Mr. Shepard and Lady Russell, two trusted family advisors, help the Elliots save money and get their finances back in order.

### Chapter 2

Mr. Shepard and Lady Russell draw up a plan for ways that Sir Elliot can save money. They decide that he must "retrench" by seriously cutting back on his expenditures if he is to get out of the large debt he has accrued. Lady Russell, argues that such cuts will in no way lessen Sir Walter's standing in the eyes of sensible people since "Kellynch Hall has a respectability in itself, which cannot be affected by these reductions." Anne agrees and thinks their spending should be cut even more, since there is much they do not need.

Yet, Sir Walter will not hear of altering his lifestyle so significantly. He believes doing without such comforts would be disgraceful to his rank. Finally, Mr. Shepard suggests that the Elliots should leave Kellynch Hall for a short time. In another house, he reasons, the Elliots could more easily alter their style of living to become a more modest household. Sir Walter agrees to this option only if they can find a tenant worthy enough to rent Kellynch. Sir Walter decides that the family will relocate to Bath, dismissing Anne's dislike of the city.

Lady Russell thinks the relocation of the family is a very good idea for two reasons: first, it will help the Elliots save money, and second, it will hopefully separate Elizabeth from her new friend Mrs. Clay, the widowed daughter of Mr. Shepard. Lady Russell is a good woman, but she values propriety, rank, and consequence. She feels that it is out of place for Elizabeth to be friends with Mrs. Clay and she feels the slight that Elizabeth prefers the company of this woman to Anne. We learn that Lady Russell thinks Mrs. Clay a "very dangerous companion."

## **Analysis**

The opening chapters of *Persuasion* introduce us to the main characters of the novel and set up the problem which will drive the rest of the plot. The primary conflict is the difficulty of saving money while keeping up the appearance of a rich and titled landowner. The problem Sir Walter faces is not unique; it emerges in part because of the class system of early nineteenth-century England. Such a system, in which families are strictly categorized by their wealth, rank, and birth, necessitates living a lifestyle consistent with one's class. Sir Walter is horrified that people might think less of him for spending less money and is shocked at the prospect of giving up comforts that he considers necessities.

Austen introduces the concept of "retrenching" and implies that it is not an infrequent occurrence for the wealthy families of her time. "Retrenching" involves living less ostentatiously for a period of time in order to save money and get out of debt. In this period of industrial and imperial progress, the traditional aristocracy was having an increasingly difficult time maintaining their large estates and lavish way of living. Lady Russell suggests that the retrenching of respected families is a common occurrence. She notes that, "there will be nothing singular in his case, and it is singularity which often makes the worst part of our suffering, as it always does of our conduct."

In these chapters, we see the first example of persuasion. Anne, Lady Russell, and Mr. Shepard gently convince Sir Walter that it would be best for him to leave Kellynch Hall for a time. They persuade not by appealing to practicality, about which he cares little, but by appealing to his vanity. He is induced to believe that Bath will provide him more consequence and enjoyment than he can receive in Somersetshire. This is an example of positive persuasion that influences a decision on the side of practicality.

These opening chapters establish the Elliot family dynamics. Sir Walter is a "silly parent," and like silly parents in many Austen novels, he precipitates the initial crisis. His vanity and

impracticality mean that his more sensible daughter, Anne, must find a way to straighten out the mess. Sir Walter serves as a foil for the valued characteristics which will bring closure to the novel. By existing as a conceited, image-conscious, and insensible man, Sir Walter highlights Anne's opposing qualities of self-deprecation, humility, and sensibility. He has not transmitted his characteristics to her, yet their differences foreshadow potential future conflict in the novel.

### **Check Your Progress**

#### **1. Analyze the character of Lady Russell.**

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## **Chapter 3**

Observing that England is now at peace, Mr. Shepard remarks that many men of the English Navy will soon be back to home. He suggests that a sailor would be a very desirable tenant to rent Kellynch Hall because they are so meticulous and careful with their possessions. The family enters into a conversation on the merits of the Navy as a profession. Anne asserts that naval men work extremely hard and that they must all be indebted to them for their service. Sir Walter counters that he would never want any of his relatives to be a part of the Navy for two reasons: first, it is a "means of bringing persons of obscure birth into undue distinction" and second, it severely weathers a man's youth and appearance. Mrs. Clay makes the point that every career, except that of the privileged landowner, does its part to wear on the looks and health of men.

News comes that Admiral Croft, a native of Somersetshire and a man with quite a large fortune, is interested in renting Kellynch Hall. Sir Walter is concerned that Admiral Croft's appearance must be "orange" and weatherbeaten from all his time at sea. But Mr. Shepard assures him that the Admiral is a "well-looking man" who would be an extremely desirable and appreciative tenant. The Admiral is a gentleman, and he has a wife but no children. A woman, Shepard argues, is much more likely to keep a watchful eye over the estate. Furthermore, Admiral Croft has family connections to the area; his wife's brother, Mr. Wentworth, was a curate at Monkford. Sir Walter concedes that the sentence, "I have let my house to Admiral Croft" has a good sound to it, since the consequence and rank of the tenant is quite clear. Finally convinced by the "extreme happiness" the Crofts would have at being chosen to be the tenants of Kellynch, Sir Walter agrees to let them rent his estate. Elizabeth is strongly in favor of going to Bath and is happy to have a tenant so soon. At the end of the chapter, Anne walks outside with flushed cheeks and thinks fondly to herself that her love interest "may soon be walking here."

## **Chapter 4**

Anne's love interest is Captain Frederick Wentworth, the brother of the former curate of Monkford and of Mrs. Croft. The narrator recounts the events of the summer of 1806 in which Captain Wentworth was visiting his brother in the area and became acquainted with Anne. They fell in love and had hoped to marry but Anne's family and her trusted friend Lady Russell thought it a degrading alliance. In 1806 Captain Wentworth was without fortune or high birth. Lady Russell thought it was her duty, in the absence of Anne's mother, to persuade her not to marry beneath her social class. She vehemently opposed the match.

Anne, very young and gentle at this time, did not want to contradict her father's wishes and her friend's advice. She was persuaded that their engagement was improper and impractical, and she ended it. Her consolation was that her prudence and self-denial was for his good, as well as her own, and that Captain Wentworth would be better off unattached to her. But he was angry at being given up so easily, and he proudly left the country. Anne suffered from the lonely effects of her decision for the seven years from their short engagement to the present time. She did not stop thinking about her Captain, who by now, she reasons, must have made a large fortune.

Since that time, there was no man who matched Captain Wentworth in Anne's affections, though Charles Musgrove proposed to her. Although her father condoned this match, she refused him, and he married instead her younger sister, Mary. Anne regretted her refusal of Captain Wentworth, but she did not blame Lady Russell for her unwanted advice. She understood that Lady Russell's motives were good, however selfish her father's might be. Seven years let Anne mature, and her maturity brought a greater understanding of love, romance, and happiness. The thought of Captain Wentworth's sister inhabiting Kellynch Hall brings all these emotions to the forefront of Anne's mind.

## **Analysis**

Persuasion explores the role of the Navy in early nineteenth-century class-structured society. Sir Walter's principal objection to the Navy is that it brings "persons of obscure birth into undue distinction." Thus, he dislikes and disapproves of its function as a means of social mobility. The Navy allows men who are dedicated and hard-working to build not only a fortune, but also to gain respect and social status. His objection then, is not only to the Navy, but to increasing social mobility in society. Sir Walter's dislike of this progress, in which birthright loses some of its social importance, is representative of upper-class nineteenth-century British men.

On the other hand, Anne sees the Navy as a source of national pride. In this period of English history, England was often embroiled in wars with France and skirmishes with America. Domestic politics gave way to perceived international threats and the Navy was considered the arm of English power and the defender of British sovereignty. The officers of the Navy held a charm and an attraction for young girls at home, who believed that they had a reputation for gallantry and bravery.

Chapter Four highlights the theme of persuasion. Anne is persuaded by the disapproval of her father and of Lady Russell to end her engagement with Captain Wentworth. Such advice is against her initial decision, but she believes it is right to defer to those older and wiser, who must, she

assumes, have her best interest at heart. Though seven years later Anne regrets her decision to break the engagement, Austen leaves it unclear whether her ability to be persuaded is a positive or negative character trait. Anne is torn between her duty to her class and her passion for Captain Wentworth. Austen's style makes use of free indirect discourse, which interweaves grammatical and other features of the character's direct speech with the narrator's indirect report. This technique allows the narrator to take on the speech or thought patterns of a particular character, often expressing a sense of irony. Thus we learn that from Sir Walter's point of view, "an admiral speaks his own consequence, and, at the same time, can never make a baronet look small."

## Chapter 5

Admiral and Mrs. Croft come to see Kellynch. They approve of the house, grounds, and furniture, and hit it off very well with Sir Walter and Elizabeth. Sir Walter is flattered and gratified by their polished behaviour and good manners. He thinks the Admiral one of the "best-looking sailors he has ever met." It is formally approved that the Crofts will rent Kellynch. Sir Walter and Elizabeth plan to take Mrs. Clay with them to Bath as an assistant and companion. Both Anne and Lady Russell feel the imprudence of this arrangement. Though Mrs. Clay has freckles and a projecting tooth, she is not altogether bad-looking and Anne suspects that her mild manners may allow her to form an intimacy with Sir Walter which would be neither appropriate nor desirable for the Elliot family. In an effort to warn Elizabeth of this danger, Anne suggests the impropriety of bringing Mrs. Clay to Bath. But Elizabeth rejects Anne's suggestion, confident that Mrs. Clay is not pretty enough for their father to ever consider her a potential wife.

Claiming that she is unwell, Mary requests that Anne come to stay with her for a few weeks at Uppercross Cottage, rather than immediately joining Sir Walter and Elizabeth at Bath. Anne, happy to be of some use and grateful to stay in Somersetshire a while longer, gladly agrees to go to Mary. She finds her sister in a very bad mood, lying on a couch and complaining that she has been alone all morning; Charles is out shooting and her two small sons are unmanageable. Mary, we are told, was never as pretty as either of her two sisters; she has a trying nature and easily falls into self-pity when others fail to pay her attention. Anne finally manages to cheer her up enough that she could get off the sofa and go with Anne to visit the Musgroves at the Great House.

At the Great House, Austen introduces us to the Musgroves, a happy family, "friendly and hospitable, not much educated and not at all elegant." The family consists of the mother and father, the three adult children: Charles (Mary's husband), Henrietta, and Louisa, who have just returned from school at Exeter, and younger children who are unnamed. Anne enjoys the Musgrove household for its merriness and comfort. She encourages the Miss Musgrove to join her and Mary for a walk.

## Chapter 6

At Uppercross, Anne notices the very different topics that occupy the Musgroves' attention. Little concerned with discussing appearances and social standing, the Musgrove family occupies itself with hunting, newspapers, house-keeping, dress, dancing, and music. She finds their presence a

welcome change from the company of her father and Elizabeth. Austen describes the marriage of Charles and Mary Musgrove as reasonably happy. Charles is good-natured enough to put up with Mary's moods, though he wastes his time on sport. Charles is much better with the children, but Mary's interference makes them unmanageable. Anne gets along tolerably with the whole family, and the young boys respect her much more than their mother.

The Musgrove family is quite pleased to have Anne visiting. While Anne is there, Mary is much happier to have a constant companion. Periodically, both Charles Musgrove and his parents entreat Anne to use her influence upon her sister to make changes. They would like Mary to better manage her children and her home, and Anne is constantly made a middle party to small complaints. Though Anne is happy at Uppercross, it bothers her deeply that the Crofts have now moved into Kellynch. She thinks sadly of her home being inhabited by other people. She and Mary go to pay a visit to the Crofts. The Crofts are amiable people, and Mrs. Croft has a weather-beaten complexion from spending much time at sea with her husband. Mrs. Croft mentions that her other brother, Mr. Wentworth is married, and Anne briefly fears that it is her Captain Wentworth to which Mrs. Croft refers. But Captain Wentworth is soon expected to be visiting. This news excites and unnerves Anne.

The name of Captain Wentworth sparks a recollection in Mrs. Musgrove. She remembers that her son Dick served under Captain Wentworth in the Navy and wrote of him fondly. Dick was a "troublesome, hopeless" son who had been sent to sea at the age of twenty because he was unmanageable on land. Though his family had never been very attached to him, Dick's death affected his mother deeply. To hear Captain Wentworth's name, a man whom her son respected and described as "dashing," made Mrs. Musgrove remember her son and grieve his loss again.

## **Analysis**

Austen continues to explore the complex English class system. Comparing her own household to that of the Musgroves allows Anne to make important observations about class divisions in England. Although the Musgroves are a wealthy, landowning family, second in the parish only to the Elliots, they are not titled. They do not have as high birth and family connections as the Elliots do. Though the Elliots are perfectly happy to interact and even to intermarry with them, there are distinct differences in their ways of life. Anne notices that the Musgroves discuss sport, dress, and daily activities; they are not nearly as concerned with appearances, social standing, and the affairs of other families. This difference is at first refreshing to Anne, but at the same time, slightly disconcerting. The narrator describes the Musgroves as "not much educated and not at all elegant." Anne enjoys the Musgroves' company, but does not wish to emulate them; her taste seeks more education and more elegance. Though Anne finds both of these qualities in her own family, she dislikes their close-minded elitism.

These chapters touch upon the social positions of women within the class system. In the late nineteenth-century, a woman's social rank was extremely tenuous. Women were unique in the class society for their ability to rise or fall in social station easily. After marriage, a woman's rank was entirely dependent upon her husband's birth and social standing. In contrast, although a man



might increase his fortune, he could not improve his rank by marrying a well-born woman; his wife would only fall to his level. Choosing a marriage partner well, then, was of the utmost importance for a woman. Her friends and family would seek to guide her in finding the very best man available.

In these chapters, the theme of social mobility for women is illustrated by the "dangerous" prospect of a match between Mrs. Clay and Sir Walter. Anne thinks taking Mrs. Clay to Bath is entirely imprudent and unwise, and she considers it her duty to warn Elizabeth that such a match might be a possibility. The "danger" of such a marriage is twofold. First, a marriage like this is a way for a woman of obscure birth to be brought into "undue distinction" and though Anne does not specifically say this, she is not liberal enough in her views to avoid being offended by such a presumptuous move on Mrs. Clay's part. Second, such a marriage would turn Mrs. Clay into Lady Elliot, thereby allowing her to take precedence over both Elizabeth and Anne at family functions. When the narrator refers to the specific "danger" to Elizabeth, she means that if a marriage were to happen, Elizabeth would be ousted from her position as first lady of Kellynch Hall.

## Chapter 7

Captain Wentworth arrives at Kellynch to visit his sister, Mrs. Croft. Mr. Musgrove goes to call on him and decides he likes the Captain very much. He invites Captain Wentworth to the Great House at Uppercross, and Mary and Anne are invited to join them in the visit. Anne is quite nervous at the prospect of seeing Captain Wentworth again after such a long time. The two sisters are on their way to the Great House when Mary's oldest son has a bad fall and seriously dislocates his collarbone. Everyone is in distress and they call for the apothecary to come examine the boy. They find that his injury is not life-threatening.

Henrietta and Louisa Musgrove come to visit the child. They bring news that Captain Wentworth has been to their house; they both appear absolutely smitten and pleased by him. It is announced that he will have dinner the following day at the Great House. The next day, the boy is in stable condition and Charles Musgrove (the boy's father) announces his intention to dine with his parents and Captain Wentworth. Mary is upset that Charles would leave her alone at home with Anne and the child. She is mostly angered by the idea that her husband may enjoy himself while she is stuck at home. Anne settles the matter by offering to stay home with the boy while Mary goes to the dinner with her husband. Though Anne consoles herself that she will be very useful to the sick child, she cannot believe that Captain Wentworth is less than half a mile away. That evening, Charles and Mary return after a lovely dinner. Everyone is charmed by the humour and good manners of the Captain.

The next morning, Captain Wentworth comes to call on Mary at breakfast before he and Charles go out shooting. Anne and the Captain glance at each other briefly, but it is a short meeting. Anne wonders how eight years have changed the Captain's feelings for her. Mary tells Anne that Henrietta asked the Captain what he thought of Anne and he responded that Anne "was so altered he should not have known her again." Anne is understandably hurt by this remark, but she reasons that it is better to know his feelings for her, whatever they may be. The narrator tells the reader

that Captain Wentworth has not forgiven Anne. He was very attached to her, and he feels that her actions eight years ago show a "feebleness of character" that he cannot endure. Now he is on the hunt for a pleasing woman to marry; anyone, he thinks, except Anne Elliot.

## Chapter 8

Captain Wentworth and Anne Elliot are now in the same social circle and must repeatedly dine together. They refrain from having any conversation, however, except what politeness necessitates. Anne thinks about how their temperaments are perfectly suited to each other. She thinks that Admiral and Mrs. Croft are the only couple she knows that could be nearly as attached and happy as she and Captain Wentworth once had the chance of being. The dinner conversation turns to the Navy and to Captain Wentworth's experiences on the ships. Mrs. Musgrove implores him to tell her what he knows of her late son, Dick Musgrove, who served beneath him on the *Laconia*. Captain Wentworth moves to sit next to Mrs. Musgrove and talk to her, comfortingly, about her son.

Captain Wentworth is sensitive in dealing with Mrs. Musgrove, amusing at dinner, and outspoken in his beliefs. He admits that he would never willingly let women aboard his ship, as he thinks it is not a suitable place for them. Mrs. Croft disagrees, and asserts her feeling that she has always been perfectly comfortable on board her husband's ship. The Crofts joke that when Frederick Wentworth is married, he will sing a different tune. The Crofts discuss their marriage. Mrs. Croft travels with her husband almost everywhere and cannot bear to be separated from him. At the end of the evening there is dancing and Anne prefers to play music for them all night. Captain Wentworth seems to be having a terrific time. All the young ladies, including both Miss Musgroves are enamoured by him. Although he rarely addresses her, Anne is hurt by the "cold politeness" in his voice.

## Analysis

Austen uses the narrative mode of free indirect discourse to indirectly convey the thoughts and feelings of her characters. In Chapter Seven, which concentrates on Anne's reaction to Captain Wentworth's reappearance, the narrative mode is especially apparent. Austen writes: "She had seen him. They had met. They had been once more in the same room!" Such a series of sentences allows Austen to express the excitement of her protagonist without directly forcing the narrator to declare it. This mode of narration is a literary technique characteristic of Austen.

These chapters address the issue of motherhood, another frequent theme in Austen's novels. We see two very different motherly reactions in these passages, that of Mary for her young son who is hurt and that of Mrs. Musgrove for her late son, Dick. Mary, though initially hysterical at the thought of her boy being seriously injured, soon gets over her hysteria and loses interest when she realizes he will most likely be all right. She reasons that she may as well go out to dinner, since she can be of little use to her son at home. Mary is one of Austen's "silly parents." She is silly because she pretends to have all the concerns of a mother, when in reality she has little loving feeling or maternal protectiveness. Austen presents Mary as an example of a bad (but not

malicious) mother, someone who cares more about her own entertainment than her child's well-being.

Mrs. Musgrove is reminded of her late son when Captain Wentworth, his former commander, comes to dine with them. She wishes to hear as much about her son as possible, and though not hysterical, shows great regret and sadness over the fate of her boy. Unlike Mary, Mrs. Musgrove is not a "silly parent," yet like her daughter-in-law, she uses her children to draw attention to herself. Encouraging Captain Wentworth to speak of Dick means that he must give her attention and comfort. Both passages are examples of Austen's close observation of social roles and the different ways people fill those roles in society.

## **Chapter 9**

Captain Wentworth has come to stay at Kellynch for an extended length of time. He makes frequent trips to Upper cross to visit the Musgroves. Charles Hayter, who is a cousin of the Musgroves and a suitor of Henrietta's, is disturbed to come back from his short trip to find Captain Wentworth so much a favourite of his cousin.

The narrator then gives background on the Hayters. Mrs. Hayter and Mrs. Musgrove are sisters, but their marriages have made a material difference in their "degree of consequence." The Hayters have an "inferior, retired and unpolished" way of living, being not as educated as the Musgroves, but there is little discord between the two amiable families. The Musgroves will not oppose a match between Henrietta and Charles Hayter if it makes her happy, but Mary thinks it a very degrading alliance for her sister-in-law. Both Musgrove sisters seem to like Captain Wentworth, however, and the family turns to speculating which sister he will choose. Charles Hayter is quite upset at the change in Henrietta's responses toward his advances.

One morning, Captain Wentworth walks into a room while looking for the Miss Musgroves, and finds himself in a room alone with Anne and the invalid little boy. After a few awkward moments, Charles Hayter joins them, increasing the tension. The younger boy, Walter, comes in the room and starts teasing Anne; she cannot get him to disentangle himself from her. Charles Hayter tells the boy to get off his aunt, but he does not listen. Before she knows what is going on, Captain Wentworth has removed the boy from her shoulders. She is so stunned that she is unable to thank him. Later, she is grateful for his assistance, yet ashamed for being so nervous.

## **Chapter 10**

Anne's observations make her believe that Captain Wentworth is not in love with either of the Musgrove sisters, but is just accepting and enjoying their attentions. Charles Hayter, feeling slighted by Henrietta, ceases to come to Uppercross after a few days. In the morning, the Miss Musgroves stop by the cottage to announce that they are going for a long walk. Though it is clear they do not want Mary to join them, she insists on going along. When the gentlemen arrive, they all decide to go on a walk together and the party consists of the two Miss Musgroves, Captain

Wentworth, Mary, Anne, and Charles Musgrove. Anne's intention is to stay as out of the way as possible and just to enjoy the landscape and the day. Louisa flirts with Captain Wentworth throughout the walk and declares that if she loved a man, nothing should ever separate them.

The party makes their way to Winthrop, the home of the Hayters. Mary wants to turn around immediately, as she does not approve of associating with people of such low connection, but Charles insists on calling on his aunt; he and Henrietta visit the Hayters. While Charles and Henrietta are gone, the rest of the group looks for seats in the woods. Mary is never satisfied because she thinks Louisa must have found a better seat somewhere else. Louisa pulls Captain Wentworth aside and they talk of firmness of character; Louisa has convinced Henrietta to visit Charles, though Henrietta would have turned back from her decided destination. Captain Wentworth compares strength of character to the "happiness" of a hazelnut that has not yet dropped off the tree. The conversation continues and Louisa remarks that Mary sometimes bothers her excessively with her "Elliot pride." Louisa tells Captain Wentworth that Charles wanted to marry Anne before Mary, but that Anne refused him. Captain Wentworth seems very interested in this piece of information. When Henrietta returns to the group, she brings Charles Hayter with her. It is now very clear that Louisa is meant for Captain Wentworth, and Henrietta for Charles.

On the walk back home, they pass Admiral and Mrs. Croft who are out in their carriage for a ride. Guessing that Anne might be tired, Captain Wentworth arranges for the Crofts to give her a ride home; Anne appreciates the kind gesture. The Crofts tell her that they hope Captain Wentworth will settle down with a nice girl soon. Anne notices that the Crofts share the reins and the responsibility of driving; Mrs. Croft steers them around posts and ruts. Anne observes that this is representative of the symbiotic way they run their marriage.

## **Analysis**

While most of Jane Austen's novels end in marriage, few of her works provide examples of couples with long and healthy relationships. Admiral and Mrs. Croft are an exception to this rule. Austen provides them as an example of a perfect marriage. The couple cannot bear to be apart; they are constantly together, even at sea. The drive home illustrates the way their marriage runs. While Admiral Croft drives the carriage most of the time, Mrs. Croft not infrequently grabs the reins to steer them around posts, ruts, and obstacles. Their relationship is symbiotic, each depending on the other for their happiness. Such a vision is extraordinarily progressive for the time. The idea of separate spheres and responsibilities for men and women is destroyed in the Crofts' marriage. Because they do everything together, they take equal joy in going to sea and in fixing a creaky door in their home. Such an equal partnership was a very forward-looking vision for the generally conservative Austenian world.

## **Chapter 11**

Anne plans to leave her sister Mary at Uppercross and go stay with Lady Russell for a while. She reasons this move may put her more in contact with Captain Wentworth, because Lady Russell's

house is decidedly closer to Kellynch. Captain Wentworth returns to visit Uppercross after not being seen for two days. He had gone to visit his friends, Captain and Mrs. Harville, in Lyme. He tells the Musgroves about Lyme, and they are all eager to see it. It is decided that Charles, Mary, Anne, Henrietta, Louisa, and Captain Wentworth will form a party to go visit Lyme. The following day, they arrive at Lyme, a seaside town, and are delighted by it.

Three new characters are introduced. Captain and Mrs. Harville are friends of Wentworth from the Navy who have a house in Lyme, and Captain Benwick is staying with them. The Harvilles are extremely hospitable people with excellent manners. Though they have very small quarters, they have developed great contrivances to make the best use of their space and Anne considers it a very happy home. Captain Benwick was known as "an excellent young man and an officer" but he has fallen into a deep depression since the death of his fiancée, Fanny Harville, Captain Harville's sister. Benwick has turned to poetry as solace for his sadness.

On one of their visits with the Harvilles, it falls to Anne to make conversation with Captain Benwick. Although he is initially shy, Benwick opens up to Anne and begins discussing poetry passionately. Anne recommends that he include more prose in his daily reading. He takes her suggestion warmly, and Anne feels that she has done a good thing by patiently helping a grieving man to open up once more.

## **Chapter 12**

The party all goes out for another walk and is joined by Captain Benwick and the Harvilles. Captain Benwick seeks Anne's company again, and Captain Harville mentions that Anne has done quite a good deed in getting Benwick talking again and bringing him out of his shell. They continue on their walk and come to a set of stairs. Louisa insists on being jumped down them by Captain Wentworth. She gets down safely but enjoys the sensation so much that she desires to do it again. But she jumps a second too soon and lands on the wall, unconscious. Mary and Henrietta become hysterical, but Anne remains calm. She directs Captain Benwick to run for a doctor and Captain Wentworth to carry her to the Inn. The Harvilles insist that Louisa be brought to their home, and there the doctor comes to examine her.

The doctor concludes that she has a severe head injury, but all is not hopeless; she will most likely have a long recovery. The Harvilles offer their home for Louisa for as long as she needs it. They decide that Captain Wentworth The next morning, the party goes for an early morning stroll by the seashore before breakfast. While they are walking up the steps, a gentleman stops to let them pass and cannot help but look at Anne. It is clear that he finds her very attractive. Captain Wentworth notices the man admiring Anne, and turns to admire her himself.

The party goes back to the Inn to have breakfast and they find that the gentleman who admired Anne is also a guest at their hotel. They inquire as to his name and find out he is Mr. Elliot, a gentleman of large fortune. Mary assumes it must be their cousin and father's heir! She wishes that they could have been introduced before Mr. Elliot left, but Anne reminds her that such an

introduction might not be proper; their father has not been on good terms with Mr. Elliot for quite some time. Henrietta, and Mary should travel back to Uppercross to give the news to the Musgroves. Wentworth praises Anne's capability to care for Louisa. But Mary objects and will not hear of leaving her sister-in-law. She decides to stay in Lyme and sends Anne back in the carriage with Captain Wentworth. Mrs. Harville, who has nursing experience, will care for Anne. On the ride home, Captain Wentworth expresses the guilt he feels for Louisa's fall. He asks Anne her opinion regarding the plan for breaking the news to the Musgroves. She feels grateful that he values her opinion. Captain Wentworth tells the Musgroves of Louisa's fall, drops Anne off at home, and returns as soon as possible to Lyme.

## Analysis

Chapter 12 signals a climax in the novel's narrative. *Persuasion* is a linear narrative that is organized chronologically. The original edition of this novel was published in two volumes, the first volume ending at the close of Chapter 12. Louisa's fall is the greatest dramatic occurrence which has happened so far. By inserting the fall here, Austen creates a cliffhanger and encourages her readers to buy the second volume of her novel. In these chapters, the reader is shown the negative effects of what can happen when one is too stubborn. Louisa would not be persuaded to keep from jumping off the wall. Her firmness of mind means serious injury for her and significant guilt for Captain Wentworth. He is encouraged to rethink his initial judgment of the benefit of a "strong character."

## Chapter 13

Louisa's health continues to slowly improve at Lyme, and family friends bring constant updates of her condition to the Musgroves at Uppercross. Anne decides to leave Uppercross to stay with Lady Russell. The Musgroves go to Lyme to visit Louisa and to help Mrs. Harville with her own children while she is caring for their daughter.

Lady Russell comes in her carriage to collect Anne, and conversation between them is initially strained; Anne finds it hard to place importance on any of the normal events that Lady Russell is concerned about. Lady Russell finds Anne much improved in her plumpness and good looks. Anne is pleased by Lady Russell's evaluation. Anne tells Lady Russell about Captain Wentworth's attachment to Louisa Musgrove. Lady Russell and Anne pay a visit to Mrs. Croft at Kellynch, and it pains Anne to see someone else occupying her house, though she likes the Crofts exceedingly. Admiral Croft, sensitive to her feelings, offers Anne the freedom to look about the house as much as she desires. She is grateful, but declines his offer. He mentions some of the small improvements he has happily made around Kellynch: fixing a creaky laundry door and having some of the numerous mirrors removed from Sir Walter's dressing room. He finds two small mirrors quite sufficient for himself.

The Crofts mention Captain Wentworth and how he has complimented Anne. He finds her exertions and aid to the Musgroves very admirable. Anne is flattered by this praise. The Crofts mention that they will be leaving Kellynch to go to the country and then to Bath for a few weeks.

Anne is relieved, but a little disappointed, since this means she has little chance of seeing Captain Wentworth in the coming weeks.

## **Chapter 14**

Charles and Mary finally return from Lyme. They pay a visit to Anne and Lady Russell to report that Louisa is now able to sit up, although her head is still very weak. Mary says she really enjoyed her two-week stay in Lyme; she had gone to church, bathed, dined nightly, and taken numerous books from the library. Her time was not limited by any nursing to Louisa. Anne asks how Captain Benwick is doing, and Charles merely laughs. He thinks Captain Benwick is romantically interested in his sister-in-law. He tells Anne how highly the captain speaks of her. Mary disagrees; she does not think Captain Benwick worthy of, or interested in, her sister. Lady Russell is amused and declares that she must see Captain Benwick for herself before she can form an opinion of him. There is a rumour that Benwick will soon ride over to Kellynch to see Anne, but he does not come, and Lady Russell dismisses him as not worth her interest.

The Musgroves return to Uppercross to care for their own younger children as well as those of the Harvilles. Lady Russell and Anne go to visit them at Uppercross. The narrator describes the strong contrast between the Musgrove house that they now see and the one of a few weeks ago. This household is filled with children, food, light, and activity, whereas only a few weeks ago the home was depressed by the thought of the family's sick daughter. Louisa is now recovering quickly and they expect her to be home soon.

Anne does not look forward to joining her father and sister in Bath; she dislikes the large, disagreeable buildings and the feel of the city. Anne receives a letter from Elizabeth reporting that their cousin, Mr. Elliot, is in Bath. He has come to visit Sir Walter, been forgiven, and is once again accepted into the company of his uncle and cousins. Anne and Lady Russell both desire to see Mr. Elliot. They make the journey to Bath.

## **Analysis**

These chapters reflect on past occurrences describe the characters of Mary, Lady Russell, and the Musgroves. Austen contrasts the traits of various characters in these chapters. In the conversation with the Crofts, the differences between Admiral Croft and Sir Walter Elliot become evident. Admiral Croft thinks it silly to have so many mirrors constantly around him in the dressing room. He is a man of relatively simple tastes, and his comments allow the reader to see the silliness and vanity of Sir Walter. Similarly, Anne contrasts the animated and friendly Musgrove home with its formerly depressed state. Visiting such a bustling place, in which she is so warmly welcomed, heightens the contrast she fears awaits her in the coldness of Bath.

## **Chapter 15**

Now in Bath, Anne finds her father and sister happily situated at a house in Camden Place. Although she is very depressed to be there, she finds the welcome from her family unusually warm. They are excited to show her all the new furniture and rooms of the house, but they have no inclination to listen to Anne's stories. Sir Walter and Elizabeth are quite pleased with the

pleasures and accommodations that Bath affords them, and Anne is saddened that her family should be so degraded and not even feel it.

They tell Anne how happy they are to have renewed their acquaintance with Mr. Elliot. He has often been visiting them at Camden Place. They have forgiven him for the estrangement and for his choice in marrying his first wife, who was rich, but not well-born. Mr. Elliot is now in mourning, his wife having died only six months ago. Anne cannot help but be sceptical as to the reasons for her cousin so suddenly paying respects to his family after so long a separation. She guesses that he might be interested in marrying Elizabeth.

The conversation with Sir Walter and Elizabeth turns to the topic of appearance. Sir Walter announces his belief that Bath is filled with plain-looking women. He inquires after Mary's appearance. Mr. Elliot arrives to visit them and finds Anne very attractive. He recognizes her from their brief meeting in Lyme and is very pleased to find that she is actually his cousin. He sits down with them, seems very interested in Anne, and tries repeatedly to talk to her. Anne thinks that he is polished, well-mannered, and sensible. After an hour, he rises to leave. Anne thinks her first evening in Bath has gone much better than she could have hoped.

## **Chapter 16**

The next morning, Mrs. Clay offers to leave Bath, now that Anne has come, but Sir Walter and Elizabeth will not hear of it. This reignites worries in Anne that her father may become romantically attached to Mrs. Clay. She notices that her sister, Elizabeth, does not worry at all about this possibility. Lady Russell, with all her propriety, is vexed that Mrs. Clay should receive any precedence over Anne at Camden Place.

Lady Russell is quite charmed by Mr. Elliot, and thinks him all that he should be: sensible, moderate, pleasant, and correct in her opinions. She has no suspicions as to his motives for reuniting with his family. Anne recognizes that she may at times disagree with Lady Russell; it is her belief that Mr. Elliot is paying them attention because he means to court Elizabeth. Now, the news comes that Lady Dalrymple and Miss Carteret, estranged cousins of the Elliots, have arrived in Bath. Lady Dalrymple is considered nobility, and Sir Walter is extremely excited about the prospect of renewing his acquaintance with her and moving with the Dalrymples among the very finest social circles in Bath. Anne is disappointed that her father and sister have so little pride as to be in awe of their cousins. Sir Walter writes the Dalrymples a letter of apology for their estrangement and receives a forgiving note in return. Anne is ashamed that her family talks of their high relations to everybody; she sees little of merit in her awkward, unaccomplished, and uninteresting relatives.

Anne talks with Mr. Elliot and finds he agrees with Sir Walter that the acquaintance with Lady Dalrymple should be pursued. Mr. Elliot believes that in a relatively small city like Bath, one's social circle is extremely important. He implies to Anne that he also worries about his uncle's connection to Mrs. Clay. He thinks such a potential attachment dangerous and he hopes to do everything possible to draw Sir Walter's attentions elsewhere.



## Analysis

Here, Austen introduces the issue of place, meaning one's position both geographically and in society. The two are highly connected. Mr. Elliot points out that Sir Walter's family may be relatively insignificant in London due to their 'present, quiet style of living,' but in Bath they are able to move within prominent social circles. Anne takes offense to the idea that one's social worth is dependent on one's location. She has a more nuanced and complex vision of social standing, in which value is placed not only on birth and wealth, but on one's accomplishments, manners, and interests. In Somersetshire, the Elliot family is considered the very best; here in Bath, they could be understood to be socially beneath their cousins, the Dalrymples. Anne has pride, and she is offended at the thought that such unaccomplished and uninteresting people could be ranked above her.

Austen does not believe that the class system should be discarded. Anne is extremely conscious of class, which explains the offense she takes at the prospect of having Mrs. Clay for her step-mother. Anne is unaccustomed to being thought beneath anyone, and in some ways, she has more pride than her father and sister. She cannot bear the thought that such a respected, landed family such as hers must live in rented rooms in a city, while their home is inhabited by others. Anne is further dismayed at the small degree to which her father and sister seem to be upset by this.

## Chapter 17

Anne hears that an old school friend of hers, Miss Hamilton now Mrs. Smith, is in Bath. After school, Mrs. Smith had married a rich man, but he was extravagant. Two years ago, he had died, leaving her a widow and deeply in debt. Soon afterwards, she contracted rheumatic fever and was crippled by her illness. Anne decides that she must go visit her old friend, who is now almost entirely excluded from society.

When she visits Mrs. Smith, she finds that her friend's good spirits and good manners have not left her, though she is now in an awful situation. Mrs. Smith makes a living by selling her needlework to the wealthier women of Bath. They re-establish their friendship and Anne promises to visit often. One night, the Elliots receive an invitation to the Dalrymples' place, and Anne tells her family she must decline it because she has an engagement to visit Mrs. Smith. Sir Walter is horrified that Anne should be visiting such a poor neighbourhood and is appalled that she chooses to associate with someone so much lower in consequence than herself.

The dinner party allows Mr. Elliot and Lady Russell to talk. Mr. Elliot expresses his high regard for Anne's character, and Lady Russell becomes convinced that he means to court Anne and not Elizabeth. This decision pleases Lady Russell immensely, as she would love to see Anne, her favourite, holding her mother's place as Lady Elliot of Kellynch Hall. She thinks Anne is just like her mother in disposition and virtue. Though Anne loves the idea of becoming the future Lady Elliot, she remains suspicious of Mr. Elliot's motives and character. She finds him agreeable, but

neither warm nor open.

## Chapter 18

A letter arrives for Anne from Mary, and Anne is pleased to learn that the Crofts have come to Bath. Mary's letter also brings Anne the news that Louisa Musgrove has become engaged to Captain Benwick. To everyone's surprise, they have fallen in love while Louisa was recovering at the Harvilles' home. Mary says that Benwick is not a good match for Louisa, but Mary considers it much better than marrying among the Hayters. Anne is entirely pleased by this news, both because she thinks it very healthy for Captain Benwick to be attached to a young woman, and because this means that Captain Wentworth is once again free. Although she thinks their temperaments very different (Louisa is high-spirited and joyous; Captain Benwick more pensive and thoughtful), she is happy that they have found love.

With the Crofts in Bath, Anne looks forward to seeing them frequently. One morning, she has the good fortune to meet the Admiral while walking. He seems happy to see her and he relates to her his knowledge of the engagement between Captain Benwick and Louisa. He tells her that he and Mrs. Croft are surprised because they expected Louisa to marry their brother, Captain Frederick Wentworth. He tells her that Frederick does not seem to be upset over the news of the engagement. He suggests that Captain Wentworth come to Bath, as there are many young, available women here for him to court.

## Analysis

Austen's novels are famous for their use of irony. Irony is hiding what is actually the case, not in order to deceive, but to achieve special rhetorical or artistic effects. Austen uses irony to hint at deeper observations of social life and customs. It is ironic that Captain Benwick proposes to Louisa because they are such an unlikely match. Yet their engagement suggests Austen's observation of different kinds of marriages in society. Austen shows that not every couple is like Anne and Captain Wentworth, entirely suited in temperament. Instead, some people marry because they happen to find something close to what they are looking for at a certain point in their life. Both Captain Benwick and Louisa are in somewhat needy and desperate situations. Benwick is recovering from the death of his fiancée, and Louisa is recovering from her fall.

Although Austen finds their match amusing, she does not condemn a match made under such conditions. Rather, her irony serves to highlight her scepticism of true love. The kind of connection which Anne and Wentworth have is rare indeed, and the practical side of this novel emphasizes the good fortune of finding someone from a corresponding social class who will make you tolerably happy. Love is not merely a matter of shared passion, but of shared learning.

Mrs. Smith's sad situation once again highlights the danger women must face in a society where they have increased social mobility. Mrs. Smith has fallen drastically in her rank and consequence since her marriage and the subsequent death of her husband. Her situation illustrates the potential cruelty of such a strongly class-based society. Not only is Mrs. Smith poor and crippled, she is relatively friendless. Few will visit her in her meagre lodgings. Anne's visit is a testament to her

own personal character, independence of mind, and willingness to look past social rank.

## **Chapter 19**

Captain Wentworth arrives in Bath and Anne sees him the very next day when she is out walking. She is with Elizabeth, Mrs. Clay, and Mr. Elliot in town when it starts to rain. Mr. Elliot asks Lady Dalrymple if she will escort the ladies' home in her carriage. Lady Dalrymple agrees but since she only has room for two of them, Anne decides to walk home with Mr. Elliot. They meet Captain Wentworth while in a store waiting for Lady Dalrymple's carriage.

Captain Wentworth is shocked to see her. He speaks to Anne and they talk of the Musgroves. Elizabeth would not acknowledge Captain Wentworth, as she thought him beneath her; this pains Anne. Elizabeth and Mrs. Clay leave to enter the carriage. On finding that there is no room for Anne, Captain Wentworth offers her his services and his umbrella. But Mr. Elliot at that moment returns to take Anne by the arm and whisk her out of the store. The people who accompany Captain Wentworth guess that there is something between Mr. Elliot and Anne. The next morning, Anne is walking with Lady Russell when they see Captain Wentworth on the opposite side of the street. Though she knows that Lady Russell must see him, she makes no comment. Anne grows tired of the private parties she must always attend with her family's friends, but she looks forward to an upcoming concert for the benefit of one of Lady Dalrymple's friends. Captain Wentworth is sure to be at this concert. She tells Mrs. Smith about the upcoming concert and Mrs. Smith makes a cryptic remark that she thinks she may not have many more visits from Anne.

## **Chapter 20**

The Elliot family goes to the concert, which all the important people in Bath will attend. Captain Wentworth enters, and Anne is pleased that her father and Elizabeth choose to acknowledge him. Wentworth stops to talk with Anne, compliments her on her level-headedness in Lyme, and expresses his good wishes for Louisa and Captain Benwick. He also tells Anne that he has some doubts about their marriage, Louisa being not nearly intellectual enough for Benwick. He is surprised that Benwick has been able to get over the death of his first love, Fanny Harville, so quickly.

Anne is very happy after her conversation with Captain Wentworth, but she is unable to sit near him during the concert. Instead, she sits next to Mr. Elliot and is asked by him to translate the Italian in their program. He compliments her excessively, hints that he was told of her fine character before he met her, and expresses his hope that her name may never change. He implies a marriage between himself and Anne. Although she is surprised, Anne is thinking instead of Captain Wentworth and how to get near enough to talk to him again. He is distant and will not come over to talk with her.

During the intermission, Anne changes seats, moving herself away from Mr. Elliot and closer to Captain Wentworth. She finally gets close enough to speak to him when Mr. Elliot once again interrupts and asks her to help him with a translation of Italian. Politeness forces her to go with

him. After she is done, Captain Wentworth rushes up to Anne to bid her goodnight and let her know that he is leaving the concert. She implores him to stay, but he refuses. Anne recognizes that Captain Wentworth must be jealous of Mr. Elliot.

## **Analysis**

In these chapters, misunderstanding and bad timing thwart the relationship between Anne and Captain Wentworth. Although both seek to ascertain the feelings and affections of the other, they are confused by the appearance of a third party, Mr. Elliot, who has his own personal motives. This part of the novel leads toward climax. Captain Wentworth is now free of all attachments, and both he and Anne are at the same place at the same time. Though they seek the same goal, they are uncertain whether obstacles such as Anne's family or Mr. Elliot will keep them from reaching happiness. The confusion and awkwardness that fill these chapters serve a larger narrative purpose; they heighten the tension leading up to the climax of the novel.

The description of the relationship By keeping the feelings between The knowledge that Captain Wentworth and Anne are in love with each other must be released slowly. Though the reader knows what both characters are feeling, it is a testament to Austen's high value on civility that she does not make her characters passionately express their feelings. The tension is deep, but the characters' restraint of emotion is an admirable, if frustrating quality. Austen does not trust unbridled passion; she sees something improper and self-absorbed in public declarations of love. Captain Wentworth's passion must unfold gradually and with prudence, in a manner in accordance with social custom, if it is to be trusted and respected.

## **Chapter 21**

The next morning, Anne goes to visit Mrs. Smith and tell her all about the concert. Mrs. Smith, having already heard a version of last night's events from one of the maids, is anxious to hear Anne's description as well. Mrs. Smith believes Anne to be in love with Mr. Elliot and she asks Anne if he has ever mentioned her in conversation. Anne tries to set Mrs. Smith straight; she reassures her that she has no interest at all in marrying her cousin. Mrs. Smith thinks that because their marriage would be so appropriate, everyone must be persuading Anne towards that end.

Mrs. Smith tells Anne the story of her acquaintance with Mr. Elliot. She considers him to be a man "without a heart or a conscience...a cold-blooded being." In the past, he had been the good friend of her late husband, and Mrs. Smith had accepted him as a friend of her own. They had often assisted him when he was having financial trouble. Mr. Elliot married entirely for money, dismissing the honor of marriage to Elizabeth in favor of wealth and independence. Mrs. Smith often heard him say that if he could sell his baronetcy, anyone could have it for fifty pounds. She shows Anne a letter written by Mr. Elliot in which he promises to destroy Kellynch or sell it for as much money as he can get. After his marriage to a wealthy, but untitled woman, he encouraged Mr. Smith to live extravagantly and go into great debt. He brought the Smiths to financial ruin and refused to help them. Upon Mr. Smith's death, Mr. Elliot, the executor of his will, refused to act, thereby leaving all the debts and difficulties onto his grieving widow.

Mrs. Smith continues to tell Anne of Mr. Elliot's current plans, which she hears through the servants' gossip. Mr. Elliot, having long had all the money he could want, now desires beyond all else, to become baronet. When he heard that it was a distinct possibility that Sir Walter might remarry, he was outraged. If Sir Walter was to have a son with Mrs. Clay, that child and not Mr. Elliot, would be the rightful heir to Kellynch. Mr. Elliot traveled to Bath and rejoined the family in an effort to keep Mrs. Clay away from Sir Walter, and to protect his future baronetcy. When he met Anne, his motives doubled; he desires that it be written into their marriage contract that Sir Walter never re-marries. Anne is saddened and upset by all this news about her cousin. She realizes what a cunning and manipulative man he actually is, but she is glad to have this information so that she can warn and protect her family. She decides to tell everything to Lady Russell as soon as possible.

## **Chapter 22**

That evening Mr. Elliot tries to flatter and entertain Anne, but to no avail. He finds she is not at all interested in him tonight. He announces that he is leaving Bath for a few days and will return on Saturday. The next morning, Anne intends to go visit Lady Russell, but she is met by Charles and Mary Musgrove, surprise visitors. They are warmly welcomed. Mary brings the news that some of the Musgrove family has come to Bath: Mrs. Musgrove, Henrietta, Mary, Charles, and Captain Harville. Henrietta has come to shop for wedding clothes. It is settled that she will soon marry Charles Hayter. Anne remarks that it is wonderful to have such nice parents who care more about their child's happiness than propriety.

Anne goes to visit the Musgroves where they are staying, and she once again relishes the happiness of their bustling company. While they are there, Mary looks out the window and notices Mr. Elliot talking to Mrs. Clay on the street outside. Anne looks and confirms that it is them.

Mary and Charles get into an argument about the plans for that night. Charles has got a box for them all to see a play, but Mary thinks they must go to her father's evening party; she feels it is vital that they be introduced to the Dalrymples. She is also very curious to meet Mr. Elliot, her father's heir. Anne takes this opportunity to express that she would much rather see a play than spend time with Mr. Elliot. Captain Wentworth takes note of this. After a good deal of arguing, Charles and Mary finally decide to attend the evening party. Sir Walter and Elizabeth enter the room briefly to extend the invitation to their party to all the Musgroves. They invite Captain Wentworth as well. The Elliots return to their home to prepare for tomorrow's party.

## **Analysis**

In these chapters, deception is discovered as Anne finds out Mr. Elliot's true motivations behind all his attentions to her family. In a twist of dramatic irony, Mrs. Smith is the one to inform Anne of her cousin's cold-heartedness and social ambition. Anne acknowledges that she would never have this important information were it not for her own feelings that friendship must trump the value of social appearances; if Anne had not chosen to visit Mrs. Smith, she would not have known about Mr. Elliot's bad character. Austen employs dramatic irony to express a certain social

justice; the crippled and impoverished Mrs. Smith is capable of ruining the plans of the wealthy Mr. Elliot.

These passages allow Austen to iron out, for her reader, the rules and limitations of social ambition in the world of *Persuasion*. The novel *critiques* aristocratic claims to distinction by painting a ridiculous caricature of Sir Walter and Elizabeth, but it *condemns* Mr. Elliot's more determined plan to rise in social consequence. In this world, there are rules to social mobility. It is acceptable that one should consider birth and fortune when choosing a marriage partner; Austen concedes that it is only prudent to do so. It is also acceptable, if humiliating, to seek company with one's social superiors. But it is entirely unacceptable to lie, manipulate, and feign emotion in order to gain a title. Mr. Elliot went wrong in failing to behave like a gentleman. He was callous and cold to Mrs. Smith, actions that Anne cannot forgive. Furthermore, Mr. Elliot openly rejected the rules and values of his class and station; by writing all those years ago that he cared neither for his family nor his title. The aristocracy is based upon the core beliefs of family and tradition; by rejecting these, Mr. Elliot proves himself unworthy to hold the title of baronet.

## Chapter 23

The next morning, Anne leaves to join the Musgroves, Captain Harville, Captain Wentworth, and Mrs. Croft for the day. They are in a parlour room, and Anne talks to Captain Harville by the window. Captain Wentworth is not far off, and is writing a letter. Anne and Captain Harville discuss the constancy of love. Anne argues that women are the more constant and faithful gender; she says that women love longest, even "when existence or when hope is gone." Captain Harville disagrees; he asserts that men remember their women long after the women have moved on. They agree to disagree. Captain Wentworth overhears the entire conversation. Having finished his letter, Captain Wentworth slips a note to Anne, and then he and Captain Harville leave to mail the letter. Anne reads Wentworth's note. In it, he declares his constancy and his undying love for her. Anne is overcome with emotion. She exclaims that she is not feeling well and must go home at once. Though she hopes to walk alone, Charles insists on walking with her. In the street, they see Captain Wentworth, and Charles suggests that he accompany Anne the rest of the way home. Finally, alone, Anne tells Captain Wentworth how much she has loved him for this long time. Though people walk the streets around them, they are only conscious of each other. They are 'exquisitely happy' and relieved. Captain Wentworth asserts that he has never loved anyone but Anne. Although he flirted with Louisa, he never meant to be engaged to her. When he found out that others thought him promised to her, he was distraught. He could not have been more pleased when, upon getting better, she chose to marry Captain Benwick.

Captain Wentworth tells Anne how horrible it was to be at the concert, knowing that everyone who had influence over her must persuade her to marry Mr. Elliot. Anne explains that eight years ago, she yielded to duty, but that in "marrying a man indifferent to [her]...all duty would be violated." They part for the afternoon, each overwhelmingly happy. That night, at the Elliots' card party, Anne talks to Captain Wentworth again. She says that eight years ago, Lady Russell poorly

advised her to reject him, but she believes she was right to follow that advice. She reasons that "a strong sense of duty is no bad part of a woman's portion." Captain Wentworth blames himself for the long years of separation. Learning that she would have said yes, he wishes that he had asked her to marry him again six years ago. He concludes that he was too proud, and in finally marrying her will be happier than he deserves.

## **Chapter 24**

This chapter is a complete summary by the narrator. Anne and Captain Wentworth announce their engagement. Neither Elizabeth nor Sir Walter openly object. With a very large fortune, Captain Wentworth is now worthy to propose to the daughter of an indebted baronet. Lady Russell is initially upset, but her first desire is to see Anne happy, so she eventually gets over her hurt feelings. She and Captain Wentworth grow fond of each other.

Mr. Elliot is shocked and withdraws from Bath. There seems to be no man of any consequence who is a prospective husband for Elizabeth. Mrs. Clay leaves Bath and it is rumored that she is under the protection of Mr. Elliot. He had been making advances to her all along, so that she would not marry Sir Walter. She gives up all hopes of marrying Sir Walter, but the narrator suggests that she may someday be made the wife of Sir William Elliot.

Captain Wentworth helps Mrs. Smith to get some of her husband's money back and she stays a close friend of Anne's. Anne and Captain Wentworth are utterly happy. The narrator ends with a few sentences on the Navy, a profession "which is, if possible, more distinguished in its domestic virtues than in its national importance."

## **Analysis**

Like many of Jane Austen's novels, *Persuasion* ends with a happy marriage. Anne and Captain Wentworth renew their love for each other and announce their engagement. Wentworth, who is now significantly richer than Sir Walter, is considered worthy enough to marry Anne. The Navy has given him the freedom of making a large fortune and of moving up substantially in society. This possibility for social mobility is what the narrator refers to in the closing line of the novel as the Navy's "domestic virtue." His position in the Navy allows Captain Wentworth to be considered deserving of Anne Elliot.

However, Captain Wentworth is not the only character whose social standing has changed. The Elliot family has been humbled by Sir Walter's significant debt. Although they were once an extremely wealthy family with a country estate, the Elliots are forced to rent their house and live more modestly. Although they retain their titles and high birth, wealth is an important factor in gauging social consequence. This fact is not lost on Sir Walter.

Anne concludes that she was right to be persuaded eight years ago. This conclusion implies that she accepts a traditional interpretation of duty; she has an obligation to follow the advice of her family and form an appropriate match. For Anne, marriage is a subordination of the self to the

social order. What allows Anne to marry Captain Wentworth eight years later is not that her ideas of duty have changed; it is the social order itself that is altered. The accepted social mobility of Naval officers is what allows Anne and Captain Wentworth to finally find happiness.

### Check Your Progress

1. Discuss the opening and closing scene of the novel.

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## 7.9 Other Books related to Persuasion

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Between the late 18th and early 19th centuries, English literature underwent a dramatic transition. The 18th century had seen the rise of the novel in the works of writers like Daniel Defoe (*Moll Flanders*) and Samuel Richardson (*Pamela*). These novels focused on broad social issues of morality and domestic manners. With the turn of the century and the rise of Romanticism, however, the novel began to explore human relationships with a greater degree of emotional complexity. Neither a Classicist nor a Romantic, Jane Austen is perhaps best thought of as a pioneering figure in the development of the novel, providing the bridge from the often-didactic novels of an earlier era to the great works of psychological realism of the Victorian period by writer such as George Eliot and Thomas Hardy.

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## 7.10 Summary

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Though her parents were members of the English gentry, they remained relatively poor. Modest to a fault about the value of her work, Jane Austen nevertheless produced some of the enduring masterpieces of English literature, including the novels *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*, and *Persuasion*. Her novels were published anonymously until after her death, when her authorship became known. While it was not unheard of for women to publish under their own names in Austen's lifetime, it was still a rarity. Despite the fact that her books focus on the intricate rituals of courtship and marriage among the British middle class, Austen herself remained single throughout her life, preferring the life of a writer over that of a wife and hostess.

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## 7.11ey Terms

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- **Class Rigidity and Social Mobility:** The issues of class rigidity and social mobility are the most important themes in *Persuasion*. Marriage and the naval profession are two means by which individuals may improve their social class. Austen is not a revolutionary; she defends the values and traditions of respect for the social structure.



- **Separate Spheres:** The idea of separate spheres was a nineteenth-century doctrine that there are two domains of life: the public and the domestic. Traditionally, the male would be in charge of the public domain (finances, legal matters, etc.) while the female would be in charge of the private domain (running the house, ordering the servants, etc.).
- **Silly Parents:** Silly parents play an important role in *Persuasion* and are a recurring theme in many of Jane Austen's novels. Here, Sir Walter's imprudence and insensible extravagance cause the initial conflict that force the Elliots to leave their homes and "retrench" in Bath.

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## 7.12 Review Questions

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1. Justify the title of the story.
2. Discuss the historical context of the novel *Persuasion*.
3. Elucidate the art of characterization of Austen in the Novel.
4. Discuss the literary works of Jane Austen.
5. Elaborate the plot of the text *Pride and Prejudice*.

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## UNIT 8: PERSUASION – NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES AND THEMES

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### STRUCTURE

- 8.1 Objectives
- 8.2 Introduction
- 8.3 Social Satire
- 8.4 Persuasion as a social satire
- 8.5 Major Themes
- 8.6 Stylistic Devices
- 8.7 Summary
- 8.8 Key Terms
- 8.9 Review Questions
- 8.10 References

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### 8.1 Objectives

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The learners shall the following:

- About the novel's perspectives.
- Jane Austen's style of writing
- Social Satire- as a new term
- The origin of satire and use of other literary devices

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### 8.2 Introduction

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In Persuasion, Jane Austen offers a penetrating critique of the standards of the British class system. She criticizes a system based on social distinctions and definitions like “Superior” and “Inferior.” Through irony and satire, she vividly shows Victorian class rigidity and its traditional values. This paper aims at showing that through her realistic portrayal of families and characters; Austen manages to capture the major defects of her social circle and sets to expose them one by one.

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### 8.3 Social Satire

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Social satire is a genre of film that relies on irony, exaggeration, ridicule, or humor to critique an unfavorable aspect of society and/or human nature. The best social satires are entertaining at the surface level – often featuring elements of fantasy or absurdism – and also pack a critical punch. Satire is so prevalent in pop culture that most of us are already very familiar with it, even if we don't always realize it. Satire can be part of any work of culture, art or entertainment. It is an often-humorous way of poking fun at the powers that be. Sometimes, it is created with the goal to drive social change. Satire has a long history and it is as relevant today as it was in ancient Rome.

The word satire traces back to the Latin word “satur,” meaning “well-fed,” and was used in the phrase “lanx satura,” meaning “a dish full of many kinds of fruit.” Though these words seem far removed from the definition of satire, they were used by ancient Roman critics and writers to refer to what we know as satire today, including what is commonly considered the literary origin of satire: Aristophanes’s *Old Comedy*. The word “satire” made its way into the English language in the sixteenth century.

In 411 BC, the ancient Greek poet Aristophanes wrote *Lysistrata*. In this satirical comedy, the protagonist Lysistrata convinces women to withhold sex from men in an effort to convince them to end the Peloponnesian War. In writing this wildly popular comedy, which is still read and studied in schools, Aristophanes was satirizing the Peloponnesian War and also poking fun at the differences between men and women. The story of Lysistrata has been retold and reinterpreted countless times over the years, recently in the 2015 Spike Lee movie *Chi-Raq*, set in contemporary Chicago.

Satire in literature is a type of social commentary. Writers use exaggeration, irony, and other devices to poke fun of a particular leader, a social custom or tradition, or any other prevalent social figure or practice that they want to comment on and call into question.

Contemporary writers have used satire to comment on everything from capitalism (like Brett Easton Ellis’s *American Psycho*, which uses extreme exaggerations of consumption, concern with social status, and masculine anger and violence to skewer American capitalism) to race (Paul Beatty’s *The Sellout*, for example, features a young black male protagonist in Southern California who ends up before the Supreme Court for trying to reinstate slavery).

### ➤ 3 Different Types of Satire

Satire remains a powerful tool in contemporary culture. Film and television, in particular, have been important vehicles for satire over the past several decades. There are three main types of satire, each serving a different role.

- **Horatian.** Horatian satire is comic and offers light social commentary. It is meant to poke fun at a person or situation in an entertaining way.
  - *Gulliver’s Travels*, written in the eighteenth century by Jonathan Swift, is an example of Horatian satire in literature. The work is a spoof of the kind of travelogues that were common at that time. Through his invented narrator, Gulliver, Swift takes aim at travel writers, the English government, and human nature itself.
  - Late-night television show *The Colbert Report*, in which Stephen Colbert inhabited the character of a conservative pundit for many years, offers a funny but deep satire of American politics.
  - *The Onion* is a popular satirical online news site that embodies Horatian satire.

- **Juvenalian.** Juvenalian satire is dark, rather than comedic. It is meant to speak truth to power.
  - George Orwell's famous 1945 novel *Animal Farm* is a good example of Juvenalian satire. The novel's intended target is communism and Stalin-era Soviet Union. *Animal Farm* is also an allegorical satire: it can be read as a simple tale of farm animals, but it has a deeper political meaning.
  - A modern-day example is the television show *South Park*, which juxtaposes biting satire with juvenile humor. The show has tackled all sorts of hot-button targets, including abortion, the Pope, Hollywood, and criminal justice.
- **Menippean.** Menippean satire casts moral judgment on a particular belief, such as homophobia or racism. It can be comic and light, much like Horatian satire—although it can also be as stinging as Juvenalian satire.
  - Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is one of the best examples of Menippean satire in literature is. The novel pokes fun at upper-class intellectualism but does it with a distinct sense of humor. The ridicule is there, but it is good-natured in spirit.
  - A modern-day example is *Saturday Night Live*, which has carried a long tradition of poking fun at elected officials ever since Chevy Chase's 1975 impersonation of Gerald Ford.

## 8.4 Persuasion as a social satire

Jane Austen is a master in comedy and satire as well as irony. Her favourite targets are fools, snobs, hypocrites, and ill-mannered people whom in general are given plenty of scope in *Persuasion*. Austen's irony, however, "allows her to poke fun at people and ideas through overstatement and understatement"

There is irony in many episodes in which the character, through his or her own thoughts, has told the reader more than the other characters know. There is also irony in character situation, as when Anne tells her father and sister that she has seen Mr. Elliot at Lyme "Anne mentioned the glimpses she had had of him at Lyme, but without being much attended to ... they could not listen to her description of him. They were describing him themselves; Sir Walter especially". Jane Austen shows us how Sir Walter judged people "He did justice to his very gentlemanlike appearance, his air of elegance and fashion, his good-shaped face, his sensible eyes ...." We also see how Sir Walter was thrilled when "Mr. Elliot appeared to think that he (Sir Walter) was looking exactly as he had done when they last parted" ten years ago.

Other qualities of Sir Walter such as snobbery and selfishness are shown in (ch.17), we see him horrified by the discovery of Anne's visits to Mrs. Smith. "'A Mrs. Smith' a mere Mrs. Smith, an everyday Mrs. Smith, of all people and names in the world". Sir Walter, who is shown to have all the appurtenances of refinement, is actually vulgar in his obsession with his own appearance and importance. Through Sir Walter, Austen expresses her disgust at self-importance. He shows

no awareness that his comfortable way of life has recently been menaced by the Napoleonic wars; Admiral Croft fought at Trafalgar but that does not improve Sir Walter's opinion of him or naval men in general because the navy "raises men to honours which their fathers and grand fathers never dreamt of" (ch.3). Sir Walter's way of life is exposed in the novel as being singularly self-centered and purposeless. He is shown as a person who lives for pleasure and the gratification of his vanity. This is shown through a comparison with Admiral Croft, a man who has earned his social position by his bravery. In ch.13 Admiral Craft and Sir Walter's tenant, tells Anne that he has moved all the large mirrors out of his dressing room and says of her father, "I should think he must be rather a dressy man for his time of life." The Admiral's dignity provides an implicit comment on Sir Walter throughout the novel.

Sir Walter hesitates to introduce the Admiral to his aristocratic relation Lady Dalrymple but does "think and talk a great deal more about the Admiral, than the Admiral ever thought or talked about him" (ch.18). Through Sir Walter, Jane Austen shows us the fact that vain men are responsive to flattery. Mr. Shepherd and Mrs. Clay have few problems with him. Mrs. Clay's use of flattery in (ch.3) shows how she manages to convince Sir Walter, whose rejection of the idea of renting his house to a navy officer is based on looks and social rank. Mrs. Clay's flattery nourishes Sir Walter's vanity saying

*I have long been convinced , though every profession is necessary and honorable in its turns , it is only the lot of those who are not obliged to follow any , who can live in a regular way in the country ... It is only their lot I say , to hold the blessings of health and a good appearance to the utmost...*

As for Mr. Shepherd, he convinced Sir Walter though making it appear that the Admiral and his life "ranked nothing beyond the happiness of being the tenants of Sir Walter Elliot." Though vain and snobbish on the one hand, he is shown to be willing to be obsequious to those of higher rank, to whom he can attach himself. When lady Dalrymple and her daughter come to Bath, Anne has no doubt that her father is demeaning himself. However, his only thought is that through his actions he can increase his social standing in the community. And so Sir Walter forces his distant cousin lady Datrymple to acknowledge their relationship, together with her daughter, Miss Carteret, who is "so plain and awkward, that she would never have been tolerated in Camden-place but for her birth" (ch.16).

Much of the humour in Persuasion is in the character rather than in situation. Characters react to one another and their resulting comments make the reader realize that there is much for laughter in what they are doing. The mockery of false taste is more subtly conceived and finds its expression in a more intricate pattern of self-deception. The key to this mockery is hidden in the episode on the Cobb, which, to the casual eye, looks so disconcertingly like a perfunctory bringing about of the conventional catastrophe-a clumsy contrivance to increase the tension to breaking-point. The young Musgroves, with Anne Elliot and their friends at Lyme walk out along the Cobb, and Louisa exhilarated by the attention of Captain Wentworth , begins to play childish pranks and insists that he shall "sump her from one ledge to the other; " ... She was too precipitate by half a second ,she fell on the pavement of the lower Cobb ,and was taken up lifeless" (ch.12)

. This irony is no mere symptom; it is the very tongue in which *Persuasion* is written. Before the episode, in the course of Anne's stay at Uppercross cottage, a slender thread of ironical suggestions has begun to weave itself into the pattern of the novel: The Musgroves of the 'Great House' are to visit the Musgroves of the 'cottage' and Louisa with laborious youthful tact, explains that by bringing their harp, she and Henrietta hope to lighten the visit, and raise their mother's spirit: "... She is thinking so much of poor Richard! And we agreed it would be best to have the harp, for it seems to amuse her more than the piano-forte" (ch.6).

Characters are presented as part of their group and through conversation, the thoughts and attitudes of life are revealed: Mary thinks that Charles Hayter should not aspire to marry a Musgrove because he comes from a poor family and the Musgroves now have a 'baronet's daughter' among them; her "And, pray, who is Charles Hayter?" anticipates Sir Walter's stricture on Mrs. Smith because he and Elizabeth wish to be part of the aristocracy and they will not risk introducing whom they consider a lower rank to lady Dalrymple.

Miss Austen's sharpness also shown through minor characters as we see in a conversation in (ch.8) with Mrs Musgrove. Mrs Croft assures Mrs Musgrove that Bermuda and the Bahamas are not called the West Indies. Mrs. Musgrove had not a word to say in dissent; she could not accuse herself of having ever called them anything in the whole course of her life. As in her previous novels, Austen's *Persuasion* explores the relationship between social illness and independence. However, in this novel, she makes it clear that a strong character is not enough to keep a woman free from social defects. What will assure her well-being, however, is the combination of an independent spirit and an independent income. Austen sees "wealth as liberating women, bringing them privilege that men...had always enjoyed." Austen in this work portrays society where, despite conservative resistance, change is underway. She criticizes the system of entail and inheritance. Austen seems to have been disheartened by the decay of England's aristocracy. The exploration of the innocent protagonist of each novel further widens her core ethics, and the relation of the imposing culture of her immediate family and surrounding social class gives a clear image of the prominence of class distinction and the apparent emptiness of the aristocratic society that in reality existed in Austen's own life.

Austen's last heroine, Anne Elliott, portrays the evolution Austen underwent to achieve the conclusive statement of social justice, and individual acceptance of others in a diverse class of people. Anne's initial "persuasion" to at least partially submit to the influence of the aristocratic society lessens, as she begins to fully comprehend the value of the emotional wealth of true friends, and true love. She found a superior humanity that did not exist in her own world. One can see the change of attitude towards Anne's marriage with Captain Wentworth. Lady Russell acknowledges that she has been mistaken about the character of Captain Wentworth. Elizabeth changes her attitude in ch.22 and smiles to Captain Wentworth and invites him to the party.

### **Check Your Progress**

#### **1. What elements of social satires have been used in the novels? Describe.**

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## 8.5 Major Themes

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### ➤ Status and Social Class

*Persuasion*, like many of Austen's novels, is a study in 18th century English society, and its nuances of class rigidity and social mobility. Status and independence are composed of a combination of wealth, ancestry, and occupation: certain characters achieve independence through marrying into wealth, as is the case with **Mr. William Elliot**'s first marriage, while others such as Captain Frederick Wentworth achieve status and wealth through climbing the Naval ranks. Sir Walter Elliot prides himself on his "ancient and respectable" lineage, baronetcy, and wealthy estate; he is greatly preoccupied that his manner of living and ensuring that the people with whom his family associates will befit his high status, although these concerns lead him into excessive debt and undiscerning connections.

Considerations of class also affect characters of less vanity and more prudence, such as **Lady Russell** and the protagonist Anne Elliot. Lady Russell judiciously advises Anne about the importance of marrying a man who matches her station and can adequately provide for her, and, based on this counsel, Anne conscientiously refrains from marrying the man she loves. Austen's novel—for all of its romantic wisdom about matching temperaments and love in marriage—also highlights and supports the importance of "marrying well" as a concern that none of the characters can escape, and one that inevitably takes into considerations of class and wealth.

Status and social class both motivate and restrict the actions that characters are able to take in fulfilling their desires. From the start of the novel, Sir Walter Elliot's vanity and luxurious spending in order to live according to his status leads him into financial debt and require him to rent his estate. Mr. William Elliot is motivated to marry Anne out of a lately developed appreciation for his inheritance and baronetcy. Captain Wentworth strikes out to sea in order to make his fortunes through the Navy.

One of the most striking examples of how status and class influence agency is in the tragedy of **Mrs. Smith**, Anne's girlhood friend who is crippled by debt, widowhood, and illness. In the eyes of society, she has essentially nothing and relies on the more privileged Anne's kindness, friendship, and charity.

### ➤ Marriage

Written in the last years of Austen's life, *Persuasion* is arguably the author's most mature and sober marriage plot. The novel critiques the heady impulses of youth displayed by Louisa Musgrove in favor of the more quiet and prudent considerations of Anne Elliot in matters of marriage and romance. For women, who were often barred from owning property and faced significant limitations in employment, marriage was particularly critical as both the expected social norm and the often necessary means of attaining financial security and social status. Even

the arrogant and beautiful Elizabeth Elliot, who is secure in her fortune and her father's love, finds herself unsettled and anxious over becoming a spinster at the age of twenty-nine; nonetheless, her pride rules out all potential suitors and she remains the only single Elliot daughter at the novel's conclusion.

Unlike many of Austen's other novels of youthful first romance, the focal drama of the narrative revolves around Anne Elliot and **Captain Wentworth**, whose early romance was ended under the persuasion of prudence, yet which rekindles seven years later after deeper consideration and appreciation of their suitability for each other. The passing of these seven years also changes the reality of Anne's marital prospects (she's no longer young) and perspective, even as it renders this novel one of Austen's more mature narratives. At the same time, Anne's prudent concerns about social class and wealth in marriage by no means disappear during these years, yet the passage of time allows Wentworth to rise to Anne's fortune and status. Nonetheless, those concerns are put into perspective, as Anne and Wentworth's match is ultimately one of developed love *and* recognition of each other's merits—Captain Wentworth, in particular, learns to prize the very prudence and humility that he once resented in Anne.

Austen's view of marriage is both romantic and realistic, prudent and nuanced, rather like her character **Anne**. Austen in the novel illustrates how marriage is an agent of social change for both men and women. Options are influenced *by* the characters' status and class (as when characters reject or pursue matches to consolidate their social standing), even as marriage also *influences* status and class. Sir Walter Elliot approves of his daughter Mary Elliot's marriage to **Charles Musgrove**, because he regards the latter as from the best family in the county second only to his own. Yet although Sir Walter Elliot believes Mary's lineage places the advantage of the match to be on Charles's side, we see that Charles's superior good nature and patience with his wife's pettiness render the real advantage to her: Austen affirms the greater importance of character qualities over status in marital happiness.

### ➤ Gender Inequality

*Persuasion* reveals the limited sphere of choice available to women in Austen's era. In the case of the female characters, marriage represents the most viable option for a woman to live a good life. Women's influence, in this sense, lies largely in their relation to men—to attract, reject, and accept their proposals of marriage. The comparatively sober tone of the novel results in part from the protagonist's reality that she is past her prime; even **Lady Russell**, who once advised her to refrain from marrying below her station, grows concerned for Anne Elliot as she remains single years later. There is an undeniable double standard around gender in the novel. Sir Walter Elliot and **Lady Russell** are both widowed, yet the narrator tells us that society would regard it as normal for Sir Walter to remarry, even as it discourages second marriages for women. Were it not for Lady Russell's great wealth and position, she would herself be socially vulnerable as a widow. The impoverished widow **Mrs. Smith** reveals the plight of women who are unsupported by men or fortune.

The divergent paths of **Captain Wentworth** and Anne Elliot after the dissolution of their early romance also illustrate gender limitations: Captain Wentworth is able to leave the country, make his fortune, and return with even more viable marriage prospects. Indeed, when he returns to England he becomes the object of admiration of not one but three women: Louisa



Musgrove, Henrietta Musgrove, and Anne Elliot. Anne, in contrast, “loses her bloom” and has no resources of mobility or occupation to heal and grow but the slow passing of time—which also reduces her marital prospects.

### ➤ Persuasion

The novel begins and returns repeatedly to the question of whether it is wise to be influenced by the concerns and counsel of others, or to remain fixed in one’s convictions and impulses. Anne Elliot reveals her disposition for the former when she dissolves her relationship with **Captain Wentworth** on the advice of her good friend and mentor **Lady Russell**. Seven years later, Anne experiences unrelenting regret over her decision and becomes convinced that she would have been happier marrying Captain Wentworth as his predictions for his fortunes come true—suggesting that she has learned to favor romance over her initial prudence at her friend’s persuasion.

However, the narrative ultimately complicates the virtues of a headstrong conviction in favor of the value of persuasion. When Captain Wentworth returns, he extols the virtue of a woman who will not listen to others but forges her own way—alluding with some bitterness to his experience with Anne’s willingness to be persuaded from marrying him by Lady Russell. After observing Louisa Musgrove’s disregard for the advice of others lead to great distress, though, he revises his opinion: such heedlessness reflects not only a foolish and arrogant inattention to the wisdom of others, but also fails to prove any true steadfastness in love. Ultimately, Anne’s receptivity to others comes to seem as a complement to her persevering love for Captain Wentworth, who in turn becomes persuaded of Anne’s merit.

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## 8.6 Stylistic Devices

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### ➤ Domestic Comedy

Austen helped create the domestic comedy of middle-class manners, a genre that is concerned with family situations and problems. This type of novel focuses on the manners and conventions of the British middle class—in Austen’s work, specifically the landed gentry. The plot is structured around problems that arise within the family concerning the particular fashions and outlook of this structured social group. The point of view is often satirical, as it illuminates and critiques the idiosyncrasies of its members. Although the plot can offer clever solutions to the family’s conflicts, it is less important than the characterizations and the dialogue. In *Persuasion*, Austen’s plot revolves around the conflicts within her family and their desire to keep those they deem undesirable out. Though some characters, such as Lady Russell and Mrs. Clay, are decidedly flat, most of the Elliot family is carefully drawn to reflect the realities of upper-middle-class life.

### ➤ Remembrance

Remembrance of past lovers is regarded as an important virtue in *Persuasion*. When Captain Benwick mourns the loss of Fanny Harville, it is regarded as highly unfortunate but at the same

time honorable and respectful. Captain Harville expects Captain Benwick to remember his sister for a long time — certainly longer than he actually does. Although Captain Harville does not go too far in his criticism of Captain Benwick's engagement to Louisa, he notes that his sister would have remembered the captain for much longer. There is a strong sense that the past must be embraced almost continuously. Indeed, one of the reasons why Anne becomes suspicious of Mr. Elliot is that he never shows signs of mourning his wife. And of course, remembrance applies not only to the dead, but also to those who are far away. The question of which sex remembers lovers longer provides fuel for a passionate debate between Anne and Captain Harville at the end of the novel. As it turns out, Anne and Captain Wentworth — the heroine and hero — both possess the virtue of remembrance.

### ➤ Walking

Walking is a motif that is employed throughout *Persuasion* and Austen's other novels. When characters go for walks in the novel, it often signals a period of character development. Walking entails conversing with others, commenting on one's surroundings, and reacting to the world outside. It allows an author to expand upon her reader's understanding of a character by bringing the character out into a different light. In *Persuasion*, walks are essential for the progression of Anne and Captain Wentworth's relationship. Anne learns of his feelings regarding female constancy on one of their initial walks, and at the end they reveal their feelings to each other on a walk home through the park. Walking is a frequent and essential motif.

### Check Your Progress

1. What symbols have been used in the novel? Elucidate from the text.

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## 8.7 Summary

Many of the characters in the novels are readers. Sir Walter reads his family lineage in the Baronetage; Captain Wentworth reads his naval records; Anne and Lady Russell are both implied to have read a great deal; Captain Benwick can recite lines and lines of romantic poetry; and even Mary enjoys the library at Lyme. For Anne, poetry seems to increase her appreciation of nature and also serves as an occasional form of distraction. Books evidently don't supply Mary with superior sensibilities, however, and fail in other ways. With regards to Captain Benwick, for example, Anne's suggestion that he read more prose is telling. Poetry overcomes the senses; it carries him away and perhaps facilitates his falling in love with Louisa. A tentative conclusion that we can draw is that the meaning of reading lies not in books but in their readers. Sir Walter reads the Baronetage to confirm his title and indulge in self-satisfaction; for Elizabeth, on the other hand, the words "heir presumptive" after the name of William Walter Elliot makes the same book unpleasant.

## 8.8 Key Terms

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- **The Navy:** The Navy is discussed by many characters in the novel, from the admiring **Louisa** and **Henrietta** to the more pragmatically appreciative **Anne**. As a vehicle of social mobility, it offers the potential for men from less prominent social standing, through hard work and merit, to climb the ranks of status *and* earn their fortune—two components that grant men distinction and importance in Austen’s society.
- **Kellynch Hall:** Kellynch Hall is the Elliot family estate and a symbol of the prestige of the baronetcy. As the family home, it holds a special significance not only for the vain baronet, **Sir Walter**, and **Elizabeth**, but also considerable sentimental value for **Anne**, who is not insensible of the value of good family.
- **The Baronetage:** *The Baronetage* is Sir Walter’s favorite book, because it records the families of British nobility—“the history and rise of all the ancient and respectable families”—among which the Elliots are included. The beginning of the novel finds him vainly poring over the book with the full anticipation that his eldest and favorite daughter, **Elizabeth**, will elevate the family through a marriage that he can proudly record in *The Baronetage*.

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## 8.9 Review Questions

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1. Does *Persuasion* challenge or defend the status of class structure in early nineteenth century British society? How?
2. What is the significance of the title "*Persuasion*"? How are the novel's characters positively and negatively affected by persuasion in the story?
3. What is the role of parents in *Persuasion*? What kinds of examples do they set for their own children?
4. Is *Persuasion* a romantic novel? Why or why not?
5. What rhetorical and narrative techniques does Austen employ in her novel? How do they affect the novel's overall narration?

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### **BLOCK-3: EMILY BRONTE**

UNIT 9: Emily Bronte and Her Age

UNIT 10: Bronte and Other Works

UNIT 11: Wuthering Heights – An Analysis

UNIT 12: Wuthering Heights – Narrative Techniques and  
Themes

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## UNIT 9: EMILY BRONTE AND HER AGE

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### STRUCTURE

- 9.1 Objectives
- 9.2 Introduction
- 9.3 The Romantic Novels
- 9.4 Romanticism and the Brontes
- 9.5 Bronte's Methodism
- 9.6 Bronte's Enthusiastic Views
- 9.7 Summary
- 9.8 Key Terms
- 9.9 Review Questions
- 9.10 References

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### 9.1 Objectives

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The learners shall know the following from this unit:

- Another new fiction writer Emily Bronte.
- The age to which Bronte belongs to
- The key features of Romanticism.

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### 9.2 Introduction

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**Female presence** in the literary world was starting to awaken and gradually became important both in Europe and in America, throughout the 19th century. Madame de Staël, from France, had inspired other gifted women at the beginning of Romanticism to challenge the stifling patriarchal grip still deeply rooted in society by exposing their literary talent to the world once and for all. Many women writers used **pseudonyms** to veil themselves and cut risks in putting their work forward. However, no-one was so optimistic at the time to think female writers could become a well-known reference that would transcend other works of the time in the eyes of readers and critics alike. It was even less expected of **Victorian society**, known for its restrictive mentality. In this foggy and uncertain, yet promising panorama, the Brontë family displayed its feminine pens like thunder and lightning, a double combination that gave a final impulse to Romanticism at the half of the 19th century, in Britain. The two elements were **Emily and Charlotte Brontë**, the most famous sisters in literary history, whose rebellious intensity was never undermined by the pseudonyms they had to use.

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### 9.3 The Romantic Novels

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Robert Kiely raises the question, in *The Romantic Novel in England*, Is there actually an English romantic novel? He skirts answering his own question by suggesting that some novels are influenced by Romanticism and incorporate the same style and themes that appear in Romantic poetry and drama. In his discussion, the term *romantic novel* is often equated with the romance, with the Gothic novel, and with the romantic elements in a novel. Kiely regards *Wuthering*

*Heights* as a model of romantic fiction; it contains these romantic/Gothic elements which characterize the romantic novel:

- The dynamic antagonism or antithesis in the novel tends to subvert, if not to reject literary conventions; often a novel verges on turning into something else, like poetry or drama. In *Wuthering Heights*, realism in presenting Yorkshire landscape and life and the historical precision of season, dates, and hours co-exist with the dreamlike and the unhistorical; Brontë refuses to be confined by conventional classifications.
- The protagonists' wanderings are motivated by flight from previously-chosen goals, so that often there is a pattern of escape and pursuit. Consider Catherine's marriage for social position, stability, and wealth, her efforts to evade the consequences of her marriage, the demands of Heathcliff and Edgar, and her final mental wandering.
- The protagonists are driven by irresistible passion—lust, curiosity, ambition, intellectual pride, envy. The emphasis is on their desire for transcendence, to overcome the limitations of the body, of society, of time rather than their moral transgressions. They yearn to escape the limitations inherent to life and may find that the only escape is death. The longings of a Heathcliff cannot be fulfilled in life.
- Death is not only a literal happening or plot device, but also and primarily a psychological concern. For the protagonists, death originates in the imagination, becomes a "tendency of mind," and may develop into an obsession.
- As in Gothic fiction, buildings are central to meaning; the supernatural, wild nature, dream and madness, physical violence, and perverse sexuality are set off against social conventions and institutions. Initially, this may create the impression that the novel is two books in one, but finally Thrushcross Grange and *Wuthering Heights* fuse.
- Endings are disquieting and unsatisfactory because the writer resists a definitive conclusion, one which accounts for all loose ends and explains away any ambiguities or uncertainties. The preference for open-endedness is, ultimately, an effort to resist the limits of time and of place. That effort helps explain the importance of dreams and memories of other times and location, like Catherine's delirious memories of childhood at *Wuthering Heights* and rambles on the moors.

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## 9.4 Romanticism and the Brontës

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Romanticism, the literary movement traditionally dated 1798 to 1832 in England, affected all the arts through the nineteenth century. The Brontës were familiar with the writings of the major romantic poets and the novels of Sir Walter Scott. When Charlotte Brontë, for instance, wanted an evaluation of her writing, she sent a sample to the romantic poet Southey. The romantic elements in the Brontës' writings are obvious. Walter Pater saw in *Wuthering Heights* the characteristic spirit of romanticism, particularly in "the figures of Hareton Earnshaw, of Catherine Linton, and of Heathcliff—tearing open Catherine's grave, removing one side of her coffin, that

he may really lie beside her in death—figures so passionate, yet woven on a background of delicately beautiful, moorland scenery, being typical examples of that spirit."

As the details of their lives became generally known and as *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* received increasingly favorable critical attention, Charlotte, Emily, and Anne were cast in the role of Romantic Rebels. Contributing to the Romantic Rebels Myth was the association of Romanticism and early death; Shelley having died at 29, Byron at 36, and Keats at 24. Branwell died at the age of 31, Emily at 30, and Anne at 29; to add to the emotional impact, Branwell, Emily, and Anne died in the space of nine months. The Romantic predilection for early death appears in *Wuthering Heights*; Linton is 17 when he dies; Catherine, 18; Hindley, 27; Isabella, 31; Edgar, 39; Heathcliff, perhaps 37 or 38.

### Check Your Progress

#### 1. How are Bronte sisters linked with Romanticism? Explain.

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### 9.5 Brontë's Methodism

Brontë's awareness of Methodism, the religion dominating both her home and society, was profound. Methodism had its most dramatic outbursts in the West Riding area of Yorkshire, in which Haworth is situated and where Brontë lived, accommodating over 17,000 Methodist members from the half-million Methodist population of Britain in the nineteenth century. This number was supported by Methodist schools such as the Clergy Daughter's School at Cowan Bridge, attended by Brontë from the age of six, and the Wesleyan Woodhouse Grove, where Brontë's clergyman father was an examiner (Baxter 66). Haworth itself is considered by some church historians to have been the original site of Evangelical radicalism, the favourite preaching ground of John Wesley, leader of the Methodist movement, and where William Grimshaw, the preacher who Wesley chose to succeed him, was rector from 1742.

The Methodist faith forged by Wesley and Grimshaw attracted penitent individuals because of the excitement and vibrancy associated with the conversion experience, one which came to be recognized as a form of enthusiasm. Religious enthusiasm signified a state of profound divine inspiration wherein the individual was overcome by a spiritual feeling that provoked intense passion, fury, anger and imaginative powers, each testifying to God's dominion. Such effusive involvement with one's faith effected an overdose of religion deemed enthusiastic and the roots of this word, "en" and "theos," suggest that enthusiasts were seen to be "in God" in an unusual way. Wesley's particular conversion technique consisted of provoking sinners into a state of religious delirium in which they would fall to the ground crying and groaning out in prayer, often fainting dramatically and speaking in tongues. These individuals generally underwent a sudden

and inspired religious regeneration aided by Wesley who was on hand to save them from intrusive demons and, in doing so, to demonstrate the power of God.

Such behavior was instantly regarded with distrust by those who recalled enthusiasm from the civil war as an evil that had provoked dissonant behaviour with terrible results, including the execution of Charles I (Gunter 16, 120). Robert Southey, for example, declared in a review of Myle's *History of the Methodists for the Annual Review for 1803*, that a "worse danger than the spread of [m]ethodism can scarcely be apprehended for England" and rendered enthusiasm a mental disease in his *Life of Wesley* (qtd. in Carnall 207). Bishop George Lavington of Exeter also attacked Wesley in a series of public letters to which Brontë had access in her father's theological library. Within the letters, Lavington accused Wesley of promoting an enthusiasm he believed lowered Protestantism to the contemptible level of Catholicism. For Lavington, enthusiasm compelled its partakers "into direct *Madness and Distraction*, either of the *moaping*, or the *raving* kind; or *both* of them, by successive *Fits*; or into the manifold Symptoms of a *Delirium*, and *Phrenzy*" intoxicating them with the "*Phantoms of a crazy brain*" (1: 49; 3: 12). A language of enthusiasm influenced by Methodism, then, was a serious threat to English civility and reason, especially if used by women whom Southey, at least, believed should avoid the practice of writing altogether (qtd. in Gordon 65).

For Brontë, a pupil of a Methodist school and daughter of a minister preaching in a historically Methodist pulpit, Methodism indeed offered a language through which to voice an extremity of passionate expression, one which appealed to men and women alike. Coleridge, for example, suggested in his *Notes on English Divines* that enthusiasm allowed "an undue" or "unusual vividness of ideas" (qtd. in Tucker 47). It is such a vividness of ideas that marks Brontë's writing, the most prominent verbs in *Wuthering Heights* being "writhe, drag, crush, grind, struggle, yield, sink, recoil, outstrip, tear, drive asunder" (Miller 167). These verbs parallel those used by Lavington to describe Methodist practices, consisting, he declares, of a succession of "Shriekings, Roarings, Groanings, Tremblings, Gnashings, Yellings, Foamings, Convulsions, Swoonings, Droppings, Blasphemies, Curses, dying and despairing Agonies" (3: 23). Catherine and Heathcliff too are enraptured by a Christian frenzy which strongly recalls enthusiasm. Catherine constantly confesses that she is in a nervous and deranged state to Nelly, who in turn draws our attention to the "maniac fury" that kindles under Catherine's brows; and Heathcliff is emphatically portrayed by Brontë as "praying madly like a Methodist" for Catherine's return, delirious as he wanders the moors searching for her ghost (158).

Brontë was familiar with eighteenth-century poetics and theories of the sublime, annotating Macpherson's *Poems of Ossian* and reading Burke's *Inquiry*, Young's *Night Thoughts* and Thomson's *The Seasons* in the family library. Enthusiasm and the sublime were constantly paired in relation to poetry in the eighteenth century, poetry itself long associated with invoking a kind of religious sublime. The contemporary Robert Lowth remarked that poetical language originated from the feeling of enthusiasm within the mind, while James Usher stated that "Enthusiasm is the very soul of poetry" (qtd. in Tucker 79, 84).<sup>[8]</sup> For Joseph Addison, enthusiasm indicated a sometimes dangerous "influence of passion" and "imagination," but he also argued that strong feeling could arouse imaginative thoughts, a "man in a dungeon" more "capable of entertaining himself with scenes and landscapes" than the free man who relies on that which he sees "before



the eye" ("Devotion" 72; "Pleasures" 394). The eighteenth-century critic John Dennis most clearly connected enthusiasm with sublimity, christianizing Longinus in order to resolutely define the sublime affect as derivative from religious ideas (Irlam 64). *The Grounds of Criticism in Poetry* (1704), for example, claims that poetry consists in enthusiastic passion inspired by religious ideas that invoke the sublime. Dennis writes: "the Nature of Poetry consists in Passion [. . .] which can be nothing but strong *Enthusiasm*; [and] Religion is the greatest, noblest, strongest source of *Enthusiasm*" (332). Moreover, "Since therefore the Enthusiasm in the greater Poetry, is to hold proportion with the Ideas; and those Ideas are certainly the greatest, which [. . .] shew the Attributes of God [. . .] it follows, That the greatest and strongest Enthusiasm that can be employ'd in Poetry, is only justly and reasonably to be deriv'd from Religious Ideas" (340). In turn, these ideas found the sublime by "moving the Soul from its ordinary Situation by the Enthusiasm which naturally attends them" (359). Dennis thus firmly located an enthusiastic sublime as essential to poetry, especially that verse which addressed God as that which inspired the imagination and so allowed the mind to expand in order to comprehend divinity.

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## 9.6 Brontë's Enthusiastic Views

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Brontë's relationship to these two sources of enthusiasm, Methodism and eighteenth-century poetics, will set the agenda for the discussion in this paper. Methodism, with its dislike of doctrine and almost pantheistic emphasis on nature, appealed to Brontë whose most famous poem, "No coward soul is mine" rejected the "thousand creeds" of orthodox Anglican religion as "withered weeds" (9, 11). Such verse was dramatically influenced by the eighteenth-century poetics of figures like John Dennis and Edward Young whom Brontë encountered in the family library. These writers offered a still religiously sublime alternative to the sometimes stagnant verses of the Methodist hymn writer. To suggest that Brontë's furious turn of expression originates from Methodist and poetic enthusiasm is important, I think, because it rescues her from more arguably tenuous charges which deem her a mystic, a Shelleyan heretic, a writer repressed by Christianity, a victim of a tragic romance or simply a very angry woman. By instead recognizing her as part of an enthusiastic literary tradition, Brontë may be seen not only as a woman writer aware of her religious environment, but as a Romantic whose poetry accords as much with the sentiment of *Night Thoughts* as *Mont Blanc*.

Brontë's poetry, transcribed into two separate notebooks, Gondal and non-Gondal, is rarely interpreted within its religious context. Her references to God, for example, when stripped of their religious frame, are read as anomalies obscuring the work of an otherwise clearly heretical poet. Several critics have commented upon the poet's historical position within Methodism, G. Elsie Harrison being the first to position Methodism as the "clue" to the Brontës' Wesleyan heritage. She argues that the "essence of old Methodism" submerged the Brontë household, preached by Patrick Brontë, whose poems, like Emily's, were "couched in the meter of Wesleyan hymns" (*Clue* 4). The most fervent of Haworth's residents, however, was Aunt Branwell, whom Brontë replaced as the "strong center of the household," according to Harrison, serving also to sustain her religious beliefs (130-31). Harrison reads *Wuthering Heights* with reference to Wesley's journal, the sermons of Jabez Bunting, and a letter by the Methodist William Grimshaw, curate of Haworth from 1742 (164-66). She even attributes Brontë's refusal to take opiates while dying

to a Methodist aversion to drug-intake as that which interfered with God's natural plan (175). Harrison imposes a Methodist frame upon all of the Brontës, but it is "Emily" that she singles out as the writer who "achieved her reputation on her Methodist background" (*Haworth* 6). Brontë, Harrison claims, "had the good sense to stay at home with God and love and the Yorkshire moors" reading "'mad Methodist Magazines'" and imbibing "the essence of that Grimshaw legend" (38). These "mad Methodist Magazines, full of miracles and apparitions" appear in Charlotte's novel *Shirley* (1849), itself, as Juliet Barker suggests, a "portrayal of Emily as she might have been" (Barker 612). If *Shirley* Keeldar is Emily Brontë, then *Shirley* the novel is a "Methodist book" argues Harrison, with a logic that marks much of her conjectural commentary (*Clue* 180). While Harrison goes too far in her Methodist narrative, many of her points have been substantiated by other critics. Amber M. Adams links Patrick Brontë with John Wesley through their mutual acquaintance, Thomas Tighe, vicar of Drumballyroney, County Down, who arranged Patrick's entrance to St. Johns, Cambridge (27). G. R. Balleine, Michael Baumber, John Lock and W. T. Dixon focus on William Grimshaw as an important influence on the Brontës. Valentine Cunningham and Stevie Davies both note Brontë's understanding of enthusiasm as a "referent for passion," although they do not relate it to her poetics (124; 145). Davies, too, comments on the "Methodist-inclined form of Anglicanism" Patrick practiced at Haworth Church (139, 154). James Fotherington notes that the Brontës' "Puritan ethics, their evangelical creed and seriousness" coloured the "spirit" of their writing (309). Susan Howe compares Brontë's poetry to the preaching style of the American Methodist, Jonathan Edwards. J. Hillis Miller notes the striking similarity between Brontë and Wesley's prose presentations of nature. Ken C. Burrows has proposed that Brontë manipulated Methodist hymn meter to create an "anti-hymn" genre which rejected "a form of worship" she "found stultifying," and enacted an "indictment" of Methodism as that which imprisoned the spirit (52). And Tom Winnifrith focuses on the "Wagnerian doctrine of redemption" central to Brontë's work, one that arguably balances the orthodox Anglicanism of Nelly Dean and extreme dissenting Calvinism of Joseph (9, 14).

Most recently, Marianne Thormählen has traced the theological implications of the Brontës' writing in her study, *The Brontës and Religion*, usefully cataloguing the religious literature Emily read. Yet Thormählen remains unwilling to question how the poet wrangled with these theological ideas. This is largely a consequence of her focus on the Brontës' prose as a formative of a series of books that "confirm fundamental Christian tenets," *Wuthering Heights* elevated as a Christian critique of the irreverent sinner (6). Such arguments, however, cannot be applied to Emily's poetry in the same way. Where such poetry is considered, it is collectively rendered "an intriguing sample-card of views" on "what happens after death" rather than an engagement with religious ideas and the manner through which such ideas might be expressed. Indeed, Thormählen's contention that "the restrictions" against which Brontë's narrators "chafe are [merely] tangible ones (such as grave mounds and dungeon walls)" leads her away from their struggle to find a suitable voice to discuss theological principles, a voice that is deeply marked by enthusiasm (73). The relative unwillingness of modern criticism to explore Brontë's own understanding of theological ideology outside of speculation, especially within her verse, is in part a result of her positioning within Romanticism. Although historically located between the Romantic and Victorian eras, Brontë is rendered Romantic by countless critics, considered "romantic in her temper and phrasing" and aligned with all the canonical male Romantic poets (Fotherington 107-33). Yet as Robert Ryan argues, critics tend to take the Romantics seriously

as "religious thinkers" only so far as they articulate "private intuitions of a noumenal order rather than as active participants in the public religious life of their times" (8). While recent work follows Ryan's contention that the Romantics were in fact preoccupied by questions of religion spurred by the Protestant revival, little of it addresses women poets, with Anna Barbauld and Hannah More as the main exceptions (Ryan 1, 10). Contextualizing Brontë's verse within revivalism illuminates both her literary expression and religious values, and it is the religious fervor associated with both Methodism and the "warmer" factions of Anglicanism to which I now turn.

### Check your Progress

#### 1. Discuss on Brontë's view of Enthusiasm.

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## 9.7 Summary

Aligning Brontë's poetics with an eighteenth-century tradition of enthusiasm, then, allows us to review her troubled relationship to religion as well as the relationship between religious and poetic enthusiasm. As I have attempted to intimate briefly here, poetical enthusiasm lies close to Methodist enthusiasm for Brontë, and by recognizing both within her verse we are able to see one possible source for the extreme passion that marks all of her work. Moreover, by understanding this source as religious and poetical, the reader is liberated to view Brontë as a kind of self-fashioned enthusiastic poet who was also interested in Methodism. On a wider scale, this point helps us to nuance our understanding of Methodist and poetical enthusiasm. Rather than dividing them as if they are two separate phenomena, we can instead see the two as dependent on one another. If the Romantics as a group inherited and revised eighteenth-century poetical traditions, then poetical *and* Methodist enthusiasm might usefully be recognized in their work, salvaging them from a sometimes-reductive secular critical frame. Blake, Wordsworth, and even Shelley use an enthusiastic language that gains power from its Methodist and poetical heritage, marked as much by the Wesleyan sermon as enlightenment sensibility. While Methodism did become a more obviously conservative force in the nineteenth century, the charismatic Wesley replaced by the dictatorial Jabez Bunting, its legacy for nineteenth-century poetry was one of vibrancy and passion and Brontë's powerful work remains a strong example of such a claim.

## 9.8 Key Terms

- **Methodism:** Methodism, also called the Methodist movement, is a group of historically related denominations of Protestant Christianity whose origins, doctrine and practice derive from the life and teachings of John Wesley. George Whitefield and John's brother Charles Wesley were also significant early leaders in the movement. They were named *Methodists* for "the methodical way in which they carried out their Christian faith".
- **Protestant:** A Protestant is an adherent of any of those Christian bodies that separated

from the Church of Rome during the Reformation, or of any group descended from them. During the Reformation, the term protestant was hardly used outside of German politics.

- **Enthusiasm:** A feeling of energetic interest in a particular subject or activity and an eagerness to be involved in it
- **Romantic Revival:** This period was termed as Romantic Revival because it tried to recreate the Elizabethan romantic aura as against the Neo-Classical framework of the early 18th century. The reaction to the standard literary practice and critical norms of the eighteenth century occurred in many areas and in varying degrees.
- **German Romanticism:** It was the dominant intellectual movement of German-speaking countries in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, influencing philosophy, aesthetics, literature, and criticism. Compared to English Romanticism, the German variety developed relatively early, and, in the opening years, coincided with Weimar Classicism (1772–1805).

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## 9.9 Review Questions

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1. How has Bronte held to the principles of Romanticism? Explain.
  2. What do you mean by Romantic Revival? Explain its characteristics.
  3. How is Emily Bronte influenced by German Romanticism?
  4. Discuss Emily Bronte with her age.
  5. What elements has Bronte focused on in her time of writing? Elucidate.
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## 9.10 References

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## UNIT 10: BRONTE AND OTHER WORKS

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### STRUCTURE

- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 Introduction
- 10.3 Emily Bronte – Early Life
- 10.4 Imaginary Tales and Teaching Career
- 10.5 Poetry (1844 - 1846)
- 10.6 Emily Bronte – Later Life
- 10.7 Bronte’s works in Literature
- 10.8 Legacy
- 10.9 Summary
- 10.10 Key Terms
- 10.11 Review Questions
- 10.12 References

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### 10.1 Objectives

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The learners shall know the following from this unit:

- Emily Bronte and her important works.
- The similarities in her writings.
- More about Bronte’s writing background.
- About Emily Bronte and individual

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### 10.2 Introduction

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Emily Brontë was believed to have preferred wearing “practical” clothing that was comfortable. For example, her preference for wide sleeves even after they went “out of style” was because they allowed room for arm movement and were more comfortable than the tighter sleeves that were becoming more popular. But she also wore clothing that made a statement or that was darker colored. For example, the famous thunder and lightning dress she chose shocked her sisters because the print was “flashy” and “rebellious” and not the typical floral and solid-colored dresses that they gravitated towards.

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### 10.3 Emily Bronte – Early Life

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Brontë was the fifth of six siblings born in six years to the Rev. Patrick Brontë and his wife, Maria Branwell Brontë. Emily was born at the parsonage in Thornton, Yorkshire, where her father was serving. All six children were born before the family moved in April 1820 to where the children would live most of their lives, at the 5-room parsonage at Haworth on the moors of Yorkshire. Her father had been appointed as perpetual curate there, meaning an appointment for life: he and

his family could live in the parsonage as long as he continued his work there. The father encouraged the children to spend time in nature on the moors.

Maria died the year after the youngest, Anne, was born, possibly of uterine cancer or of chronic pelvic sepsis. Maria's older sister, Elizabeth, moved from Cornwall to help care for the children and for the parsonage. She had an income of her own.

The three eldest sisters - Maria, Elizabeth, and Charlotte - were sent to the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge, a school for the daughters of impoverished clergy. Emily joined her sisters in 1824, upon reaching the age of six. The daughter of writer Hannah Moore was also in attendance. The harsh conditions of the school were later reflected in Charlotte Brontë's novel, *Jane Eyre*. Emily's experience of the school, as the youngest of the four, was better than that of her sisters, but the conditions were still harsh and abusive.

A typhoid fever outbreak at the school led to several deaths. The next February, Maria was sent home very ill, and she died in May, probably of pulmonary tuberculosis. Then Elizabeth was sent home late in May, also ill. Patrick Brontë brought his other daughters home as well, and Elizabeth died on June 15.

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## 10.4 Imaginary Tales and Teaching Career

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When her brother Patrick was given some wooden soldiers as a gift in 1826, the siblings began to make up stories about the world that the soldiers lived in. They wrote the stories in tiny script, in books small enough for the soldiers, and also provided newspapers and poetry for the world they apparently first called Glasstown. Emily and Anne had small roles in these tales. By 1830, Emily and Anne had created a kingdom themselves, and later created another, Gondal, about 1833. This creative activity bonded the two youngest siblings, making them more independent from Charlotte and Branwell.

Brontë went with her sister Charlotte when the elder sister got a job teaching at Roe Head school in July 1835. She hated the school – her shyness and free spirit didn't fit in. She lasted three months, and returned home, with her younger sister, Anne, taking her place. Back home, without either Charlotte or Anne, she kept to herself. Her earliest dated poem is from 1836. All the writings about Gondal from earlier or later times are now gone, aside from a 1837 reference from Charlotte to something Emily had composed about Gondal. Brontë applied for a teaching job of her own in September of 1838. She found the work grueling, working from dawn until nearly 11 pm every day. After just six months, she returned home, quite ill again. Instead, she stayed at Haworth for three more years, taking on household duties, reading and writing, playing the piano.

Eventually, the sisters began to make plans to open a school. Emily and Charlotte went to London and then Brussels, where they attended a school for six months. They were then invited to stay on as teachers to pay their tuition; Emily taught music and Charlotte taught English. In October to their home for the funeral of their aunt Elizabeth Branwell. The four Brontë siblings received shares of their aunt's estate, and Emily worked as a housekeeper for her father, serving in the role their aunt had taken.

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## 10.5 Poetry (1844 - 1846)

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Brontë, after returning from Brussels, began to write poetry again, as well as re-organizing and revising her previous poems. In 1845, Charlotte found one of her poetry notebooks and was impressed with the quality of the poems; she, Emily, and Anne finally read each other's poetry. The three selected poems from their collections for publication, choosing to do so under male pseudonyms. The false names would share their initials: Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell. They assumed that male writers would find easier publication.

The poems were published as *Poems by Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell* in May of 1846 with the help of the inheritance from their aunt. They did not tell their father or brother of their project. The book only initially sold two copies, but got positive reviews, which encouraged Brontë and her sisters.

### Check Your Progress

#### 1. Discuss the contribution of Emily Bronte to poetry.

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## 10.6 Emily Bronte – Later Life

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Brontë had begun a new novel when her brother Branwell, died in April of 1848, probably of tuberculosis. Some have speculated that the conditions at the parsonage were not so healthy, including a poor water supply and chilly, foggy weather. At her brother's funeral, Brontë apparently caught a cold.

She declined quickly as the cold turned to a lung infection and, eventually, tuberculosis, but she refused medical care until relenting in her last hours. She died in December. Then Anne began to show symptoms, though she, after Emily's experience, did seek medical help. Charlotte and her friend Ellen Nussey took Anne to Scarborough for a better environment, but Anne died there in May of 1849, less than a month after arriving. Branwell and Emily were buried in the family vault under Haworth church, and Anne in Scarborough.

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## 10.7 Bronte's works in Literature

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Emily went on to write almost 200 poems in her life but only a small fraction were published in her life time (Brownson). Her only novel, *Wuthering Heights*, is one of her most famous works. Emily was often seen as a very strange woman who never was able to leave this isolation. This made her seem even more mysterious and created many myths about her. Not much is known about the last couple of years of Emily's life except for the fact that her family continued to be cursed with sickness. This included her father becoming nearly blind and her brother dying from consumption (also known as tuberculosis) in September 1848. She became sick with consumption and refused medical attention in October 1848. Emily sadly died at the age of 30 only a few months later on December 9 (Brownson). Throughout the Victorian Era, social class was an important topic of debate and that can be seen throughout *Wuthering Heights*. This topic clearly influences Emily's work since society was very concerned with one's social class as well as the restricted rights for women, despite a women's social class status. Emily describes how one's social class affects his or her character rather than discussing the issue as a satire. Throughout her work, Emily displays a focus on the fact that actions have consequences and that the characteristics that one displays is very important to their overall character as a person. Her focus on the issues of conduct also helps to contribute to make *Wuthering Heights* a realistic novel. During this time period there was also a loss of optimism and a sense of uncertainty in what was to come. This may be reflected in Emily's work as *Wuthering Heights* constantly has people dying rather unexpected and most of the people end up living pretty miserable lives.

### Check Your Progress

#### 1. Discuss the other notable works of Emily Bronte.

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## 10.8 Legacy

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*Wuthering Heights*, Emily's only known novel, has been adapted for stage, film and television, and remains a best-selling classic. Critics do not know precisely when *Wuthering Heights* was written nor how long it took to write. A few have attempted to argue that Branson Brontë, brother to the three sisters, wrote this book, but most experts disagree.



Emily Brontë is credited as one of the major sources of inspiration for Emily Dickinson's poetry (the other was Ralph Waldo Emerson). According to correspondence at the time, Emily had begun working on another novel after *Wuthering Heights* was published. But no trace of that novel has turned up; it may have been destroyed by Charlotte after Emily's death.

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## 10.9 Summary

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Emily Brontë lived most of her life in England on the North Yorkshire moors like those depicted in *Wuthering Heights*. Not many details are known about her life. As one Brontë scholar stated, "Next to her genius, the most astonishing thing about Emily Brontë is the silence which surrounds her life." Charlotte Brontë declared that Emily's "disposition was not naturally gregarious; circumstances favoured and fostered her tendency to seclusion; except to go to church or take a walk on the hills, she seldom crossed the threshold of home. Though her feeling for the people [all around] was benevolent, intercourse with them was never sought; nor, with very few exceptions, ever experienced."

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## 10.10 Key Terms

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- **Threshold:** A threshold is an amount, level, or limit on a scale. When the threshold is reached, something else happens or changes. She has a low threshold of boredom and needs the constant stimulation of physical activity.
  - **Disposition:** one's usual attitude or mood. a cheerful disposition. b. : a leaning toward a particular way of thinking or acting : tendency, inclination.
  - **Social class:** A social class or social stratum is a grouping of people into a set of hierarchical social categories, the most common being the working class, middle class, and upper class. Membership of a social class can for example be dependent on education, wealth, occupation, income, and belonging to a particular subculture or social network.
  - **Foster:** affording, receiving, or sharing nurture or parental care though not related by blood or legal relationships. a foster child. a foster parent. foster.
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## 10.11 Review Questions

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1. Discuss Emily Brontë's career as a teacher.
  2. How the works of Emily Brontë different from her sisters? Discuss.
  3. Elucidate major works of Emily Brontë.
  4. What similarities do you find in the works of Emily Brontë? Elucidate.
  5. Discuss the perspectives of Brontë's writings.
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## 10.12 References

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## UNIT 11: WUTHERING HEIGHTS – AN ANALYSIS

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### STRUCTURE

- 11.1 Objectives
- 11.2 Introduction
- 11.3 Background
- 11.4 Historical Context of Wuthering Heights
- 11.5 Introduction to the Novel
- 11.6 Characters of the Novel
- 11.7 Plot of the Novel
- 11.8 Chapter – wise Analysis of the text
- 11.9 Other Books related to Wuthering Heights
- 11.10 Summary
- 11.11 Key Terms
- 11.12 Review Questions
- 11.13 References

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### 11.1 Objectives

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The learners shall know the following:

- The characters of the novel.
  - The plot of the novel.
  - Detailed analysis of the text Wuthering Heights.
  - Other books related to Wuthering Heights
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### 11.2 Introduction

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Born to a clergyman from Yorkshire, Brontë left home at age six to join her sisters at a harsh boarding school. After two of them died, Emily and her sister Charlotte (author of *Jane Eyre*) returned home, where, with their sister Anne and their brother Branwell, they created a complicated fantasy world; the children wrote a series of stories, plays, and poems, some of which they collected and published. Though Emily left home several more times, she always returned to the beloved moors of her childhood. She published *Wuthering Heights* the year before she died of tuberculosis.

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### 11.3 Background

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Emily began working on *Wuthering Heights* in December 1845. She completed it in July 1846 and began submitting it for publication (along with Anne's Agnes Grey and Charlotte's The Professor). In December 1847, the publisher T. C. Newby published *Wuthering Heights*. One year later, on December 19, 1848, Emily died from the effects of a severe cold. Two years later,

*Wuthering Heights* was reissued, along with a selection of Emily's poems and a biographical notice by Charlotte.

About Emily Bronte, Virginia Woolf wrote that she had the ability to "tear up all that we know human beings by, and fill these unrecognizable transparencies with such a gust of life that they transcend reality. . . She could free life from its dependence on facts; with a few touches indicate the spirit of a face so that it needs no body; by speaking of the moor make the wind blow and the thunder roar."

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## 11.4 Historical Context of *Wuthering Heights*

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The American Revolution, which often symbolizes the ability of the common man to prevail over old, established power, coincides with some of the action in *Wuthering Heights*. Heathcliff, the book's little guy (who may have actually come from America), stages a revolution of his own by trying to bring down two old, powerful families.

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## 11.5 Introduction to the Novel

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*Wuthering Heights* is Emily Bronte's only novel, an impassioned, spellbinding tale considered to be one of the greatest literary works of all time. The story—as turbulent as its title suggests—transports the reader to the North Yorkshire moors to witness the drama of the Earnshaws and the Lintons, and the volatile, yet spiritual, relationship of Catherine and Heathcliff.

*Wuthering Heights*, which has long been one of the most popular and highly regarded novels in English literature, seemed to hold little promise when it was published in 1847, selling very poorly and receiving only a few mixed reviews. Victorian readers found the book shocking and inappropriate in its depiction of passionate, ungoverned love and cruelty (despite the fact that the novel portrays no sex or bloodshed), and the work was virtually ignored. Even Emily Bronte's sister Charlotte—an author whose works contained similar motifs of Gothic love and desolate landscapes—remained ambivalent toward the unapologetic intensity of her sister's novel. In a preface to the book, which she wrote shortly after Emily Bronte's death, Charlotte Brontë stated, "Whether it is right or advisable to create beings like Heathcliff, I do not know. I scarcely think it is."

Emily Bronte lived an eccentric, closely guarded life. She was born in 1818, two years after Charlotte and a year and a half before her sister Anne, who also became an author. Her father worked as a church rector, and her aunt, who raised the Bronte children after their mother died, was deeply religious. Emily Bronte did not take to her aunt's Christian fervour; the character of Joseph, a caricature of an evangelical, may have been inspired by her aunt's religiosity. The Brontës lived in Haworth, a Yorkshire village in the midst of the moors. These wild, desolate expanses—later the setting of *Wuthering Heights*—made up the Brontës' daily environment, and Emily lived among them her entire life. She died in 1848, at the age of thirty.

As witnessed by their extraordinary literary accomplishments, the Bronte children were a highly creative group, writing stories, plays, and poems for their own amusement. Largely left to their own devices, the children created imaginary worlds in which to play. Yet the sisters knew that

the outside world would not respond favourably to their creative expression; female authors were often treated less seriously than their male counterparts in the nineteenth century. Thus the Bronte sisters thought it best to publish their adult works under assumed names. Charlotte wrote as Currer Bell, Emily as Ellis Bell, and Anne as Acton Bell. Their real identities remained secret until after Emily and Anne had died, when Charlotte at last revealed the truth of their novels' authorship. Today, *Wuthering Heights* has a secure position in the canon of world literature, and Emily Bronte is revered as one of the finest writers—male or female—of the nineteenth century. Like Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights* is based partly on the Gothic tradition of the late eighteenth century, a style of literature that featured supernatural encounters, crumbling ruins, moonless nights, and grotesque imagery, seeking to create effects of mystery and fear. But *Wuthering Heights* transcends its genre in its sophisticated observation and artistic subtlety. The novel has been studied, analyzed, dissected, and discussed from every imaginable critical perspective, yet it remains unexhausted. And while the novel's symbolism, themes, structure, and language may all spark fertile exploration, the bulk of its popularity may rest on its unforgettable characters. As a shattering presentation of the doomed love affair between the fiercely passionate Catherine and Heathcliff, it remains one of the most haunting love stories in all of literature.

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## 11.6 Characters of the Novel

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### Major Characters

#### ➤ Mr. Lockwood

A gentleman who rents Thrushcross Grange from **Heathcliff**. He is the narrator of the story; **Nelly Dean** tells him about all of the other characters, and he passes on her account to the reader. He is a somewhat smug and emotionally remote city boy who is not very involved in the action.

#### ➤ Ellen "Nelly" Dean

Housekeeper to the Earnshaws and Lintons. The novel is from her point of view; we see every character (aside from **Lockwood**) through her eyes. She grows up alongside **Hindley**, **Catherine**, and **Heathcliff** and works at both *Wuthering Heights* and Thrushcross Grange. Nelly is confidante to many, including both **Catherines**, **Isabella**, and even **Heathcliff**. She cares for **Hareton** when he is an infant and is a mother-figure to the younger **Cathy**. Though a servant, she is educated and articulate. Frequently, she does more than observe; she becomes very involved in her employers' lives. Some might call her meddlesome, but most of the characters are so comfortable with her that they have intimate conversations in front of her.

#### ➤ Hindley Earnshaw

Son of **Mr. Earnshaw**, brother of **Catherine**, foster brother of **Heathcliff**, father of **Hareton**, husband of **Frances**. He inherits *Wuthering Heights* from his father. A hardcore drinker and gambler, he falls apart after his wife's death. He evolves from a fun-loving, good-natured boy into an angry, bitter, jealous, and self-destructive man.

### ➤ **Catherine Earnshaw Linton**

Daughter of **Mr. Earnshaw**, sister of **Hindley**, foster sister and true love of **Heathcliff**, wife of **Edgar**, mother of **Cathy**. Gorgeous and fiery with dark curls and penetrating eyes, Catherine is a woman in conflict— she craves the luxury, security, and serenity of ultra-civilized Edgar, even as she runs wild across the moors with brooding and unkempt Heathcliff. She loves Heathcliff with a huge and overwhelming passion. She is impetuous, proud, and sometimes haughty.

### ➤ **Heathcliff**

Foster son of **Mr. Earnshaw**; foster brother of **Hindley** and **Catherine**; husband of **Isabella**; father of **Linton**. Heathcliff is the conflicted villain/hero of the novel. Mr. Earnshaw finds him on the street and brings him home to Wuthering Heights, where he and Catherine become soul mates. He is the ultimate outsider, with his dark "gypsy" looks and mysterious background. Though he eventually comes to own Wuthering Heights, he never seems as fully home in the house as he does on the moors. His love for Catherine is gigantic and untamed and matters to him more than anything else, but it is never easy— it leads him to control and belittle and manipulate nearly everyone around him. Despite his many horrible deeds, Heathcliff is not a straight-out bad guy; he is a poor orphan who finds material success but not what he really wants— the love of Catherine.

### ➤ **Catherine/Cathy Linton Heathcliff Earnshaw**

Daughter of **Edgar** and **Catherine**; wife of Linton Heathcliff and **Hareton Earnshaw** (both her cousins). Young, beautiful, and good-hearted, Cathy has the gumption and passion of her mother and the calm and blonde beauty of her father. She is a complicated teenager who is frequently kind and compassionate but often selfish and inconsiderate, too. Ultimately, she shows the capacity to see past superficial things to the nobility and beauty beneath, a trait her mother lacked.

### ➤ **Hareton Earnshaw**

Son of **Hindley** and **Frances**; husband of young **Cathy**. Hareton lives and works at Wuthering Heights, where his father ignores him and Heathcliff tolerates him; he is shy, rough, illiterate, hard-working, and neglected. By birth, he should be a gentleman, but his guardians purposely neglect his education. Underneath his gruffness is a smart, kind, and sensitive soul.

### ➤ **Edgar Linton**

Brother of **Isabella**, husband of **Catherine**, father of **Cathy**. Sweet, loving, and kind, Edgar is the picture of a country gentleman; he is very handsome and dotes upon both wife and daughter. He initially appears fragile, but, in fact, he is quite strong in a quiet, introspective way. He's not pure goodness, however: he despises **Heathcliff** and can be unforgiving.

## **Minor Characters**

### ➤ **Mr. Earnshaw**

A gentleman farmer. He is father to Hindley and Catherine. Out of kindness, he takes in Heathcliff, an orphan. He is stern. He alienates his biological son by showing interest in Heathcliff. By the time of his death, he has little control over any of his children.

➤ **Frances Earnshaw**

Hindley's wife and Hareton's mother. Frances, a minor character, meets Hindley away from Wuthering Heights. She arrives at Wuthering Heights full of enthusiasm but dies soon after giving birth to her son.

➤ **Isabella Linton**

Sister of Edgar, wife of Heathcliff, mother of Linton. Beautiful and fair, she is raised to be a dainty, delicate lady. She is no match for Heathcliff, who marries her for her claim on Thrushcross Grange rather than for love.

➤ **Linton Heathcliff**

Son of Heathcliff and Isabella; husband of young Catherine. Though lovely looking, Linton is sickly, whiny, effeminate, and weak.

➤ **Joseph**

Long-time servant at Wuthering Heights. He is very religious and judgmental. Joseph speaks in a very thick dialect.

➤ **Zillah**

Housekeeper at Wuthering Heights.

**Check Your Progress**

**1. Draw the character sketch of Heathcliff.**

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## **11.7 Plot of the Novel**

**Mr. Lockwood**, an out-of-towner renting an estate called Thrushcross Grange, twice visits his landlord, **Mr. Heathcliff**, who lives at a nearby manor called Wuthering Heights. During the first visit, Heathcliff is gruff but compelling. During the second, Lockwood meets other mysterious residents of Wuthering Heights, is attacked by dogs when he tries to leave, and endures a ghostly

visitation overnight. Lockwood asks the housekeeper at the Grange, Ellen Dean (a.k.a. "Nelly"), to tell him about Heathcliff and Wuthering Heights. She recounts a complicated story of two families, the Earnshaws and the Lintons.

**Mr. Earnshaw**, a gentleman, owns Wuthering Heights. He has two children, **Hindley** and **Catherine**, and adopts a third, Heathcliff. Hindley is jealous of Heathcliff because both his father and his sister are very fond of the youngster. To avoid strife, Mr. Earnshaw sends Hindley away to college, during which time Catherine and Heathcliff become extremely close. Mr. Earnshaw dies, and Hindley, with a new wife, returns to claim Wuthering Heights. Still bitter, Hindley forces Heathcliff to give up his education and treats him like a servant. Hindley's wife dies soon after giving birth to a baby boy, **Hareton**, however. Hindley descends into alcoholism, though he continues to abuse and mistreat Heathcliff.

Meanwhile, Heathcliff and Catherine grow interested in the Lintons, a well-to-do family who live at Thrushcross Grange. The Lintons have two children, **Edgar** and **Isabella**, who seem very cultured and refined to the somewhat wild inhabitants of Wuthering Heights. After suffering an injury while spying on the Lintons, Catherine Earnshaw spends five weeks with the Lintons, becoming close to Edgar. She finds Edgar's wealth and blonde beauty enticing, yet her feelings for Heathcliff are far more passionate. Even so, Catherine tells Nelly that she can't marry Heathcliff because of how Hindley has degraded him. Heathcliff overhears Catherine, and flees Wuthering Heights that night.

In Heathcliff's absence, a devastated Catherine marries Edgar Linton and moves to Thrushcross Grange. All is well—until Heathcliff returns, now rich and dignified, but just as wild and ferocious. Catherine is thrilled to see Heathcliff again. Edgar doesn't share her excitement. He tries to keep them apart, but Catherine continues to see Heathcliff despite her husband's disapproval. Heathcliff, meanwhile, moves into Wuthering Heights. Hindley, who has become a gambler, welcomes Heathcliff into his home because he lusts after Heathcliff's money.

Soon after, Catherine reveals to Heathcliff that Isabella has a crush on him. Not long after that, she observes the two of them embracing. The developing romance leads to a conflict between Edgar and Heathcliff, after which Edgar demands that Catherine choose between the two of them. Catherine responds by locking herself into her room and refusing to eat for three days. On the third day, she is frenzied and delusional and believes herself near death. That same night, Heathcliff elopes with Isabella.

Edgar nurses Catherine for two months. Her health improves somewhat, though not completely. She also discovers that she is pregnant. At Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff treats Isabella terribly from the moment after their wedding. Edgar, however, refuses to have any contact with Isabella, and fears that Heathcliff wed Isabella solely as a way to try to take Thrushcross Grange from the Lintons. Two months after the wedding, Heathcliff, concerned about Catherine's health, pays a surprise visit to Thrushcross Grange while Edgar is away. In a tearful reunion, Heathcliff and Catherine profess their continuing and eternal love for each other, but Edgar soon returns and Catherine collapses. That night, Catherine gives birth to a girl, **Cathy**, and dies a few hours later. Catherine is buried in a spot overlooking the moors where she used to play with Heathcliff as a child.



Two days later, Isabella escapes from Wuthering Heights and goes to town outside London, where she gives birth to Heathcliff's son, **Linton**. Hindley dies six months later, so deeply in debt to Heathcliff that Heathcliff becomes the owner of Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff then places Hareton into the same kind of servitude into which Hindley once placed him.

Twelve years pass. Cathy grows into a beautiful young woman, while Hareton grows into a rough youth. Isabella dies, and Edgar brings Linton back to Thrushcross Grange, but Heathcliff insists that Linton come to live with him at Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff then carefully and deliberately cultivates a friendship between the weak and spineless Linton and the strong-willed Cathy. Though Edgar at first forbids Cathy from seeing Linton at all, as his own health fails he relents and allows her to meet with Linton at Thrushcross Grange or on the moors. One day, while meeting with Linton on the moors, Heathcliff forces Cathy and Nelly to return with him and Linton to Wuthering Heights. He confines Cathy and Nelly in the house until Cathy marries Linton, which she ultimately does. Cathy escapes from Wuthering Heights long enough to be with her father as he dies, but is soon taken back to Wuthering Heights by Heathcliff. Edgar is buried next to Catherine. Linton dies soon after that, and Heathcliff, because of careful legal maneuverings, now owns both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. Cathy reluctantly lives with Heathcliff and Hareton (whom she constantly mocks for his illiteracy) at Wuthering Heights. This brings the story up to the present, when Lockwood has rented Thrushcross Grange.

Lockwood goes back to London, but passes through the region six months later. Much to everyone's surprise, Cathy and Hareton have fallen in love. Cathy has realized Hareton's nobility and kindness beneath his lack of education. Heathcliff, who sees strong a resemblance in both Hareton and Cathy to Catherine, no longer feels the need for revenge. He dies and is buried beside Catherine (on the side opposite where Edgar is buried). Cathy and Hareton, at last free of interfering adults, plan to marry and move to Thrushcross Grange.

### **Check Your Progress**

#### **1. Comment on the relationship between Heathcliff and Catherine.**

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## **11.8 Chapter – wise Analysis of the text**

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### **Chapter 1**

It is 1801, and the narrator, Mr. Lockwood, relates how he has just returned from a visit to his new landlord, Mr. Heathcliff. Lockwood, a self-described misanthropist, is renting Thrushcross Grange in an effort to get away from society following a failure at love. He had fallen in love with a "real goddess" (6), but when she returned his affection he acted so coldly she "persuaded her mamma to decamp." He finds that relative to Heathcliff, however, he is extremely sociable. Heathcliff, "a dark skinned gypsy, in aspect, in dress and manners a gentleman" (5) treats his visitor with a minimum of friendliness, and Wuthering Heights, the farm where Heathcliff lives,

is just as foreign and unfriendly. 'Wuthering' means stormy and windy in the local dialect. As Lockwood enters, he sees a name carved near the door: Hareton Earnshaw. Dangerous-looking dogs inhabit the bare and old-fashioned rooms, and threaten to attack Lockwood: when he calls for help Heathcliff implies that Lockwood had tried to steal something. The only other inhabitants of Wuthering Heights are an old servant named Joseph and a cook—neither of whom are much friendlier than Heathcliff. Despite his rudeness, Lockwood finds himself drawn to Heathcliff: he describes him as intelligent, proud and morose—an unlikely farmer. Heathcliff gives Lockwood some wine and invites him to come again. Although Lockwood suspects this invitation is insincere, he decides he will return because he is so intrigued by the landlord.

## **Analysis**

This chapter introduces the reader to the frame of the story: Lockwood will gradually discover the events which led to Heathcliff—now about forty years old—living with only his servants at Wuthering Heights, almost completely separated from society. Here, Heathcliff is characterized by casual violence and lack of concern for manners or consideration for other people. This is only a hint of the atmosphere of the whole novel, in which violence is contrasted with more genteel and civilized ways of living.

## **Chapter 2**

Annoyed by the housework being done in the Grange, Lockwood pays a second visit to Wuthering Heights, arriving there just as snow begins to fall. The weather is cold, the ground is frozen, and his reception matches the bleak unfriendliness of the moors. After yelling at the old servant Joseph to open the door, he is finally let in by a peasant-like young man. The bare kitchen is warm, and Lockwood assumes that the young and beautiful girl there is Mrs. Heathcliff. He tries to make conversation but she is consistently scornful and inhospitable, and he only embarrasses himself. There is "a kind of desperation" (11) in her eyes. She refuses to make him tea unless Heathcliff said he could have some. The young man and Heathcliff come in for tea. The young man behaves boorishly and seems to suspect Lockwood of making advances to the girl. Heathcliff demands tea "savagely" (12), and Lockwood decides he doesn't really like him. Trying to make conversation again, Lockwood gets into trouble first assuming that the girl is Heathcliff's wife, and then that she is married to the young man, who he supposes to be Heathcliff's son. He is rudely corrected, and it transpires that the girl is Heathcliff's daughter-in-law but her husband is dead, as is Heathcliff's wife. The young man is Hareton Earnshaw. It is snowing hard and Lockwood requests a guide so he can return home safely, but he is refused: Heathcliff considers it more important that Hareton take care of the horses. Joseph, who is evidently a religious fanatic, argues with the girl, who frightens him by pretending to be a witch. The old servant doesn't like her reading. Lockwood, left stranded and ignored by all, tries to take a lantern, but Joseph offensively accuses him of stealing it, and sets dogs on him. Lockwood is humiliated and Heathcliff and Hareton laugh. The cook, Zillah, takes him in and says he can spend the night.

## **Analysis**

Bronte begins to develop the natural setting of the novel by describing snowstorms and the moors,

and it becomes clear that the bleak and harsh nature of the Yorkshire hills is not merely a geographical accident. It mirrors the roughness of those who live there: *Wuthering Heights* is firmly planted in its location and could not exist anywhere else.

Knowing Emily Brontë's passionate fondness for her homeland, we can expect the same bleakness which Lockwood finds so disagreeable to take on a wild beauty. Its danger cannot be forgotten, though: a stranger to those parts could easily lose his way and die of exposure. Heathcliff and the wind are similar in that they have no pity for weakness. The somewhat menacing presence of the natural world can also be seen in the large number of dogs who inhabit *Wuthering Heights*: they are not kept for pets.

The power dynamics that Lockwood observes in the household of *Wuthering Heights* are extremely important. The girl is evidently frightened of Heathcliff and scornful of Hareton; Hareton behaves aggressively because he is sensitive about his status; Heathcliff does not hesitate to use his superior physical strength and impressive personality to bully other members of his household. The different ways in which different characters try to assert themselves reveal a lot about their situation. Most notably, it is evident that in this house, sheer force usually wins out over intellectual and humane pretensions. The girl is subversive and intellectual, an unwilling occupant of the house, but she can achieve little in the way of freedom or respect.

Lockwood continues to lose face: his conversational grace appears ridiculous in this new setting. Talking to Heathcliff, for example, he refers to the girl as a "beneficent fairy," which is evidently neither true nor welcome flattery. This chapter might be seen, then, as a continuation of the strict division between social ideals (grace, pleasant social interactions, Lockwood) and natural realities (storms, frost, dogs, bluntness, cruelty, Hareton, Heathcliff). If the chapter was taken by itself, out of context, the reader would see that while social ideals are ridiculed, it is clear that the cruel natural world is ugly and hardly bearable. However, these depictions will change and develop as the novel continues.

### Chapter 3

Zillah quietly shows Lockwood to a chamber which, she says, Heathcliff does not like to be occupied. She doesn't know why, having only lived there for a few years. Left alone, Lockwood notices the names "Catherine Earnshaw," "Catherine Linton," and "Catherine Heathcliff" scrawled over the window ledge. He leafs through some old books stacked there, and finds that the margins are covered in handwriting—evidently the child Catherine's diary. He reads some entries which evoke a time in which Catherine and Heathcliff were playmates living together as brother and sister, and bullied by Joseph (who made them listen to sermons) and her older brother Hindley. Apparently Heathcliff was a 'vagabond' taken in by Catherine's father, raised as one of the family, but when the father died Hindley made him a servant and threatened to throw him out, to Catherine's sorrow. Lockwood then falls asleep over a religious book, and has a nightmare about a fanatical preacher leading a violent mob. Lockwood wakes up, hears that a sound in his dream had really been a branch rubbing against the window, and falls asleep again. This time he dreams that he wanted to open the window to get rid of the branch, but when he did, a "little, ice-cold hand" (25) grabbed his arm, and a voice sobbed "let me in." He asked who it was, and was answered: "Catherine Linton. I'm come home, I'd lost my way on the moor." He

saw a child's face and, afraid, drew the child's wrist back and forth on the broken glass of the window so that blood soaked the sheets. Finally he gets free, and insists that he won't let the creature in, even if it has been lost for twenty years, as it claims. He wakes up screaming.

Heathcliff comes in, evidently disturbed and confused, unaware that Lockwood is there. Lockwood tells him what happened, mentioning the dream and Catherine Linton's name, which distresses and angers Heathcliff. Lockwood goes to the kitchen, but on his way he hears Heathcliff at the window, despairingly begging 'Cathy' to come in "at last" (29). Lockwood is embarrassed by his host's obvious agony. Morning comes: Lockwood witnesses an argument between Heathcliff and the girl, who has been reading. Heathcliff bullies her, and she resists spiritedly. Heathcliff walks Lockwood most of the way home in the snow.

## Analysis

It is very important that the ghost of Catherine Linton (who is more than just a figment of Lockwood's imagination) appears as a child. Of course Lockwood thinks of her as a child, since he has just read parts of her childhood diary, but Heathcliff also seems to find it natural that she appeared in the form she had when they were children together. Rather than progressing from childhood on to a mature age with its different values, Heathcliff and Catherine never really grew up. That is to say, the most emotionally important parts of their lives either took place in childhood or follows directly from commitments made then. They never outgrew their solidarity against the oppressive forces of adult authority and religion that is described in Catherine's diary. Thus the ghost of Catherine Linton (that is her married name) tries to return to her childhood sanctuary, which Heathcliff has kept in its original state. This challenges the dominion of linear time.

## Chapter 4

Lockwood is bored and a little weak after his adventures, so he asks his housekeeper, Ellen Dean, to tell him about Heathcliff and the old families of the area. She says Heathcliff is very rich and a miser, though he has no family, since his son is dead. The girl living at Wuthering Heights was the daughter of Ellen's former employers, the Lintons, and her name was Catherine. She is the daughter of the late Mrs. Catherine Linton, was born an Earnshaw, thus Hareton's aunt. Heathcliff's wife was Mr. Linton's sister. Ellen is fond of the younger Catherine, and worries about her unhappy situation.

The narrative switches to Ellen's voice, whose language is much plainer than Lockwood's. She is a discreet narrator, rarely reminding the listener of her presence in the story, so that the events she recounts feel immediate. She says she grew up at Wuthering Heights, where her mother worked as a wet nurse. One day, Mr. Earnshaw offered to bring his children Hindley (14 years old) and Catherine (about 6) a present each from his upcoming trip to Liverpool. Hindley asked for a fiddle and Catherine for a whip, because she was already an excellent horsewoman. When Earnshaw returned, however, he brought with him a "dirty, ragged, black-haired child" (36) found starving on the streets. The presents had been lost or broken. The boy was named Heathcliff and taken into the family, though he was not entirely welcomed by Mrs. Earnshaw,

Ellen, and Hindley. Heathcliff and Catherine became very close, and he became Earnshaw's favourite. Hindley felt that his place was usurped, and took it out on Heathcliff, who was hardened and stoic. For example, Earnshaw gave them each a colt, and Heathcliff chose the finest, which went lame. Heathcliff then claimed Hindley's, and when Hindley threw a heavy iron at him, Heathcliff threatened to tell Earnshaw about it if he didn't get the colt.

## **Analysis**

In this chapter, the narrative turns to the past: from now on, Lockwood will gradually lose importance as the story of Heathcliff and Catherine's childhood becomes more and more vibrant. However, we cannot entirely neglect the role Ellen Dean plays as a narrator: her personality means that the events she recounts are presented in a unique style. She is practical and, like a good housekeeper, tends to incline to the side of order. Even when she was young, she did not really participate in the private lives of the children of Wuthering Heights, and has little access to the relationship of Heathcliff and Catherine. Brontë demonstrates her versatility by using different points of view, faithfully recording each character's distinctive style of speech.

Considering character development, it is interesting to know what Heathcliff and Catherine were like as children since, as we have seen in the previous chapter, their essential natures remain very much the same. Like her mother, Catherine Linton was wilful and mischievous and Heathcliff was uncomplaining but vindictive.

## **Chapter 5**

Earnshaw grew old and sick, and with his illness he became irritable and somewhat obsessed with the idea that people disliked his favourite, Heathcliff. Heathcliff was spoiled to keep Earnshaw happy, and Hindley, who became more and more bitter about the situation, was sent away to college. Joseph, already "the wearisomest, self-righteous Pharisee that ever ransacked a Bible to rake the promises to himself, and fling the curses to his neighbors" (42) used his religious influence over Earnshaw to distance him from his children. Earnshaw thought Hindley was worthless, and didn't like Cathy's playfulness and high spirits, so in his last days he was irritable and discontented. Cathy was "much too fond" of Heathcliff, and liked to order people around. Heathcliff would do anything she asked. Cathy's father was harsh to her and she became hardened to his reproofs.

Finally, Earnshaw died one evening when Cathy had been resting her head against his knee and Heathcliff was lying on the floor with his head in her lap. When she went to kiss her father good night, she discovered he was dead and the two children began to cry, but that night Ellen saw that they had managed to comfort each other with "better thoughts than [she] could have hit on" (44) imagining the old man in heaven.

## **Analysis**

The extremely close and entirely sexless relationship between Heathcliff and Cathy already manifests itself in an opposition to the outside world of parental authority and religion. Cathy is already charming and manipulative, though her love for her father is real. Joseph's false,

oppressive religious convictions contrast with the pure, selfless thoughts of heaven of the grieving children.

Earnshaw's decline and death highlights the bond between the physical body and the spirit. The old man had formerly been charitable, loving, and open, but his physical weakness makes him irritable and peevish: the spirit is corrupted by the body's decline. One might remember that Emily Brontë watched her brother Branwell die wretchedly of alcohol and drug abuse, having had his youthful dreams of gallantry and glory disappointed.

## Chapter 6

Hindley returns home, unexpectedly bringing his wife, a flighty woman with a strange fear of death and symptoms of consumption (although Ellen did not at first recognize them as such). Hindley also brought home new manners and rules, and informed the servants that they would have to live in inferior quarters. Most importantly, he treated Heathcliff as a servant, stopping his education and making him work in the fields like any farm boy. Heathcliff did not mind too much at first because Cathy taught him what she learned, and worked and played with him in the fields. They stayed away from Hindley as much as possible and grew up uncivilized and free. "It was one of their chief amusements," Ellen recalls, "to run away to the moors in the morning and remain there all day, and after punishment grew a mere thing to laugh at" (46).

One day they ran off after being punished, and at night Heathcliff returned. He told Ellen what had happened. He and Cathy ran to the Grange to see how people lived there, and they saw the Linton children Edgar and Isabella in a beautiful room, crying after an argument over who could hold the pet dog. Amused and scornful, Heathcliff and Cathy laughed; the Lintons heard them and called for their parents. After making frightening noises, Cathy and Heathcliff tried to escape, but a bulldog bit Cathy's leg and refused to let go. She told Heathcliff to escape but he would not leave her, and tried to pry the animal's jaws open. Mr. and Mrs. Linton mistook them for thieves and brought them inside.

When Edgar Linton recognized Cathy as Miss Earnshaw, the Lintons expressed their disgust at the children's wild manners and especially at Heathcliff's being allowed to keep Cathy company. They coddled Cathy and drove Heathcliff out; he went back to Wuthering Heights on foot after assuring himself that Cathy was all right. When Hindley found out, he welcomed the chance to separate Cathy and Heathcliff, so Cathy was to stay for a prolonged visit with the Lintons while her leg healed and Heathcliff was forbidden to speak to her.

## Analysis

In this chapter we first hear young Heathcliff speak, and it is worth noting how his language differs from the narrators we have heard so far. He is more expressive and emotional than Lockwood or Ellen, and his speech is more literary than Ellen's and less artificial than Lockwood's. He tends to speak in extreme and vibrant terms: expressing his scorn for Edgar Linton's cowardice and whiny gentility, he says: "I'd not exchange, for a thousand lives, my

condition here, for Edgar Linton's at Thrushcross Grange not if I might have the privilege of flinging Joseph off the highest gable, and painting the housefront with Hindley's blood!" (48) He admires the comparative luxury of the Grange and recognizes its beauty, but he remains entirely devoted to the freedom of his life with Cathy, and cannot understand the selfishness of the spoiled children: "When would you catch me wishing to have what Catherine wanted?" His devotion to Cathy is clear, and he sees it as completely natural and inescapable: "she is so immeasurably superior to them to everyone one earth; is she not, Nelly?" (51) He admires Cathy for her bravery, and he possesses that same kind of courage.

The image of the two civilized children inside the beautiful room forms a parallel to the two wild children outside. Through this use of parallelism, Bronte turns the window glass into a kind of mirror. However, the 'mirror' shows the complete opposite rather than the true images of those who look into it. Although the children are of similar ages, their breeding differs dramatically, as does their relationship—Edgar and Isabella fight, but Heathcliff and Cathy are inseparable.

## **Chapter 7**

Ellen resumes the narrative. Cathy stayed at Thrushcross Grange for five weeks, until Christmas. When she returned home she had been transformed into a young lady with that role's attending restrictions: she could no longer kiss Ellen without worrying about getting flour on her dress. She hurt Heathcliff's feelings by comparing his darkness and dirtiness to Edgar and Isabella's fair complexions and clean clothes. The boy had become more and

## **Analysis**

This chapter marks the end of Cathy and Heathcliff's time of happiness and perfect understanding; Cathy has moved into a different sphere, that of the genteel Lintons, and Heathcliff cannot follow her. Although Cathy still cares for the things she did when the two of them ran wild together, she is under a lot of pressure to become a lady, and she is vain enough to enjoy the admiration and approval she gets from Edgar, Hindley and his wife.

Cathy's desire to inhabit two worlds—the moors with Heathcliff and the parlor with Edgar—is a central driving force for the novel and eventually results in tragedy. Emily Bronte had experienced a personal inability to remain true to herself while interacting in conventional social terms, and she chose to abandon society as a result. Cathy takes a different route.

Just as the window separated the Wuthering Heights children from the Lintons in the last chapter, a material object separates Cathy from Heathcliff in this one. The fine dress she wears is a very real boundary between the old friends: it must be sacrificed (smudged, crumpled) if the two of them are to be as close as they were before. It is valuable for economic reasons (its cost), for social ones (the respect Cathy gets on account of it), and

because of its artificial beauty. These issues will consistently come between Cathy and Heathcliff; he is right to recognize the dress and what it represents as a threat to his happiness.

## **Chapter 8**

Hindley's wife Frances gave birth to a child, Hareton, but did not survive long afterwards: she

had consumption. Despite the doctor's warnings, Hindley persisted in believing that she would recover, and she seemed to think so too, always saying she felt better, but she died a few weeks after Hareton's birth. Ellen was happy to take care of the baby. Hindley "grew desperate; his sorrow was of a kind that will not lament, he neither wept nor prayed—he cursed and defied—execrated God and man, and gave himself up to reckless dissipation" (65). The household more or less collapsed into violent confusion— respectable neighbours ceased to visit, except for Edgar, entranced by Catherine.

Heathcliff's ill treatment and the bad example posed by Hindley made him "daily more notable for savage sullenness and ferocity." Catherine disliked having Edgar visit Wuthering Heights because she had a hard time behaving consistently when Edgar and Heathcliff met, or when they talked about each other. Edgar's presence made her feel as though she had to behave like a Linton, which was not natural for her.

One day when Hindley was away, Heathcliff was offended to find Catherine dressing for Edgar's visit. He asked her to turn Edgar away and spend the time with him instead but she refused. Edgar was by this time a gentle, sweet young man. He came and Heathcliff left, but Ellen stayed as a chaperone, much to Catherine's annoyance. She revealed her bad character by pinching Ellen, who was glad to have a chance to show Edgar what Catherine was like, and cried out. Catherine denied having pinched her, blushing with rage, and slapped her, then slapped Edgar for reproving her. He said he would go; she, recovering her senses, asked him to stay, and he was too weak and enchanted by her stronger will to leave. Brought closer by the quarrel, the two "confess[ed] themselves lovers" (72). Ellen heard Hindley come home drunk, and out of precaution unloaded his gun.

## Analysis

Hindley's dissipation and moral degradation are further evidence that only a strong character can survive defeat or bereavement without becoming distorted. His desperation is a result of his lack of firm foundations: Ellen says that he "had room in his heart for only two idols—his wife and himself—he doted on both and adored one" (65). Evidently it is impossible to live well when only caring about one's self, as Hindley does following his wife's death. It would be interesting to compare Hindley's behaviour and Heathcliff's in the opening chapters: both survive after the deaths of their beloveds and both live in a chaotic and cheerless Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff, however, has not entirely lost contact with Cathy: their closer relationship rules out a complete separation, even after death. Emily Brontë's obvious model for Hindley is her brother Branwell, who was sinking into dissipation when she was writing the novel.

This is the first time we really see Cathy behaving badly, showing that her temper makes the gentle and repressed life led by Edgar Linton unsuitable for her. Here she blushes with rage and in a later chapter she refers to her blood being much hotter than Edgar's: heat and coolness of blood are markers of different personalities. The physical differences between Cathy and Edgar are linked to their moral differences, not only in their appearances but even in their blood and bones.

## Chapter 9

Hindley came in raging drunk and swearing, and caught Ellen in the act of trying to hide



Hareton in a cupboard for his safety. Hindley threatened to make Nelly swallow a carving knife, and even tried to force it between her teeth, but she bravely said she'd rather be shot, and spat it out. Then he took up Hareton and said he would crop his ears like a dog, to make him look fiercer, and held the toddler over the banister. Hearing Heathcliff walking below, Hindley accidentally dropped the child, but fortunately Heathcliff caught him.

Looking up to see what had happened, he showed "the intensest anguish at having made himself the instrument of thwarting his own revenge" (75). In other words, he hated Hindley so much that he would have liked to have him to kill his own son by mistake. If it had been dark, Ellen said, "he would have tried to remedy the mistake by smashing Hareton's skull on the steps." Hindley was somewhat shaken, and began to drink more. Heathcliff told Nelly he wished Hindley would drink himself to death, but that was unlikely to happen as he had a strong constitution.

In the kitchen Cathy came to talk to Nelly (neither of them knew Heathcliff was in the room, sitting behind the settle). Cathy said she was unhappy, that Edgar had asked her to marry him, and she had accepted. She asked Nelly what she should have answered. Nelly asked her if and why she loved Edgar; she said she did for a variety of material reasons: "he will be rich, and I shall like to be the greatest woman in the neighborhood, and I shall be proud of such a husband" (78). Nelly disapproved, and Cathy admitted that she was sure she was wrong: she had had a dream in which she went to heaven and was unhappy there because she missed Wuthering Heights. She said: *"I have no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven; and if the wicked man in there had not brought Heathcliff so low, I shouldn't have thought of it. It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff, now; so he shall never know how I love him; and that, not because he's handsome, Nelly, but because he's more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same, and Linton's is as different as a moonbeam from lightening, or frost from fire."* (81)

Heathcliff left after hearing that it would degrade her to marry him and did not hear Cathy's confession of love. Nelly told Cathy that Heathcliff would be deserted if she married Linton, and Cathy indignantly replied that she had no intention of deserting Heathcliff, but would use her influence to raise him up. Nelly said Edgar wouldn't like that, to which Cathy replied: "Every Linton on the face of the earth might melt into nothing, before I could consent to forsake Heathcliff!" (82)

Later that night it turned out that no one knew where Heathcliff was. Cathy went out in the storm looking for him, unsuccessfully—he had run away. The next morning she was sick. After some time she went to stay with the Lintons a healthier environment and she got better, although Edgar and Isabella's parents caught the fever from her and died. She returned to Wuthering Heights "saucier, and more passionate, and haughtier than ever" (88). When Nelly said that Heathcliff's disappearance was her fault, Cathy stopped speaking to her. She married Edgar three years after Mr. Earnshaw's death, and Ellen unwillingly went to live with her at the Grange, leaving Hareton to live with his wretched father and Joseph.

## Analysis

The atmosphere of careless violence, despair, and hatred in the first part of the chapter is almost

suffocating. Heathcliff's willingness to kill an innocent child out of revenge is the first real indication of his lack of morality. It is unclear whether that immorality is partly a result of his hard childhood and miserable circumstances, or whether he was always like that. Certainly he appears quite changed from the sensitive boy who wanted to look nice so Cathy wouldn't reject him for Edgar, and who relied trustfully on Ellen, but he had spoken of wanting to paint the house with Hindley's blood much earlier.

The definition of love for Cathy and Heathcliff is perhaps Emily Brontë's original creation. It is not based on appearances, material considerations, sexual attraction, or even virtue, but rather a shared being. Cathy says: "I am Heathcliff—he's always, always in my mind—not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself—but as my own being" (82). In this sense, her decision to marry Edgar is a terrible mistake: she will be abandoning the essence of herself. Apparently, the sexual aspect of love is so meaningless for her that she believes marriage to Edgar will not come between her and Heathcliff: she would not consciously abandon her soul. Heathcliff thinks otherwise, since he runs away.

## Chapter 10

Catherine got along surprisingly well with her husband and Isabella, mostly because they never opposed her. She had "seasons of gloom and silence" (92) though. Edgar took these for the results of her serious illness.

When they had been married almost a year, Heathcliff came back. Nelly was outside that evening and he asked her to tell Catherine someone wanted to see her. He was quite changed: a tall and athletic man who looked as though he might have been in the army, with gentlemanly manners and educated speech, though his eyes contained a "half-civilized ferocity" (96). Catherine was overjoyed and didn't understand why Edgar didn't share her happiness. Heathcliff stayed for tea, to Edgar's peevish irritation. It transpired that Heathcliff was staying at Wuthering Heights, paying Hindley generously, but winning his host's money at cards. Catherine wouldn't let Heathcliff actually hurt her brother.

In the following weeks, Heathcliff often visited the Grange. Edgar Linton's sister, Isabella, a "charming young lady of eighteen" (101) became infatuated with Heathcliff, to her brother's dismay. Isabella got angry at Catherine for keeping Heathcliff to herself, and Catherine warned her that Heathcliff was a very bad person to fall in love with and that Isabella was no match for him: *"I never say to him to let this or that enemy alone, because it would be ungenerous or cruel to harm them, I say 'Let them alone, because I should hate them to be wronged'; and he'd crush you, like a sparrow's egg, Isabella, if he found you a troublesome charge."*

Catherine teased Isabella by telling Heathcliff in her presence that Isabella loved him. Humiliated, Isabella tried to run away, but Catherine held her. Isabella scratched Catherine's arm and managed to escape, and Heathcliff, alone with Catherine, expressed interest in marrying Isabella for her money and to enrage Edgar. He said he would beat Isabella if they were married because of her "mawkish, waxen face" (106).

Catherine makes several analogies to the natural world: Heathcliff would crush Isabella "like a sparrow's egg" (103), and he is "an arid wilderness of furze and whinstone" (102). Isabella uses what seems to be a natural metaphor, but is in fact a literary one: she compares Catherine to "a dog in the manger" (102) for keeping Heathcliff to herself. The sisters-in-law speak and think quite differently despite superficial similarities.

There are also important differences between the ways that Edgar and Catherine view class. Edgar thinks that Heathcliff, "a runaway servant" (96), should be entertained in the kitchen, not the parlor. Catherine jokes that she will have two tables laid, one for the gentry (Edgar and Isabella) and one for the lower classes (herself and Heathcliff). Likewise, she and Heathcliff both call the narrator Nelly, while Edgar coldly calls her Ellen.

## **Chapter 11**

Nelly went to visit Wuthering Heights to see how Hindley and Hareton were doing. She saw little Hareton outside, but he didn't recognize her as his former nurse, so he threw a rock at her and cursed. She found that his father had taught him how to curse, and that Hareton liked Heathcliff because he defended Hareton from Hindley's curses, and allowed Hareton to do what he liked. Nelly was going to go in when she saw Heathcliff there; frightened, she ran back home.

The next time Heathcliff visited Thrushcross Grange, Nelly saw him kiss Isabella in the courtyard. She told Catherine what had happened, and when Heathcliff came in the two had an argument. Heathcliff said he had a right to do as he pleased, since Catherine was married to someone else. He said: "You are welcome to torture me to death for your amusement, only, allow me to amuse myself a little in the same style" (112).

Nelly found Edgar, who came in while Catherine was scolding Heathcliff. Edgar scolded Catherine for talking to "that blackguard" (113), which made her very angry, since she had been defending the Lintons. Edgar ordered Heathcliff to leave, who scornfully ignored him. Edgar motioned for Nelly to fetch reinforcements, but Catherine angrily locked the door and threw the key into the fire when Edgar tried to get it from her. Catherine and Heathcliff mocked the humiliated and furious Edgar, so he hit Heathcliff and went out by the back door to get help. Nelly warned Heathcliff that he would be thrown out by the male servants if he stayed, so he chose to leave.

Left with Nelly, Catherine expressed her anger at her husband and Heathcliff: "Well, if I cannot keep Heathcliff for my friend—if Edgar will be mean and jealous, I'll try to break their hearts by breaking my own" (116). Edgar came in and demanded to know whether Catherine would drop Heathcliff's acquaintance, and she had a temper tantrum, ending with a faked "fit of frenzy" (118). When Nelly revealed that the fit was faked, Catherine ran to her room and refused to come out or to eat for several days.

## **Analysis**

Nelly may seem unfeeling in her unsympathetic descriptions of Catherine and Heathcliff, but her behaviour to Hareton and Hindley (who was her foster-brother) reveals her to be extremely

tender-hearted and maternal at times. However, she is independent and spirited, and doesn't like to be bullied or imposed upon by Catherine, so she has no qualms about siding with Edgar Linton when her mistress is being temperamental.

The strain imposed on the three characters—Catherine, Edgar, and Heathcliff—has finally resulted in outright violence: it is no longer possible to conceal the strength of the emotions involved. Edgar is in a particularly difficult situation: Catherine and Heathcliff are used to violent expressions of feeling, but he is not, and hates having to adjust to their modes of communication. He is more committed to gentility of behaviour than the others, although they now appear as well-dressed and cultivated as he does.

Heathcliff and Catherine call Edgar a "lamb," a "sucking leveret," and a "milk-blooded coward" (115). The first two insults are natural images that might easily come to mind for people who grew up on the moors; the third again uses the 'blood' imagery which appears to be central to the way they think about personality.

## Chapter 12

After three days in which Catherine stayed alone in her room, Edgar sat in the library, and Isabella moped in the garden, Catherine called Nelly for some food and water because she thought she was dying. She ate some toast, and was indignant to hear that Edgar wasn't frantic about her. She said: "How strange! I thought, though everybody hated and despised each other, they could not avoid loving me—and they have all turned to enemies in a few hours" (122). It became clear to Ellen that Catherine was delirious, and thought she was back in her room at Wuthering Heights. After seeing her reflection in a mirror, Catherine became frightened because she thought there was no mirror there. She opened the window and talked to Heathcliff (who was not there) as though they were children again. Edgar came in and was very concerned for Catherine, and angry at Ellen for not having told him what was going on.

Going to fetch a doctor, Ellen noticed that Isabella's little dog almost dead, hanging by a handkerchief on the gate. She rescued it, and found Dr. Kenneth, who told her that he had seen Isabella walking for hours in the park with Heathcliff. Moreover, Dr. Kenneth had heard a rumour that Isabella and Heathcliff were planning to run away together. Ellen rushed back to the Grange found that Isabella had indeed disappeared, and a little boy told her he had seen the girl riding away with Heathcliff. Ellen told Edgar, hoping he would rescue his sister from her ill-considered elopement, but he coldly refused to do so.

## Analysis

In her delirium, Catherine reveals that her true emotional identity has not altered since she was twelve, just before she stayed with the Lintons for some weeks. Everything that happened to her since then ceases to have any importance when she is irrational: *"...supposing at twelve years old, I had been wrenched from the Heights, and every early association, and my all in all, as Heathcliff was at that time, and been converted, at a stroke, into Mrs. Linton, the lady of Thrushcross Grange, and the wife of a stranger; an exile, and outcast, thenceforth, from what had been my world You may fancy a glimpse at the abyss where I groveled!"* (125)

Time is unimportant: it has no effect on the true, deep emotions in Brontë's world.

Edgar's coldness to Isabella seems to result from his sister deserting him for his greatest enemy. His willingness to abandon her because of hurt pride is perhaps his greatest moral flaw. The emphasis he places on personal dignity differentiates him from the other characters—who certainly have many faults, though not that one.

## **Chapter 13**

In the next two months Catherine "encountered and conquered the worst shock of what was denominated a brain fever" (134), but it became clear that she would never really recover. She was pregnant. Heathcliff and Isabella returned to Wuthering Heights, and Isabella wrote Edgar an apology and a plea for forgiveness, to which he gave no reply. She later sent Ellen a longer letter asking whether Heathcliff were a demon or crazy, and recounting her experiences. She found Wuthering Heights dirty, uncivilized and unwelcoming: Joseph was rude to her, Hareton was disobedient, Hindley was a half-demented wreck of a man, and Heathcliff treated her cruelly. He refused to let her sleep in his room, which meant she had to stay in a tiny garret. Hindley had a pistol with a blade on it, with which he dreamed of killing Heathcliff, and Isabella coveted it for the power it would have given her. She was miserable and regretted her marriage heartily.

## **Analysis**

Isabella's reactions to her new home reveal her lack of inner fortitude: although she tries at first to stand up to Joseph and Hareton, her ladylike education has in no way prepared her for her married life, so when she loses her pride she has little else to fall back on. Her envy upon seeing Hindley's pistol is a little disconcerting, and she herself is horrified by it.

It is worth noting the unfortunate position of women who depend on men: Isabella cannot escape from Heathcliff without the help of her brother, who does not want to help her. Surrounded by hatred and indifference, she can only fall back on Ellen's pity.

## **Chapter 14**

Ellen, distressed by Edgar's refusal to console Isabella, went to visit her at Wuthering Heights. She told Isabella and Heathcliff that Catherine would "never be what she was" (135) and that Heathcliff should not bother her anymore. Heathcliff asserted that he would not leave her to Edgar's lukewarm care, and that she loved him much more than her husband. He said that if he had been in Edgar's place he would never have interfered with Catherine's friendships, although he would kill the friend the moment Catherine no longer cared about him.

Ellen urged Heathcliff to treat Isabella better, and he expressed his scorn and hatred for his wife (in her presence, of course). He said Isabella knew what he was when she married him: she had seen him hanging her pet dog. Isabella told Ellen that she hated Heathcliff, and he ordered her upstairs so he could talk to Ellen.

Alone with her, he told her that if she did not arrange an interview for him with Catherine, he

would force his way in armed, and she agreed to give Catherine a letter from him.

## Analysis

This chapter includes a great deal of criticism of the Lintons: Edgar is called proud and unfeeling, and Heathcliff says that Isabella was actually attracted by his brutality until she herself suffered from it. Edgar's explanation of his refusal to write to Isabella is extremely unconvincing: "I am not angry, but sorry to have lost her: especially as I can never think she'll be happy. It is out of the question my going to see her, however; we are eternally divided" (145). Edgar is angry, of course, because he hates Heathcliff: presumably he is jealous of him. Heathcliff considers Edgar's version of love to be selfish, as though Edgar thought he owned his wife, and had a right to restrict her behavior: "*Had he been in my place, and I in his, though I hated him with a hatred that turned my life to gall, I never would have raised a hand against him... I never would have banished him from her society, as long as she desired his.*" (147)

Correspondingly, Heathcliff imagines Catherine's affection for Edgar in terms of property: "He is scarcely a degree dearer to her than her dog, or her horse—it is not in him to be loved like me" (148). Bronte has always associated the Lintons with material wealth. Heathcliff extends ideas of property and ownership to their emotions as well.

Isabella's case is somewhat different. Heathcliff despises her because she loves him despite knowing what he is. This is an interesting point: Heathcliff is an obviously romantic figure, with his mysterious past, dark appearance, and passionate emotions. But Bronte makes it very clear that although he exerts a certain amount of fascination, he should in no way be considered a "hero of romance" (149). For doing so, Isabella is called a "pitiful, slavish, mean-minded brach" (150). In this very romantic novel, one can never rely on conventional notions of romance: through Heathcliff's character, Bronte suggests that brutality should never be considered attractive. Even Catherine does not find Heathcliff attractive—she simply finds him inescapable, a part of herself.

## Chapter 15

The Sunday after Ellen's visit to Wuthering Heights; while most people were at church, she gave Catherine Heathcliff's letter. Catherine was changed by her sickness: she was beautiful in an unearthly way *and her eyes "appeared always to gaze beyond and far*

*beyond"* (158). Ellen had left the door open, so Heathcliff walked in and Catherine eagerly waited for him to find the right room. Their reunion was bitter-sweet: though passionately glad to be reunited, Catherine accused Heathcliff of having killed her, and Heathcliff warned her not to say such things when he would be tortured by them after her death—besides, she had been at fault by abandoning him. She asked him to forgive her, since she would not be at peace after death, and he answered: "It is hard to forgive, and to look at those eyes, and feel those wasted hands... I love my murderer—but yours! How can I?" (163) They held each other closely and wept until Ellen warned them that Linton was returning. Heathcliff wanted to leave, but Catherine insisted that he stay, since she was dying and would never see him again. He consented to stay, and "in the midst of the agitation, [Ellen] was sincerely glad to observe that

Catherine's arms had fallen relaxed... She's fainted or dead, so much the better..." (164) Linton came in, and Heathcliff handed him Catherine's body and told him to take care of her: "Unless you be a friend, help her first then you shall speak to me!" He told Nelly he would wait outside for news of Catherine's welfare, and left.

## Analysis

The passionate scene between Catherine and Heathcliff in this chapter is probably the emotional climax of the novel, though it only marks the middle of the book. It reveals how little their love relies on pleasure: they can hardly be said to be fond of one another, or to enjoy each other's company, yet they are absolutely necessary to each other. It is as though they were members of a different species from other humans, and they belonged together. Ellen says: "The two, to a cool spectator, made a strange and fearsome picture"

(160). Catherine tore Heathcliff's hair, and he left bruises on her arm. Later, he "foamed like a mad dog, and gathered her to him with greedy jealousy. [Ellen] did not feel as though [she] were in the company of a member of [her] own species" (162). Love appears to be a form of madness.

Catherine and Heathcliff's emotional reunion is counteracted by Ellen's cool and unsympathetic narration: their passionate conversation is interspersed with dry commentary on her part.

## Chapter 16

Around midnight, Catherine gave birth to a daughter (also named Catherine—she is Catherine Linton, the teenage girl Lockwood saw at Wuthering Heights). Catherine Earnshaw died two hours later without recovering consciousness. No one cared for the infant at first, and Ellen wished it had been a boy: with no son, Edgar's heir was

Isabella, Heathcliff's wife. Catherine's corpse looked peaceful and beautiful, and Ellen decided that she had found heaven at last.

She went outside to tell Heathcliff and found him leaning motionless against an ash tree. He knew Catherine was dead, and asked Ellen how it had happened, attempting to conceal his anguish. Ellen was not fooled, and told him that Catherine had died peacefully, like a girl falling asleep. Heathcliff cursed Catherine and begged her to haunt him so he would not be left in "this abyss, where I cannot find you!... I *cannot* live without my soul!"

(169) He dashed his head against the tree and howled "like a savage beast getting goaded to death with knives and spears." Ellen was appalled.

On Tuesday, when Catherine's body was still lying in the Grange, strewn with flowers, Heathcliff took advantage of Edgar's short absence from the bedchamber to see her again, and to replace Edgar's hair in Catherine's locket with some of his own. Ellen noticed the change, and enclosed both locks of hair together.

Catherine was buried on Friday in a green slope in a corner of the kirkyard, where, Ellen said; her husband now lies as well.

## Analysis

The question of what happens after death is important in this chapter and throughout the novel;

though no firm answer is ever given. Ellen is fairly sure Catherine went to heaven, "where life is boundless in its duration, and love in its sympathy, and joy in its fullness" (167) But Heathcliff cannot conceive of Catherine finding peace when they are still separated, or of his living without her. In the chapter before, Catherine said: "I'm wearying to escape into that glorious world and to be always there; not seeing it dimly through tears, and yearning for it through the walls of an aching heart, but really with it, and in it" (162). It is as though she had in mind a heaven that was like the moors in every way but the constraints of physicality: the spirit of natural freedom.

Another interesting question that comes up in this chapter is that of the value of self-control and reserve: Heathcliff tries to conceal his weakness and grief, holding "a silent combat with his inward agony" (168), but Ellen considers it to be worse than useless, since he only tempts God to wring his "heart and nerves." Yet we know that Emily Brontë herself was incredibly self-disciplined, refusing to alter her everyday life even when suffering a mortal illness.

## Chapter 17

The next day, while Ellen was rocking baby Catherine, Isabella came in laughing giddily. Isabella was pale, her face was cut, and her thin silk dress was torn by briars. She asked Ellen to call a carriage for the nearest town, Gimmerton, since she was escaping from her husband, and to have a maid get some clothes ready. Then she allowed Ellen to give her dry clothes and bind up the wound. Isabella tried to destroy her wedding ring by throwing it in the fire, and told Ellen what had happened to her in the last few days.

Isabella said that she hated Heathcliff so much that she could feel no compassion for him even when he was in agony following Catherine's death. He hadn't eaten for days, and spent his time at Wuthering Heights in his room, "praying like a methodist; only the deity he implored was senseless dust and ashes" (175). The evening before, Isabella sat reading while Hindley drank morosely. When they heard Heathcliff returning from his watch over Catherine's grave, Hindley warned Isabella of his plan to lock Heathcliff out, and try to kill him with his bladed pistol if he came in. Isabella would have liked Heathcliff to die, but refused to help in the scheme, so when Heathcliff knocked she refused to let him in, saying: "If I were you, I'd go stretch myself over her grave, and die like a faithful dog... The world is not worth living in now, is it?" (178) Hindley went to the window to kill Heathcliff, but the latter grabbed the weapon so the blade shut on Hindley's wrist; then he forced his way in.

He kicked and trampled Hindley, who had fainted from the loss of blood, then roughly bound up the wound, and told Joseph and Isabella to clean up the blood.

The next morning when Isabella came down, Hindley "was sitting by the fire, deadly sick; his evil genius, almost as gaunt and ghastly, leant by the chimney" (180). After eating breakfast by herself, she told Hindley how he had been kicked when he was down, and mocked Heathcliff for having so mistreated his beloved's brother, saying to Hindley: "everyone knows your sister would have been living now, had it not been for Mr. Heathcliff"

(182). Heathcliff was so miserable that he could hardly retaliate, so Isabella went on and said that if Catherine had married him, he would have beaten her the way he beat Hindley. Heathcliff threw a knife at Isabella, and she fled, knocking down Hareton, "who was hanging a litter of puppies from a chairback in the doorway" (183). She ran to the Grange.

That morning, Isabella left, never to return to the moors again. Later, in her new home near



London, she gave birth to a son, named Linton, "an ailing, peevish creature." Isabella died of illness when her son was about twelve years old.

Edgar grew resigned to Catherine's death, and loved his daughter, who he called Cathy, very much. Ellen points out the difference between his behavior and Hindley are in a similar situation.

Hindley died, "drunk as a lord" (186), about six months after Catherine. He was just 27, meaning that Catherine had been 19, Heathcliff was 20, and Edgar was 21. Ellen grieved deeply for him they had been the same age and were brought up together. She made sure he was decently buried. She wanted to take Hareton back to the Grange, but Heathcliff said he would keep him, to degrade him as much as he himself had been degraded by Hindley. If Edgar insisted on taking Hareton, Heathcliff threatened to claim his own son Linton, so Ellen gave the idea up.

## **Analysis**

Isabella's tendency toward impotent cruelty shows up again in the character of her son Linton. The question of how cruelty operates in powerful versus weak characters was evidently of great interest to Bronte and might bear further investigation. One obvious point is that weakness is not simply equated with goodness, as is often the case in the Christian tradition. Although the weak are unable to physically express their hatred, they can, like Isabella, use verbal taunts to hurt their enemies emotionally.

Ellen's particular grief for Hindley emphasizes the way characters are paired in the novel: Ellen and Hindley, Heathcliff and Catherine, Edgar and Isabella. These pairs all grew up together (Ellen's mother was Hindley's wet-nurse, so they literally shared mother's milk) under somewhat fraternal conditions. Bronte's careful structure and concern with symmetry are important presences throughout the novel, and form an interesting contrast with the chaotic emotions that seem to prevail.

## **Chapter 18**

In the next twelve years, Cathy Linton grew up to be "the most winning thing that ever brought sunshine into a desolate house" (189). She was fair like a Linton, except for her mother's dark eyes. High-spirited but gentle, she seemed to combine the good qualities of both the Lintons and the Earnshaws, though she was a little saucy because she was accustomed to getting her way. Her father kept her within the park of the Grange, but she dreamed of going to see some cliffs, Penistone Craggs, which were located not too far away on the moor.

When Isabella fell ill, she wrote to Edgar to come visit her, so he was gone for three weeks. One day Cathy asked Ellen to give her some food for a ramble around the grounds— she was pretending to be an Arabian merchant going across the desert with her caravan of a pony and three dogs. She left the grounds, however, and later Ellen went after her on the road to Penistone Craggs, which passed Wuthering Heights. She found Cathy safe and sound there—Heathcliff wasn't home, and the housekeeper had taken her in— chattering to Hareton, now 18 years old. After Ellen arrived, Cathy offended Hareton by asking whether he was the master's son, and when he said he wasn't, deciding that he must be a servant.

The housekeeper told Cathy that Hareton was her cousin, which made her cry. Hareton offered

her a puppy to console her, which she refused. Ellen told Cathy that her father didn't want her to go to Wuthering Heights, and asked her not to tell Edgar about the incident, to which Cathy readily agreed.

## **Analysis**

We have moved from the violent and discordant world of adulthood back to harmonious childhood. The abrupt contrast between the hellish last chapters and this relatively serene and innocent one could hardly be clearer. One might even suppose that we are witnessing a second chance: the story of the first Catherine ended in grief and bloodshed, but perhaps her daughter's life will be more serene. Indeed, there are many similarities between the first Catherine and her daughter, although the mother's bad qualities are minimized in the younger Cathy.

Although Cathy appears to display more Linton characteristics than Earnshaw ones, her desire to explore the wilderness outside of the Grange's park links her strongly to the wild, Wuthering Heights clan. Her sauciness also reminds the reader of her mother, as does her aristocratic unwillingness to be related to Hareton (just as Catherine thought it would degrade her to marry Heathcliff, who was at the time very much like Hareton).

## **Chapter 19**

Isabella died, and Edgar returned home with his half-orphaned nephew, Linton, a "pale, delicate, effeminate boy" (200) with a "sickly peevishness" in his appearance. Cathy was excited to see her cousin, and took to babying him when she saw that he was sickly and childish. That very evening, Joseph came to demand the child on Heathcliff's behalf—Linton was, after all, Heathcliff's son. Ellen told him Edgar was asleep, but Joseph went into Edgar's room and insisted on taking Linton. Edgar wished to keep Linton at the Grange, but could not legally claim him, so he could only put it off until the next morning.

## **Analysis**

The contrast between Cathy and her cousin Linton is very strong: she is energetic and warm-hearted, whereas he is limp and parasitic. It is interesting to see how Bronte distributes conventionally masculine and feminine characteristics among her characters without regard for gender. Linton is pointedly described as being delicate, with fine flaxen hair even lighter than Cathy's: he is the helpless 'lady' of the two, who cries when he doesn't get his way, and allows himself to be cared for by his female cousin.

## **Chapter 20**

The next morning, Ellen woke Linton early and took him over to Wuthering Heights, promising dishonestly that it was only for a little while. Linton was surprised to hear he had a father, since Isabella had never spoken of Heathcliff. When they arrived, Heathcliff and Joseph expressed their contempt for the delicate boy. Heathcliff told Linton that his mother was a "wicked slut" (208) because she did not tell Linton about his father. Ellen asked Heathcliff to be kind to the boy, and he said that he would indeed have him carefully tended, mostly because Linton was

heir to the Grange, so he wanted him to live at least until Edgar was dead and he inherited. So when Linton refused to eat the homely oatmeal Joseph offered him, Heathcliff ordered that his son be given tea and boiled milk instead. When Ellen left, Linton begged her not to leave him there.

## **Analysis**

Bronte's novel is full of innocent children who are abandoned into cold and unfriendly homes: Heathcliff as an orphan in Liverpool; Hindley sent away to college; Heathcliff and Cathy after Earnshaw's death; Hareton and Linton at Wuthering Heights, and Cathy Linton at her father's death. The effect of this is that each character, no matter how ruthless and cruel they may be, contains at their core the same wish for love and the same loneliness as their former childlike selves. We are never able to judge any character too harshly because we know this. Linton is a particularly interesting example of this because he is unpleasant, even as a child, yet one can only pity him for being so abruptly introduced to an unloving father and a home where everyone despises him.

## **Chapter 21**

Cathy missed her cousin when she woke up that morning, but time made her forget him. Linton grew up to be a selfish and disagreeable boy, continually complaining about his health. On Cathy's sixteenth birthday she and Ellen went out on the moors, and strayed onto Heathcliff's land, where he found them. He invited them to come to Wuthering Heights, telling Ellen that he wanted Linton and Cathy to marry so he would be doubly sure of inheriting the Grange. Cathy was glad to see her cousin, though she was somewhat taken back by his invalidish behaviour. Hareton, at Heathcliff's request, showed Cathy around the farm, though he was shy of her and she teased him unkindly. Linton mocked Hareton's lack of education in front of Cathy, showing himself to be mean-spirited.

Later, Cathy told her father where she had been, and asked him why he had not allowed the cousins to see each other. Heathcliff had told her that Edgar was still angry at him because he thought Heathcliff too poor to marry Isabella. Edgar told her of Heathcliff's wickedness, and forbade her to return to Wuthering Heights. Cathy was unhappy, and began a secret correspondence with Linton. By the time Ellen discovered it, they were writing love letters—affected ones on Linton's part, that Ellen suspected had been partially dictated by Heathcliff. Ellen confronted Cathy and burned the letters, threatening to tell her father if Cathy continued to write to Linton.

## **Analysis**

Trespassing becomes an important issue in this chapter, which recalls the scene in Chapter 6 when Cathy Earnshaw and Heathcliff are caught on the Lintons' land. This chapter is almost an inversion of the earlier one, especially considering that this Cathy will marry Linton, just as the earlier Cathy married Edgar. The fact that people frequently leave their property and marriages often result from trespassing speaks to the wild, dynamic quality of the moors. The emphasis on land and privacy might be taken for a metaphor for more emotional intimacy: in order for two people to become close, one must in some way trespass. On the other hand, the marriages

that result from trespassing are unhappy, while those that result from exploration, such as Cathy Linton's first meeting with Hareton in Chapter 18, are happy. Of course, the difference between trespassing and innocent exploration depends entirely on the attitude taken by the people whose lands are being entered.

Often in literature, land and women are identified with one another, so that trespassing could be taken for a metaphor for sex. This hardly seems to be the case in *Wuthering Heights*: Linton and Edgar remain passively in their places while their future wives come to see them. This is consistent with the way the male Lintons are frequently given female characteristics. Isabella, both biologically female and Lintonishly feminine, meets Heathcliff when he intrudes at the Grange.

## Chapter 22

That fall, Edgar caught a cold that confined him to the house all winter. Cathy grew sadder after the end of her little romance, and told Ellen that she was afraid of being alone after Ellen and her father die. Taking a walk, Cathy ended up briefly stranded outside of the wall of the park, when Heathcliff rode by. He told her that Linton was dying of a broken heart, and that if she were kind, she would visit him. Ellen told her that Heathcliff was probably lying and couldn't be trusted, but the next day Cathy persuaded her to accompany her on a visit to Wuthering Heights.

## Analysis

See the analysis of Chapter 20 for a discussion of children left alone in the world—Cathy Linton is not the only character to fear a parent's death, nor is her fear unjustified. Cathy is particularly vulnerable because, as a girl, she will not inherit her father's estate: her father's nephew Linton will. This is a result of legal conventions, and has nothing to do with Edgar's relationship with his daughter.

Emily Brontë was especially conscious of the position of orphaned children: although her father outlived her, her mother, like Cathy's mother, died when she was very young, and Emily's older sister Maria, who took a mothering role with her younger siblings, died in childhood of tuberculosis. See Chapter 12 for further evidence of the importance of abandoned children: in her delirium Catherine Earnshaw remembers a nest of baby birds that died of starvation ("little skeletons") after Heathcliff caught their mother. She had been deeply upset by the sight and made Heathcliff promise never to kill a mother bird again. This may be the key to Brontë's continual emphasis on that theme: she was deeply familiar with the natural world, in which orphaned baby animals stand little chance of survival.

## Chapter 23

At Wuthering Heights, Cathy and Ellen heard "a peevish voice" (236) calling Joseph for more hot coals for the fire. Following the sound of the voice, they discovered Linton, who greeted them rather ungraciously: "No don't kiss me. It takes my breath dear me!" (237) He complained that writing to Cathy had been very tiring, and that the servants didn't take care of him as they ought, and that he hated them. He said that he wished Cathy would marry him, because wives always loved their husbands, upon which Cathy answered that this was not always so. Her father had told

her that Isabella had not loved Heathcliff. Upon hearing this, Linton became angry and answered that Catherine's mother had loved Heathcliff and not Edgar. Cathy pushed his chair and he coughed for a long time, for which she was very sorry. Linton took advantage of her regret and bullied her like a true hypochondriac, making her promise to return the next day to nurse him.

When Cathy and Ellen were on their way home, Ellen expressed her disapproval of Linton and said he would die young—a “small loss” (242). She added that Cathy should on no account marry him. Cathy was not so sure he would die, and was much more friendly toward him.

Ellen caught a cold and was confined to her room. Cathy spent almost all her time taking care of her and Edgar, but she was free in the evenings. As Ellen later found out, she used this time to visit Linton.

## **Analysis**

In this chapter, Bronte explores the intersections between love and power: to what extent does Linton want Cathy to love him freely, and to what extent does he want to have husbandly control over her? It would appear that for him, love is just another form of control: he uses Cathy's love for him to make her do whatever he likes, without any consideration for her own happiness. Is this form of controlling love essentially linked to marriage? That might well be the case: see how the relationship between the older Catherine and her husband Edgar breaks down when he tries to control her friendships.

However, Edgar unmistakably loved Catherine, whereas Linton seems to care for no one but himself. Marriage in *Wuthering Heights* is not an unqualified good: it must be accompanied by unselfish love on both sides in order to be successful.

## **Chapter 24**

Three weeks later, Ellen was much better, and discovered Cathy's evening visits to *Wuthering Heights*. Cathy told her what had happened:

Cathy bribed a servant with her books to take care of saddling her pony and keep her escapades secret. On her second visit, she and Linton had an argument about the best way of spending a summer afternoon: Linton wanted to lie in the heather and dream it away, and she wanted to rock in a treetop among the birds. “He wanted to lie in an ecstasy of peace;” Cathy explained “I wanted all to sparkle, and dance in a glorious jubilee” (248). They made up and played ball until Linton became unhappy because he always lost, but as usual, Cathy consoled him for that.

Cathy looked forward to her next visit, but when she arrived, she met Hareton, who showed her how he had learned to read his name. She mocked him for it. (Here Ellen rebuked Cathy for having been so rude to her cousin. Cathy was surprised by Ellen's reaction, but went on.) When she was reading to Linton, Hareton came in angrily and ordered them into the kitchen. Shut out of his favourite room, Linton staged a frightening temper tantrum, wearing an expression of “frantic, powerless fury” (251) and shrieking that he would kill Hareton. Joseph pointed out that he was showing his father's character. Linton coughed blood and fainted; Cathy fetched Zillah. Hareton carried the boy upstairs but wouldn't let Cathy follow. When she cried,

Hareton began to regret his behaviour. Cathy struck him with her whip and rode home.

On the third day, Linton refused to speak to her except to blame her for the events of the preceding day, and she left resolving not to return. However, she did eventually, and took Linton to task for being so rude. He admitted that he was worthless, but said that she was much happier than he and should make allowances. Heathcliff hated him, and he was very unhappy at Wuthering Heights. However, he loved Cathy.

Cathy was sorry Linton had such a distorted nature, and felt she had an obligation to be his friend. She had noticed that Heathcliff avoided her, and reprimanded Linton when he did not behave well to her.

Ellen told Edgar about the visits, and he forbade Cathy to return to Wuthering Heights, but wrote to Linton that he could come to the Grange if he liked.

## **Analysis**

The contrast between Linton and Cathy's ideas of how to spend an afternoon sums up the differences in their characters. However, the juxtaposition of Linton's peaceful ideal afternoon with his furious temper tantrum is somewhat disconcerting. Are passivity and laziness essentially related to hatred and fury in the novel? This hardly seems possible, considering Edgar's peaceful and generally loving character. However, the juxtaposition serves to remind us that weakness and goodness are not to be carelessly equated.

## **Chapter 25**

Ellen points out to Lockwood that these events only happened the year before, and she hints that Lockwood might become interested in Cathy, who is not happy at Wuthering Heights. Then she continues with the narrative.

Edgar asked Ellen what Linton was like, and she told him that he was delicate and had little of his father in him—Cathy would probably be able to control him if they married. Edgar admitted that he was worried about what would happen to Cathy if he were to die. As spring advanced Edgar resumed his walks, but although Cathy took his flushed cheeks and bright eyes for health, Ellen was not so sure. He wrote again to Linton, asking to see him.

Linton answered that his father refused to let him visit the Grange, but that he hoped to meet Edgar outside sometime. He also wrote that he would like to see Cathy again, and that his health was improved.

Edgar could not consent, because he could not walk very far, but the two began a correspondence. Linton wrote well, without complaining about his health (since Heathcliff carefully edited his letters) and eventually Edgar agreed to Cathy's going to meet Linton on the moors, with Ellen's supervision. Edgar wished Cathy to marry Linton so she would not have to leave the Grange when he died—but he would not have wished it if he knew that Linton was dying as fast as he was.

## **Analysis**

The prominent presence of tuberculosis in this novel is disturbingly prescient, considering that

the illness was soon to be the cause of Brontë's own death. Cathy fools herself into thinking that Edgar is getting better, just as Hindley's wife Frances (and Brontë herself) tried hard to pretend that she was not sick.

In *Wuthering Heights*, death is a mysterious and yet unavoidable presence: the characters cannot simply expect each other to live until they are old. A cold can turn into a fever, which can turn into consumption, ending in the grave. In this chapter, Brontë lays the groundwork for the sudden deaths from illness that will occur in the final third of the novel.

## **Chapter 26**

When Ellen and Cathy rode to meet Linton, they had to go quite close to Wuthering Heights to find him. He was evidently very ill, though he claimed to be better: "his large blue eyes wandered timidly over her; the hollowness round them, transforming to haggard wildness, the languid expression they once possessed" (261). Linton had a hard time making conversation with Cathy, and was clearly not enjoying their talk, so she decided to leave.

Surprisingly, Linton then looked anxiously towards Wuthering Heights and begged her to stay longer, and to tell her father he was in "tolerable health" (262). Cathy half-heartedly agreed, and Linton soon fell into some kind of slumber. He woke suddenly and seemed to be terrified that his father might come. Eventually, Cathy and Ellen returned home, perplexed by his strange behavior.

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## **Analysis**

This chapter reveals a level of cruelty in Heathcliff that has not been seen before. He has no reason to hate his son beyond the fact that he is a Linton, and yet he is perfectly willing to fill Linton's last days with terror and despair. Linton's life is singularly hopeless, and the mere fact that Brontë invented it testifies to the darkness of her vision. Linton is unlikable and dislikes everyone; he will die without ever achieving anything worthwhile or good, and probably without ever having been happy. A more pointless, bitter existence could hardly be imagined. In contrast, Heathcliff seems energetic and happy in this section of the novel, such that he seems to draw vitality from his son's misery.

## Chapter 27

A week later, Ellen and Cathy were to visit Linton again. Edgar was much sicker, and Cathy didn't want to leave him, but he encouraged her relationship with Linton, hoping to ensure his daughter's welfare thereby. Linton "received us with greater animation on this occasion; not the animation of high spirits though, nor yet of joy; it looked more like fear"

(266). Cathy was angry that she had had to leave her father, and she was disgusted by Linton's abject admissions of terror of his father. Heathcliff came upon them, and asked Ellen how much longer Edgar had to live: he was worried that Linton would die before Edgar, thus preventing the marriage. Heathcliff then ordered Linton to get up and bring Cathy into the house, which he did, against Cathy's will: "Linton... implored her to accompany him, with a frantic importunity that admitted no denial" (269). Heathcliff pushed Ellen into the house as well and locked the door behind them. When Cathy protested that she must get home to her father, Heathcliff slapped her brutally and made it clear that she wouldn't leave Wuthering Heights until she married Linton. Linton showed his true character: as Heathcliff said, "He'll undertake to torture any number of cats if their teeth be drawn, and their claws pared" (274). Cathy and Heathcliff declared their mutual hatred. Ellen remained imprisoned separately from Cathy for five days with Hareton as her jailer: he gave her food but refused to speak to her beyond what was necessary. She did not know what was happening to Cathy.

## Analysis

This chapter provides further evidence of Linton's bad character; he thinks exclusively of himself despite Cathy's pain and terror. Cathy's pity and kindness are the causes of her misfortunes here: in the presence of Heathcliff's intelligent hatred, her good qualities only leave her vulnerable to his plans.

## Chapter 28

On the fifth afternoon of the captivity, Zillah released Ellen, explaining that Heathcliff said she could go home and that Cathy would follow in time to attend her father's funeral.

Edgar was not dead yet, but soon would be. Ellen asked Linton where Catherine was, and he answered that she was shut upstairs, that they were married, and that he was glad she was being treated harshly. Apparently he resented that she hadn't wished to marry him. He was annoyed by her crying, and was glad when Heathcliff struck her as punishment.

Ellen rebuked Linton for his selfishness and unkindness, and went to the Grange to get help. Edgar was glad to hear his daughter was safe and would be home soon: he was almost dead, at the age of 39. Upon hearing of Heathcliff's plot to take control of his estate, Edgar sent for Mr. Green, the local attorney, to change his will so that his money would be held in a trust for Cathy. However, Heathcliff bought off Mr. Green and the lawyer did not arrive until it was too late to change the will. The men sent to Wuthering Heights to rescue Cathy returned without her, having believed Heathcliff's tale that she was too sick to travel. Very early the next morning, however, Catherine came back by herself, joyful to hear that her father was still alive. She had convinced Linton to help her escape. Ellen asked her to tell Edgar that she would be content



with Linton so that he could die happy, to which she agreed. Edgar died "blissfully" (283). Catherine was stony-eyed with grief. Mr. Green, now employed by Heathcliff, gave all the servants but Ellen notice to quit, and hurried the funeral.

## **Analysis**

One part of Heathcliff's revenge fails: Cathy manages to escape in time to see her father again, and Edgar dies happy. Given the great importance attached to last words and dying moments, this is a notable victory for Cathy, and an essential one if all of Heathcliff's evil work is to be undone in the end. If Edgar had died miserably, no amount of happy endings could ever have undone that tragedy. This chapter also includes some brief satire of lawyers; much as in modern society, many Victorians considered lawyers to be untrustworthy. Mr. Green's willingness to be bought by the highest bidder demonstrates a moral bankruptcy that rivals Heathcliff's.

## **Chapter 29**

Heathcliff came to the Grange to fetch Catherine to Wuthering Heights to take care of Linton, who was dying in terror of his father. When Ellen begged him to allow Cathy and Linton to live at the Grange, Heathcliff explained that he wanted to get a tenant for the estate (Mr. Lockwood, as it turned out). Catherine agreed to go because Linton was all she had to love, and explained that she pitied Heathcliff because no one loved him. Then she left the room.

Heathcliff, in a strange mood, told Ellen what he had done the night before. He had bribed the sexton who was digging Edgar's grave to uncover his Catherine's coffin, so he could see her face again—he said it was hers yet. The sexton told him that the face would change if air blew on it, so he tore himself away from contemplating it, and struck one side of the coffin loose and bribed the sexton to put his body in with Catherine's when he was dead. Ellen was shocked, and scolded him for disturbing the dead, at which he replied that on the contrary she had haunted him night and day for eighteen years, and—"yesternight, I was tranquil. I dreamt I was sleeping my last sleep, by that sleeper, with my heart stopped, and my cheek frozen against hers" (289).

Heathcliff then told Ellen what he had done the night after Catherine's burial (the night he beat up Hindley). He had gone to the kirkyard and dug up the coffin "to have her in his arms again" (289), but while he was wrenching at the screws he suddenly felt sure of her living presence. He was consoled, but tortured as well: from that night for 18 years he constantly felt as though he could almost see her, but not quite. He tried sleeping in her room, but constantly opened his eyes to see if she were there, he felt so sure she was.

Heathcliff finished his story, and Cathy sadly bade farewell to Ellen.

## **Analysis**

Heathcliff's continued love for Catherine's dead body after 18 years emphasizes the physical, yet non-physical nature of their relationship. It would appear to physical in a way that transcends conventional ideas about sexuality: Heathcliff was pleased to see that Catherine still looked like herself after 18 years, but claimed that if she had been "dissolved into earth,

or worse" (289) he would have been no less comforted by the proximity to her body. His idea of heaven is to be utterly and completely unified with Catherine in body, as in spirit—and this could just as well mean to disintegrate into dust together as to be joined in the act of love. The difference between these two forms of union is that while people are joined during sexual intercourse, their separate bodies and identities remain clear. But in Heathcliff and Catherine's corporeal and spiritual unity, as envisioned by him, an observer would not be able to tell "which is which" (288) This is similar to Catherine's statement in Chapter 9 that she was Heathcliff.

## Chapter 30

Ellen has now more or less reached the present time in her narrative, and tells Lockwood what Zillah told her about Cathy's reception at Wuthering Heights. Cathy spent all her time in Linton's room, and when she came out she asked Heathcliff to call a doctor, because Linton was very sick. Heathcliff replied: "We know that! But his life is not worth a farthing" (292). Cathy was thus left to care for her dying cousin all by herself—Zillah, Hareton and Joseph would not help her—and became haggard and bewildered from lack of sleep. Finally Linton died, and when Heathcliff asked Cathy how she felt, she said: "He's safe and I'm free. I should feel very well but you have left me so long to struggle against death, alone, that I feel and see only death! I feel like death!" (294) Hareton was sorry for her.

Cathy was ill for the next two weeks. Heathcliff informed her that Linton had left all of his and his wife's property to himself. One day when Heathcliff was out, Cathy came downstairs. Hareton made shy, friendly advances, which she angrily rejected. He asked Zillah to ask Cathy to read for them (he was illiterate, but wished to learn) but she refused on the grounds that she had been forsaken during Linton's illness, and had no reason to care for Hareton or Zillah. Hareton said that he had in fact asked Heathcliff to be allowed to relieve her of some of her duties, but was denied. Cathy was in no mood to forgive, however, and thus became the unfriendly young woman whom Lockwood had seen at Wuthering Heights. According to Zillah: "She'll snap at the master himself, and as good dares him to thrash her; and the more hurt she gets, the more venomous she grows" (297). Ellen wanted to get a cottage and live there with Cathy, but Heathcliff would not permit it. Ellen now believes that the only way Cathy might escape from Wuthering Heights is to marry a second time.

## Analysis

Some believe that difficult and painful experiences open the door to personal growth. If this is the case, Cathy's short marriage to Linton should have caused her to grow a great deal from the happy and innocent girl she had formerly been. Instead, it appears to make her venomous and permanently angry. However, one might make the argument that the humbling she undergoes is necessary because, without it, she never would have bothered to see the good in Hareton. Is the time Cathy spends caring for Linton a complete loss, or does she learn anything valuable from it? This is related to the question of whether *Wuthering Heights* is a Christian novel: in Christian theology, suffering is usually considered ennobling. See the analysis of the next chapter for a discussion of the role of education and books in Cathy and Hareton's relationship.

## Chapter 31

Lockwood goes to Wuthering Heights to see Heathcliff and tell him he is moving to London and thus doesn't want to stay at the Grange any longer. He notices that Hareton is "as handsome a rustic as need be seen" (299). He gives Cathy a note from Ellen. Initially, Cathy thinks it is from Lockwood and rejects it, but when Lockwood makes it clear that it isn't, Hareton snatches it away, saying that Heathcliff should look at it first (he isn't home yet). Cathy tries to hide her tears, but Hareton notices and lets the letter drop beside her seat. She reads it and expresses her longing for freedom, telling Lockwood that she can't even write Ellen back because Heathcliff has destroyed her books. Hareton has all the other books in the house: he has been trying to learn to read. Catherine mocks him for his clumsy attempts at self-education: "Those books, both prose and verse, were consecrated to me by other associations, and I hate to hear them debased and profaned in his mouth!" (302) Poor Hareton fetches the books and throws them into her lap, saying he doesn't want to think

about them any longer. She persists in her mockery, reading aloud in "the drawling tone of a beginner," for which Hareton slaps her and throws the books into the fire. Lockwood "read[s] in his countenance what anguish it was to offer that sacrifice to spleen."

Heathcliff enters and Hareton leaves, "to enjoy his grief and anger in solitude" (303).

Heathcliff moodily confides to Lockwood that Hareton reminds him more of Catherine Earnshaw than he does of Hindley. He also tells Lockwood that he will still have to pay his full rent even if he leaves the Grange, to which Lockwood, insulted, agrees. Heathcliff invites Lockwood to dinner, and informs Cathy that she can eat with Joseph in the kitchen.

Lockwood eats the cheerless meal and leaves, contemplating the possibility of his courting Cathy and bringing her "into the stirring atmosphere of the town" (304).

## Analysis

Books take on an important role in the relationship between Hareton and Catherine: Hareton's illiteracy is the most glaring result of Heathcliff's mistreatment of him, designed to reduce him to rustic ignorance. Hareton never rebels against Heathcliff, but his contact with Catherine, who was carefully educated by her father, makes him extremely conscious of his shortcomings. One might wonder how great the value of book-learning is in this novel: Linton, who can read, is obviously inferior to his more vigorous cousin Hareton, which might lead one to think that Brontë is championing native energy over imposed refinement.

However, for Catherine and Hareton to become close it is absolutely necessary for Hareton to wish to educate himself, and in the last chapter their love will be symbolized in the joint reading of a book. Similarly, Heathcliff's youthful degradation really begins when he ceases to follow Catherine's lessons. It appears that book-learning is not enough to make a person good, but that the lack of it is enough to make someone ridiculous. Literacy is, in short, a basic and essential quality.

## Chapter 32

In the fall of 1802, later that year, Lockwood returns to the Grange because he is passing through

the area on a hunting trip. He finds the Grange more or less empty: Ellen is now at Wuthering Heights, and an old woman had replaced her. Lockwood visits Wuthering Heights to see what has changed. He notices flowers growing around the old farm house, and overhears a pleasant lesson from indoors. Cathy, sounding "sweet as a silver bell" (307) is teaching Hareton, now respectably dressed, to read. The lesson is interspersed with kisses and very kind words. Lockwood doesn't want to disturb them, and goes around to the kitchen to find Ellen singing and Joseph complaining as usual. Ellen is glad to see Lockwood and tells them that he will have to settle the rent with her, since she is acting for Cathy.

Heathcliff has been dead for three months. Ellen tells Lockwood what has happened in his absence.

A fortnight after Lockwood left the Grange the previous spring, Nelly was summoned to Wuthering Heights, where she gladly went, hoping to keep Cathy out of Heathcliff's way. She was pleased to see Cathy, but saddened by the way the young woman's personality had changed.

One day when Cathy, Ellen, and Hareton were sitting in the kitchen, Cathy grew tired of the animosity between herself and her cousin and offered him a book, which he refused. She left it close to him, but he never touched it. Hareton was injured in a shooting accident in March, and since Heathcliff didn't like to see him, he spent a lot of time sitting in the kitchen, where Cathy found many reasons to go. Finally her efforts at reconciliation succeeded, and they became loving friends, much to Joseph's indignation.

## **Analysis**

Cathy and Hareton's is not surprising given Brontë's preoccupation with symmetry.. At the beginning of the story, Hindley and Catherine inhabited Wuthering Heights and Edgar and Isabella inhabited the Grange. The obvious symmetrical plot would have been: Hindley married Isabella producing a son, while Catherine married Edgar, producing Cathy. Then Cathy and her male cousin would marry, unifying the two houses completely, and Cathy Linton would become Catherine Earnshaw, taking her mother's maiden name. The harmony of this plot was disrupted by the introduction of Heathcliff, an alien figure who destroyed the potential marital balance. By the end of the novel, however, Heathcliff and his issue are eliminated, and the unifying marriage between the Linton and Earnshaw families will take place after all, as though Heathcliff had never existed. The union between Isabella and Heathcliff should not have taken place, so naturally Linton Heathcliff was a mistake, an unlikable and weakly being. Cathy Linton's marriage to Linton Heathcliff was likewise a mistake, forced by Heathcliff, and in order to preserve the integrity of the pattern, their marriage was childless. For harmony to be reinstated, no descendants of Heathcliff must remain by the end of the novel.

Another beauty of Brontë's plot is that the three names that Lockwood reads when he stays at Wuthering Heights in Chapter 3—Catherine Earnshaw, Catherine Heathcliff, and Catherine Linton—are all assumed at one point or another by each of the two Catherine's. The first Catherine is named Earnshaw, then Linton when she marries Edgar, then perhaps Heathcliff when she and Heathcliff are finally united in the grave. Her daughter is first Catherine Linton, then Heathcliff, then Earnshaw.

## Chapter 33

The next morning Ellen found Catherine with Hareton in the garden, planning a flower garden in the middle of Joseph's cherished currant bushes. She warned them that they would be punished for destroying the bushes, but Hareton promised to take the blame. At tea, Cathy was careful not to talk to Hareton too much, but she put flowers into his porridge, which made him laugh and made Heathcliff angry. Heathcliff assumed Cathy had laughed, but Hareton quietly admitted his fault. Joseph came in and incoherently bewailed the fate of his bushes. Hareton said he had uprooted some, but would plant them again, and Cathy said it had been at her instigation. Heathcliff called her an "insolent slut" (319) and Cathy accused him of having stolen her land and Hareton's. Heathcliff commanded Hareton to throw her out. The poor boy was torn between his two loyalties and tried to persuade Catherine to leave. Heathcliff seemed "ready to tear Catherine in pieces" (319) when he suddenly calmed down and told everyone to leave. Later Hareton asked Catherine not to speak ill of Heathcliff in front of him because Hareton considers him to be his father. Cathy understood his position and refrained from insulting her oppressor from then on. Ellen was glad to see her two 'children' happy together; Hareton quickly shook off his ignorance and boorishness and Catherine became sweet again.

When Heathcliff saw them together he was struck by their resemblances to Catherine Earnshaw, and told Ellen that he had lost his motivation for destruction. He no longer took any interest in everyday life. Catherine and Hareton didn't appear to him to be distinct characters of their own, but apparitions that evoked his beloved. He also felt Hareton to be very much like himself as a youth. But most importantly, his Catherine haunted him completely: "The most ordinary faces of men, and women my own features mock me with a resemblance. The entire world is a dreadful collection of memoranda that she did exist, and that I have lost her!" (324) He told Nelly that he felt a change coming—that he could no longer exist in the living world when he felt so close to that of the dead, or the immortal. Nelly wondered whether he was ill, but decided that he was in fine health and mind, except for his "monomania" (324) for Catherine Earnshaw.

## Analysis

This chapter offers us an extraordinary window into Heathcliff's mind. Whenever he looks at something, he sees Catherine in it, and he hears her voice in every sound. This is Brontë's conception of true haunting, which seems to bear far more resemblance to madness than it does to scary noises in the dark. It is mainly an interior phenomenon: if the ghost of Catherine is at work, she has found her home in Heathcliff's mind, and her vocation in distorting his perception and his ability to communicate with the outside world.

## Chapter 34

In the next few days Heathcliff all but stopped eating, and spent the nights walking outside. Catherine, happily working on her garden, came across him and was surprised to see him looking "very much excited, and wild, and glad" (327). Ellen urged him to eat, and indeed at dinner he took a heaping plate, but abruptly lost interest in food, seemed to be watching something by the window, and went outside. Hareton followed to ask him what was wrong, and Heathcliff told him to go back to Catherine and not bother him. He came back an hour or two

later, with the same "unnatural appearance of joy" (328), shivering the way a "tight-stretched cord vibrates a strong thrilling, rather than trembling." Ellen asked him what was going on, and he answered that he was within sight of his heaven, hardly three feet away. His heaven, needless to say, was being buried alongside Catherine Earnshaw.

Later that evening, Ellen found Heathcliff sitting in the dark with all the windows open. His black eyes and pale face frightened her. Ellen half-wondered if he were a vampire, but told herself that she was foolish, since she had watched him grow up. The next day he was even more restless and could hardly speak coherently, and stared with fascination at nothing with an "anguished, yet raptured expression" (331). Early the next morning, he declared he wanted to settle things with his lawyer, Mr. Green. Ellen said he should eat, and get some sleep, but he replied that he could do neither: "My soul's bliss kills my body, but does not satisfy itself" (333). Ellen told him to repent his sins, and he thanked her for the reminder and asked her to make sure that he was buried next to Catherine: "I have nearly attained my heaven; and that of others is altogether unvalued, and uncoveted by me." Heathcliff behaved more and more strangely, talking openly of Catherine. Ellen called the doctor, but Heathcliff refused to see him. The next morning she found him dead in his room, by the open window, wet from the rain and cut by the broken window-pane, with his eyes fiercely open and wearing a savage smile. Hareton mourned deeply for him. The doctor wondered what could have killed him, although Ellen knew that it was Heathcliff's depression. He was buried alongside Catherine's remains, as he had asked. People claim that his ghost roams the moors with Catherine. Ellen once came across a little boy crying because he believed he had seen Heathcliff's phantom with a woman and dared not pass them.

Cathy and Hareton are engaged, and they plan to move to the Grange, leaving Wuthering Heights to Joseph and the ghosts. Lockwood notices on his walk home that the church was falling apart from neglect, and he found the three headstones—Catherine's, Edgar's, and Heathcliff's—covered by varying degrees of heather. He "wondered how anyone could ever imagine unquiet slumbers, for sleepers in that quiet earth" (337).

## Analysis

An essential question for thinking about this novel is: does it end happily or not, and why? Is the novel on the side of the Grange and civilization, since Catherine and Hareton move there after Heathcliff dies? Or should we miss the passionate intensity of *Wuthering Heights*? Who wins? It seems at first that the Grange wins, and yet we should remember that Heathcliff achieves his version of heaven as well. Several film versions of *Wuthering Heights* prefer to delete the whole second half of the novel, ending dramatically with Catherine's death—they find that the restabilising second half detracts from the romance and power of the first part. Is this the case? Did Bronte add the second half because society would not have accepted the first half alone?

When considering these questions, it is important to keep in mind the novel's carefully designed, symmetrical structure. This might lead to the conclusion that civilization really does win, since the marriage of Cathy and Hareton is the final and necessary conclusion to two generations of unrest, and all traces of Heathcliff disappear. In another sense, however, Cathy and Hareton resemble the earlier Catherine and Heathcliff, purified of their wilder and more

antisocial elements. Their marriage could be an echo of the marriage that never took place between Catherine and Heathcliff. This is supported by the fact that the story begins and ends with a Catherine Earnshaw, and that the name Hareton is very similar to Heathcliff.

In another reading, one might remember that Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff belonged above all to the natural and immaterial world, whereas the Lintons belonged to a material society. The reunion in death of the two lovers constitutes their achievement of complete freedom—as far as they are concerned, it hardly matters what happens on earth. Heathcliff's realization at the end of the novel that he no longer cares about getting revenge on Hindley and Edgar, both long dead, supports this interpretation.

One might also conclude that Emily Brontë was really more drawn to her wild characters—Catherine and Heathcliff—but realized that their extreme personalities posed a great threat to the existence of peaceful life on earth. Perhaps she eliminated them because she was unwilling to sacrifice the rest of the world for such a wild ideal, whatever its appeal. In this case the ambiguous conclusion of the novel may represent an inner conflict in the author herself.

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## 11.9 OTHER BOOKS RELATED TO WUTHERING HEIGHTS

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Like Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, *Wuthering Heights* contains elements of Gothic literature as well as Romanticism, which focuses on people's natural goodness and imagination and favors "the sublime" of nature and spirituality over urbanity and technology. Yet Brontë's novel also has much in common with George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871), which realistically examines life in a provincial village.

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### 11.10 Summary

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*Wuthering Heights* is constructed around a series of dialectic motifs that interconnect and unify the elements of setting, character, and plot. An examination of these motifs will give the reader the clearest insight into the central meaning of the novel. Although *Wuthering Heights* is a "classic," as Frank Kermode has noted, precisely because it is open to many different critical methods and conducive to many levels of interpretation, the novel grows from a coherent imaginative vision that underlies all the motifs. That vision demonstrates that all human perception is limited and failed. The fullest approach to Emily Brontë's novel is through the basic patterns that support this vision.

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### 11.11 Key Terms

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**Doubles:** Brontë organizes her novel by arranging its elements—characters, places, and themes—into pairs. Catherine and Heathcliff are closely matched in many ways, and see themselves as identical. Catherine's character is divided into two warring sides: the side that wants Edgar and the side that wants Heathcliff. Catherine and her daughter Cathy are both remarkably similar and strikingly different. The two houses, Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, represent opposing worlds and values.

**Repetition:** Repetition is another tactic Brontë employs in organizing *Wuthering Heights*. It seems that nothing ever ends in the world of this novel. Instead, time seems to run in cycles, and the horrors of the past repeat themselves in the present. The way that the names of the characters are recycled, so that the names of the characters of the younger generation seem only to be rescrablings of the names of their parents, leads the reader to consider how plot elements also repeat themselves. For instance, Heathcliff's degradation of Hareton repeats Hindley's degradation of Heathcliff. Also, Cathy's mockery of Joseph's earnest evangelical zealousness repeats her mother's. Even Heathcliff's second try at opening Catherine's grave repeats his first.

**Futility:** uselessness as a consequence of having no practical result. type of: inutility, unusefulness, uselessness.

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## 11.12 Review Questions

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1. Trace out the life of Heathcliff in the novel.
2. How did Heathcliff face the criticism of the society? Elucidate with examples from the text.
3. Describe the beauty of Catherine.
4. Trace the love affair of Heathcliff and Catherine in the novel.
5. How did Heathcliff manage to buy a house just next to Catherine's?

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## UNIT 12: WUTHERING HEIGHTS–NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES AND THEMES

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### STRUCTURE

- 12.1 Objectives
- 11.2 Introduction
- 12.3 Themes
- 12.4 Stylistic Devices
- 12.5 Symbols
- 12.6 Assessment of *Wuthering Heights*
- 12.7 Motifs
- 12.8 Summary
- 12.9 Key Terms
- 12.10 Review Questions
- 12.11 References

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### 12.1 Objectives

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The learners shall know the following:

- The other perspectives of the text
- The symbols used in the text.
- The motifs used in the text.
- The important terms used in the novel.

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### 12.2 Introduction

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Besides poetry and novel writing, Brontë was an excellent pianist, enjoyed painting and sketching, and loved animals. She would still enjoy piano today and maybe even experiment with other instruments like guitar or violin. Given her love for art and nature, she would enjoy photography and using her shots as inspiration for her art. She would probably even have a blog or YouTube channel where she shared her art and love for writing.

*Wuthering Heights*'s violence and passion led the Victorian public and many early reviewers to think that it had been written by a man. According to Juliet Gardiner, "the vivid sexual passion and power of its language and imagery impressed, bewildered and appalled reviewers." Literary critic Thomas Joudrey further contextualizes this reaction: "Expecting in the wake of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* to be swept up in an earnest Bildungsroman, they were instead shocked and confounded by a tale of unchecked primal passions, replete with savage cruelty and outright barbarism."

Even though the novel received mixed reviews when it first came out, and was often condemned for its portrayal of amoral passion, the book subsequently became an English literary classic. Emily Brontë never knew the extent of fame she achieved with her only novel, as she died a year after its publication, aged 30.

Although a letter from her publisher indicates that Emily had begun to write a second novel, the manuscript has never been found. Perhaps Emily or a member of her family eventually destroyed

the manuscript, if it existed, when she was prevented by illness from completing it. It has also been suggested that, though less likely, the letter could have been intended for Anne Brontë, who was already writing *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, her second novel.

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## 12.3 Themes

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### ➤ Gothic Literature and the Supernatural

From beginning to end, *Wuthering Heights* is a novel full of ghosts and spirits. Dead characters refuse to leave the living alone, and the living accept that the deceased find ways of coming back to haunt them. In a departure from traditional Gothic tales, these hauntings are sometimes welcome. **Heathcliff**, for instance, repeatedly seeks out visitations from the ghost of his beloved **Catherine**. He even digs up her grave in order to be closer to her. Brontë uses otherworldly figures to emphasize the ferocity of Heathcliff's and Catherine's love; their connection is so powerful that even death can't stop it.

### ➤ Nature and Civilization

Pitting nature against civilization, Emily Brontë promotes the Romantic idea that the sublime—the awe-inspiring, almost frightening, beauty of nature—is superior to man-made culture. She makes this point by correlating many of the characters with one side or the other and then squaring them off against each other. For instance, **Heathcliff**, whose origins are unknown and who roams the moors, is definitely on the nature side, while his rival, the studious **Edgar Linton**, is in the civilized camp. Other pairings include Hareton Earnshaw vs. Linton Earnshaw; **Catherine** vs. **Isabella**; and Hareton vs. **Cathy**. In all of these cases, Brontë makes one character a bit wild (perhaps by showing them in tune with animals and/or the outdoors and/or their emotions), while portraying the other as somewhat reserved and often prissy or fussy.

But nothing is black and white in *Wuthering Heights*. Many of the characters exhibit traits from both sides. While Brontë argues that nature is somehow purer, she also lauds civilization, particularly in terms of education. Hareton Earnshaw personifies this combination of nature and civilization: Brontë associates the young orphan with nature (he is a coarse, awkward farm boy) as well as civilization (inspired by his desire for young Cathy, he learns how to read). This mixture of down-to-earth passion and book-centered education make him, arguably, the most sympathetic character in the book.

### ➤ Love and Passion

*Wuthering Heights* explores a variety of kinds of love. Loves on display in the novel include Heathcliff and Catherine's all-consuming passion for each other, which while noble in its purity is also terribly destructive. In contrast, the love between Catherine and Edgar is proper and civilized rather than passionate. Theirs is a love of peace and comfort, a socially acceptable love, but it can't stand in the way of Heathcliff and Catherine's more profound (and more violent) connection.

The love between Cathy and Linton is a grotesque exaggeration of that between Catherine and Edgar. While Catherine always seems just a bit too strong for Edgar, Cathy and Linton's love is *founded* on Linton's weakness—Linton gets Cathy to love him by playing on her desire to protect and mother him. Finally, there's the love between Cathy and Hareton, which seems to balance the traits of the other loves on display. They have the passion of Catherine and Heathcliff without the destructiveness, and the gentleness shared by Edgar and Catherine without the dullness or inequality in power.

### ➤ Masculinity and Femininity

Written when gender roles were far more rigid and defined than they are now, *Wuthering Heights* examines stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. Emily Brontë constantly contrasts masculinity and femininity, but not all of the comparisons are simple; sometimes boys act like girls and girls act like boys. **Edgar Linton** and Linton Heathcliff, for instance, are men, but Brontë frequently describes them as having the looks and attributes of women. Likewise, **Catherine Earnshaw** has many masculine characteristics; even though she is outrageously beautiful, she loves rough, outdoor play and can hold her own in any fight. She is a complex mix of hyper-feminine grace and loveliness and ultra-masculine anger and recklessness. **Heathcliff**, with his physical and mental toughness, has no such ambiguities—he is exaggeratedly masculine and scorns his wife Isabella for her overblown femininity.

Emily Brontë seems to favor masculinity over femininity, even in her women. In general, she portrays weak, delicate characters with contempt, while she treats strong and rugged characters like Heathcliff, both Catherines, and Hareton, with compassion and admiration, despite their flaws.

### ➤ Class

Understanding the importance of class in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain is essential to understanding *Wuthering Heights*. Generally, at the time, people were born into a class and stayed there: if your parents were rich and respected (like Edgar's), you would be, too; if your parents were servants (like Nelly Dean's), you probably would be too. Social mobility—the idea that you can change your class status (usually for the better)—was not commonplace.

In Brontë's novel, however, class distinctions are constantly changing, much to the confusion of the characters. There are two primary examples of this: **Heathcliff** and **Hareton**. Because no one knows anything about Heathcliff's background, they all treat him differently. **Mr. Earnshaw** adopts him and treats him like a son, but the snobby Lintons refuse to socialize with him. When he disappears for a few years and comes back rich, the characters struggle even more over how to approach him—he now has money and land, but many of them still consider him a farm boy. Likewise, Hareton has a hard time gaining respect. The son of **Hindley**, Hareton should be the heir to *Wuthering Heights*. With land and standing, he ought to be a gentleman. However, Heathcliff refuses to educate him, and everyone else mostly ignores him, so his manners (a very important indicator of class status) are rough and gruff. Only when young Cathy helps educate him does he achieve the class standing to which he was born.

## ➤ Revenge and Repetition

Nearly all of the action in *Wuthering Heights* results from one or another character's desire for revenge. The result are cycles of revenge that seem to endlessly repeat. **Hindley** takes revenge on Heathcliff for taking his place at Wuthering Heights by denying him an education, and in the process separates **Heathcliff** and **Catherine**. Heathcliff then takes revenge upon Hindley by, first, dispossessing Hindley of Wuthering Heights and by denying an education to **Hareton**, Hindley's son. Heathcliff also seeks revenge on Edgar for marrying Catherine by marrying **Cathy** to **Linton**.

Yet while Heathcliff's revenge is effective, it seems to bring him little joy. Late in the novel, Cathy sees this, and tells Heathcliff that *her* revenge on *him*, no matter how miserable he makes her, is to know that he, Heathcliff, is *more* miserable. And it is instructive that only when Heathcliff loses his desire for revenge is he able to finally reconnect with Catherine in death, and to allow Cathy and Hareton, who are so similar to Heathcliff and Catherine, to find love and marry.

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## 12.4 Stylistic Devices

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*Wuthering Heights* (1847), her first and only novel, of **Gothic** style, is an impressive achievement. The novel caused immediate surprise and wonder; despite bad critics on unreasonable moral grounds at the time, it impressed the readers to the extent of becoming one of the most widely read English classics today. The plot revolves around the location of Wuthering Heights, a country-house charged with dolours of the past, and **Heathcliff, an aggressive, coarse landlord** behind a façade of gentlemanliness who, in spite of this, arouses passions. He is a sort of Gothic **perversion of the Byronic hero**, but evolves throughout the novel. Sentimental demons of **intense love and hate** play with the characters in an atmosphere of **domestic and interior** problems and intrigues. A serious critical message comes across, displaying people's self-destruction by changing their ways to fit in society, according to matters of class and appearance, which thus creates a **chasm between true feeling and social hypocrisy**. The **supernatural** (ghosts in particular) also has an important role, together with the unnatural metamorphoses of the characters that are alive. Regarding the novel's form, it reaches moments of **beautifully poetic description** and overall has a **constant euphonic contact with sound**, particularly that of the moors' wind, as implied in the title, in a very lively and innovative fashion.

## ➤ Narration

The power of *Wuthering Heights* owes much to its complex narrative structure and to the ingenious device of having two conventional people relate a very unconventional tale. The story is organized as a narrative within a narrative, or what some critics call "Chinese boxes." Lockwood is used to open and end the novel in the present tense, first person ("I"). When he returns to Thrushcross Grange from his visit to Wuthering Heights sick and curious, Nelly

cheerfully agrees to tell him about his neighbors. She picks up the narrative and continues it, also in the first person, almost until the end, with only brief interruptions by Lockwood. The critic David Daiches notes in his introduction of *Wuthering Heights* the "fascinating counterpoint" of "end retrospect and present impression," and that the strength of the story relies on Nelly's familiarity with the main characters.

## **Repetition**

Repetition is another tactic Brontë employs in organizing *Wuthering Heights*. It seems that nothing ever ends in the world of this novel. Instead, time seems to run in cycles, and the horrors of the past repeat themselves in the present. The way that the names of the characters are recycled, so that the names of the characters of the younger generation seem only to be rescramblings of the names of their parents, leads the reader to consider how plot elements also repeat themselves. For instance, Heathcliff's degradation of Hareton repeats Hindley's degradation of Heathcliff. Also, the young Catherine's mockery of Joseph's earnest evangelical zealotness repeats her mother's. Even Heathcliff's second try at opening Catherine's grave repeats his first.

### **Check Your Progress**

1. Comment on the writing style of Emily Bronte.

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## **12.5 Symbols**

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### **Moors**

The constant emphasis on landscape within the text of *Wuthering Heights* endows the setting with symbolic importance. This landscape is comprised primarily of moors: wide, wild expanses, high but somewhat soggy, and thus infertile. Moorland cannot be cultivated, and its uniformity makes navigation difficult. It features particularly waterlogged patches in which people could potentially drown. (This possibility is mentioned several times in *Wuthering Heights*.) Thus, the moors serve very well as symbols of the wild threat posed by nature. As the setting for the beginnings of Catherine and Heathcliff's bond (the two play on the moors during childhood), the moorland transfers its symbolic associations onto the love affair.

### **Ghosts**

Ghosts appear throughout *Wuthering Heights*, as they do in most other works of Gothic fiction, yet Brontë always presents them in such a way that whether they really exist remains ambiguous. Thus the world of the novel can always be interpreted as a realistic one. Certain ghosts—such as Catherine's spirit when it appears to Lockwood in Chapter III—may be explained as nightmares. The villagers' alleged sightings of Heathcliff's ghost in Chapter

XXXIV could be dismissed as unverified superstition. Whether or not the ghosts are “real,” they symbolize the manifestation of the past within the present, and the way memory stays with people, permeating their day-to-day lives.

## Wuthering Heights

The childhood home of many of the book's characters (**Heathcliff**, **Catherine**, **Hindley**, **Nelly Dean**, and **Hareton**), Wuthering Heights is a centuries-old farmhouse that symbolizes simplicity, wildness, and passion. Sturdy, substantial, and stubborn, the house is at one with the surrounding moors; it is fierce but unchanging. Its inhabitants share its characteristics—like it or not, they are in touch with their raw, natural, and animalistic instincts. Wuthering Heights stands for unfettered, primal emotions—it *is* nature.

## Thrushcross Grange

Thrushcross Grange, the house owned by the Lintons and then inhabited by **Lockwood**, is a symbol of tamed, refined, civilized culture. Even when **Heathcliff** owns it, he chooses to rent it rather than live in it, for its formality does not suit the likes of him. In contrast to Wuthering Heights, “The Grange” stands for manners and civility. It is an outpost of education and urbanity in the midst of the wildness of the northern English moors.

## The Weather

The frequent storms and wind that sweep through *Wuthering Heights* symbolize how the characters are at the mercy of forces they cannot control. For example, **Lockwood**, the city boy, thinks he can walk back to Thrushcross Grange through a storm, but the nature-respecting folks at Wuthering Heights tell him he's crazy; they know that the weather—nature—is far stronger than he is. Brontë uses the weather as a metaphor for nature, which she portrays as a magnificently strong force that can conquer any character. The strongest characters are those who give the weather the respect it deserves.

### Check Your Progress

1. Discuss the title used as a symbol in the novel.

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## 12.6 Assessment of *Wuthering Heights*

### Family Connections

Emily wrote *Wuthering Heights*, but it was Charlotte who edited and published the novel after Emily's death, in addition to penning the preface to the work (it was originally published in 1847, a year before Emily died and three years before Charlotte's edition was published). Charlotte additionally added a Biographical Notice, publicly admitting for the first time that the mysterious authors Currer, Ellis, and Action Bell were in fact three women (Ref 2). Charlotte takes the preface as a chance to both praise her sister's work and express doubt on the inclusion of some of the controversial elements.

The Preface reveals that, while Charlotte admired her sister's work, she was not afraid to point to its "faults," or to debate the controversial elements of *Wuthering Heights*. She discusses the great loss that many readers will experience, as anyone unfamiliar with the passions and wildness of northern England will not be able to appreciate Emily's skill in representing these qualities. She also acknowledges that Emily—a woman not inclined to converse with the people around her yet knew much about them by listening—may have had a darker view of people than most; as Charlotte claims, when all one knows of people is facts about them, the mind clings to "tragic and terrible traits," which stick out in memory. Charlotte also expresses doubt that it is "right or advisable" for her sister to have written a character as dark as Heathcliff; however, she notes that it hardly matters, because the writer is "not always master" of her art, and "little deserve[s] blame" if her creative product is unattractive (Ref 3). Even having pointed to these faults, though, Charlotte herself does not even hint at the contention that any of these elements make *Wuthering Heights* of lesser quality. In fact, she ends her Preface first on the concept that Emily—or an author, for that matter—is not necessarily responsible for the controversial elements of the novel, at least the ones that she addresses in the Preface. She also notes that, despite all this, *Wuthering Heights* is an impressive work, and ends her Preface on that note.

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## 12.7 Motifs

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### Doubles

Brontë organizes her novel by arranging its elements—characters, places, and themes—into pairs. Catherine and Heathcliff are closely matched in many ways, and see themselves as identical. Catherine's character is divided into two warring sides: the side that wants Edgar and the side that wants Heathcliff. Catherine and her daughter Cathy are both remarkably similar and strikingly different. The two houses, Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, represent opposing worlds and values.

The novel has not one but two distinctly different narrators, Nelly and Mr. Lockwood. The relation between such paired elements is usually quite complicated, with the members of each pair being neither exactly alike nor diametrically opposed. For instance, the Lintons and the Earnshaws may at first seem to represent opposing sets of values, but, by the end of the novel, so many intermarriages have taken place that one can no longer distinguish between the two families.

## Repetition

Repetition is another tactic Brontë employs in organizing *Wuthering Heights*. It seems that nothing ever ends in the world of this novel. Instead, time seems to run in cycles, and the horrors of the past repeat themselves in the present. The way that the names of the characters are recycled, so that the names of the characters of the younger generation seem only to be rescramblings of the names of their parents, leads the reader to consider how plot elements also repeat themselves. For instance, Heathcliff's degradation of Hareton repeats Hindley's degradation of Heathcliff. Also, Cathy's mockery of Joseph's earnest evangelical zealotry repeats her mother's. Even Heathcliff's second try at opening Catherine's grave repeats his first.

## The Conflict Between Nature and Culture

In *Wuthering Heights*, Brontë constantly plays nature and culture against each other. Nature is represented by the Earnshaw family, and by Catherine and Heathcliff in particular. These characters are governed by their passions, not by reflection or ideals of civility. Correspondingly, the house where they live—Wuthering Heights—comes to symbolize a similar wildness. On the other hand, Thrushcross Grange and the Linton family represent culture, refinement, convention, and cultivation. When, in Chapter VI, Catherine is bitten by the Lintons' dog and brought into Thrushcross Grange, the two sides are brought onto the collision course that structures the majority of the novel's plot. At the time of that first meeting between the Linton and Earnshaw households, chaos has already begun to erupt at Wuthering Heights, where Hindley's cruelty and injustice reign, whereas all seems to be fine and peaceful at Thrushcross Grange.

However, the influence of *Wuthering Heights* soon proves overpowering, and the inhabitants of Thrushcross Grange are drawn into Catherine, Hindley, and Heathcliff's drama. Thus the reader almost may interpret *Wuthering Heights*'s impact on the Linton family as an allegory for the corruption of culture by nature, creating a curious reversal of the more traditional story of the corruption of nature by culture.

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## 12.8 Summary

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However, Brontë tells her story in such a way as to prevent our interest and sympathy from straying too far from the wilder characters, and often portrays the more civilized characters as despicably weak and silly. This method of characterization prevents the novel from flattening out into a simple privileging of culture over nature, or vice versa. Thus in the end the reader must acknowledge that the novel is no mere allegory.

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## 12.9 Key Terms

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- **Revenge Tragedy:** Revenge tragedy, drama in which the dominant motive is revenge for a real or imagined injury; it was a favourite form of English tragedy in the Elizabethan



and Jacobean eras and found its highest expression in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

- **Gothic Novel: Gothic fiction**, sometimes called **Gothic horror** (primarily in the 20th century), is a loose literary aesthetic of fear and haunting. The name refers to Gothic architecture of the European Middle Ages, which was characteristic of the settings of early Gothic novels.
- **Thrushcross Grange**: Thrushcross Grange represents the positive aspects of wealth and education. The residents of this house are well-educated and civilized. They are also generally calm, well-mannered, and happy.
- **Conflict**: to be in active disagreement, as between opposing opinions or needs: We received reports that conflict with each other.

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## 12.10 Review Questions

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1. Justify the title of the novel *Wuthering Heights*.
2. Discuss the various themes of the novel *Wuthering Heights*.
3. Justify the novel as a revenge tragedy.
4. Comment on the love and revenge relationship of Heathcliff and Catherine.
5. Elucidate the difference between Thrushcross Grange and *Wuthering Heights*.

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## **BLOCK-4: TRAVEL NARRATIVES AND NOVELLAS**

UNIT 13: Travel Narratives

UNIT 14: Jonathan Swift and Gulliver's Travels

UNIT 15: Richardson and Novella

UNIT 16: Pamela – An Analysis

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## UNIT 13: TRAVEL NARRATIVES

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### STRUCTURE

- 13.1 Objectives
- 13.2 Introduction
- 13.3 History
- 13.4 Travel Books
- 13.5 Adventure Literature
- 13.6 Guide Books
- 13.7 Travel Journals
- 13.8 Summary
- 13.9 Key Terms
- 13.10 Review Questions
- 13.11 References

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### 13.1 Objectives

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The learners shall about the following from this unit:

- New genre of literature.
- The new concept of travel literature.
- The best travel guide books
- History of travel narratives in literature.

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### 13.2 Introduction

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If Jonathan Swift had contemplated buying a copy of the newly published *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World in Four Parts By Lemuel Gulliver, First a Surgeon, and then a Captain of Several Ships*, printed in 1726 in London for "Benj. Motte, at the Middle Temple-Gate in Fleet-street," in quickly scanning the the work he would have noted prefatory remarks from "The Publisher to the Reader," signed by one Richard Sympson, a full and very informative table of contents, and an appended "Letter from Capt. Gulliver to his Cousin Sympson." Further investigation would have revealed the pres ence of four maps and two diagrams, rather modest paraphernalia compared to other more lavishly illustrated travel literature but not out of keeping with the modest format of these *Travels*. Swift already possessed a small body of travel literature, including the two principal collections, those of Richard Hakluyt and Samuel Purchas. He also had in his library at his death Bernier's *Voyages*, 2 vols., 1699; *The Voyage of John Huyghen Van Linschoten to the East Indies*, the 1598 translation from the Dutch; the 1634 folio edition of Sir Thomas Herbert's *Travels*, profusely illustrated; Lionel Wafer's *New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America*, 1699; a volume entitled *Voyages and Discover ies in South America*, published in 1698; and Addison's "Travels Through Italy," i.e. his *Remarks on Italy*. Two of these books have annotations in Swift's hand: Bernier's *Voyages* and Herbert's *Some Years*

Travaile...into Afrique and the Greater Asia.<sup>2</sup> A manuscript catalog of Swift's books compiled on August 19, 1715 reveals that he also had copies of "Le blanc's Travells," which I take to be Vincent le Blanc's *The World Surveyed, or the Famous Voyages and Travailes of Vincent le Blanc*, originally published in French in 1648 and translated into English in 1660 by one Francis Brooks, as well as Captain William Dampier's "Travells," 1698, i.e. the third edition of the *New Voyage Round the World*.<sup>3</sup> The "State of Turk. Empire. 1686," listed among the octavos, is almost surely Sir Paul Rycaut's *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, sixth edition, 1686, octavo. And hidden among the "Libri Classici et Philologici in Folio" is "Nieuhovii Legatio Britannica ad Chinam. Amsterd. 1668," which turns out to be Jan Nieuhot's *Legatio Batavica ad Magnum Tartarei Chamum Sungteium, modernam Sinae Imperatorem*. Swift borrowed a paragraph (p.48), "with alterations, from A New Voyage to the East Indies, by 'William Sympson' (1715)" for *Gulliver's Travels*. And in a list of books Swift was reading in 1697 and 1698 there are five unidentified books, at least two of which are travel literature, with the other three possibly falling into that category: *Voyage de Maroc* [Morocco], *Voyage de Syam*, *Histoire d'Aethiopie*, *Histoire de Chypre* [Cyprus], and *Histoire de Cotes de etc.*<sup>4</sup> I tentatively identify the *Voyage de Syam* as the *Journal du Voyage de Siam Fait en 1685 & 1686*, by the Abbe de Choisy, published in 1687, or Guy Tachard's *Voyage de Siam des Peres Jesuites*, Paris 1686 and Amster dam, 1688. The *Histoire d'Aethiopie* is almost surely the *Nouvelle Histoire d'Abissinie, ou d'Ethiopie*, Paris, 1684, a translation of Hiob (or Job) Ludolf's Latin history. All this, of course, is clear evidence of Swift's familiarity with travel literature.

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### 13.3 History

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Early examples of travel literature include the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (generally considered a 1st century CE work; authorship is debated), *Pausanias' Description of Greece* in the 2nd century CE, *Safarnama* (Book of Travels) by *Nasir Khusraw* (1003-1077), the *Journey Through Wales* (1191) and *Description of Wales* (1194) by *Gerald of Wales*, and the travel journals of *Ibn Jubayr* (1145-1214), *Marco Polo* (1254-1354), and *Ibn Battuta* (1304-1377), all of whom recorded their travels across the known world in detail. As early as the 2nd century CE, *Lucian of Samosata* discussed history and travel writers who added embellished, fantastic stories to their works. The travel genre was a fairly common genre in medieval *Arabic literature*. In China, 'travel record literature' (Chinese: 遊記文學; pinyin: yóujì wénxué) became popular during the *Song dynasty* (960-1279). Travel writers such as *Fan Chengda* (1126-1193) and *Xu Xiake* (1587-1641) incorporated a wealth of *geographical* and *topographical* information into their writing, while the 'daytrip essay' *Record of Stone Bell Mountain* by the noted poet and statesman *Su Shi* (1037-1101) presented a philosophical and moral argument as its central purpose.

Chinese travel literature of this period was written in a variety of different styles, including *narratives*, *prose*, *essays* and *diaries*, although most were written in prose. One of the earliest known records of taking pleasure in travel, of travelling for the sake of travel and writing about it, is *Petrarch's* (1304-1374) *ascent of Mont Ventoux* in 1336. He states that he went to the mountaintop for the pleasure of seeing the top of the famous height. His companions who stayed at the bottom he called *frigida incuriositas* ("a cold lack of curiosity"). He then wrote about his climb, making *allegorical* comparisons between climbing the mountain and his own moral

progress in life.

Michault Taillevent [fr], a poet for the Duke of Burgundy, travelled through the Jura Mountains in 1430 and recorded his personal reflections, his horrified reaction to the sheer rock faces, and the terrifying thunderous cascades of mountain streams. Antoine de la Sale (c. 1388 – c. 1462), author of *Petit Jehan de Saintre*, climbed to the crater of a volcano in the Lipari Islands in 1407, leaving us with his impressions. "Councils of mad youth" were his stated reasons for going.

By the 16th century, accounts to travels to India and Persia had become common enough that they had been compiled into collections such as the *Novus Orbis* ("New World") by Simon Grynaeus, and collections by Ramusio and Richard Hakluyt. 16th century travelers to Persia included the brothers Robert Shirley and Anthony Shirley, and for India Duarte Barbosa, Ralph Fitch, Ludovico di Varthema, Cesare Federici, and Jan Huyghen van Linschoten.<sup>[10]</sup> Humanist travellers in Europe also produced accounts, often noting monuments and inscriptions, e.g., Seyfried Rybisch's *Itinerarium* (1570s), Michel de Montaigne's *Journal de voyage* (1581), Germain Audebert's [fr] *Voyage d'Italie* (1585) and Aernout van Buchel's *Iter Italicum* (1587–1588).

In the 18th century, travel literature was commonly known as "books of travels", which mainly consisted of maritime diaries. In 18th-century Britain, travel literature was highly popular, and almost every famous writer worked in the travel literature form; *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), for example, is a social satire imitating one, and Captain James Cook's diaries (1784) were the equivalent of today's best-sellers. Alexander von Humboldt's *Personal narrative of travels to the equinoctial regions of America, during the years 1799–1804*, originally published in French, was translated to multiple languages and influenced later naturalists, including Charles Darwin.

Other later examples of travel literature include accounts of the Grand Tour: aristocrats, clergy, and others with money and leisure time travelled Europe to learn about the art and architecture of its past. One tourism literature pioneer was Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894) with *An Inland Voyage* (1878), and *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes* (1879), about his travels in the Cévennes (France), is among the first popular books to present hiking and camping as recreational activities, and tells of commissioning one of the first sleeping bags.

Other notable writers of travel literature in the 19th century include the Russian Ivan Goncharov, who wrote about his experience of a tour around the world in *Frigate "Pallada"* (1858), and Lafcadio Hearn, who interpreted the culture of Japan with insight and sensitivity. The 20th century's interwar period has been described as a heyday of travel literature when many established writers such as Graham Greene, Robert Byron, Rebecca West, Freya Stark, Peter Fleming and Evelyn Waugh were traveling and writing notable travel books.

In the late 20th century there was a surge in popularity of travel writing, particularly in the English-speaking world with writers such as Bruce Chatwin, Paul Theroux, Jonathan Raban, Colin Thubron, and others. While travel writing previously had mainly attracted interest by historians and biographers, critical studies of travel literature now also developed into an

academic discipline in its own right.

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### 13.4 Travel Books

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Travel books come in styles ranging from the documentary, to the literary, as well as the journalistic, and from memoir to the humorous to the serious. They are often associated with tourism and include guide books. Travel writing may be found on web sites, in periodicals, on blogs and in books. It has been produced by a variety of writers, including travelers, military officers, missionaries, explorers, scientists, pilgrims, social and physical scientists, educators, and migrants.

Travel literature often intersects with philosophy or essay writing, as in V. S. Naipaul's *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1976), whose trip became the occasion for extended observations on a nation and people. This is similarly the case in Rebecca West's *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* (1941), focused on her journey through Yugoslavia, and in Robin Esrock's series of books about his discoveries in Canada, Australia and around the globe. Fictional travel narratives may also show this tendency, as in Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884) or Robert M. Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* (1974). Sometimes a writer will settle into a locality for an extended period, absorbing a sense of place while continuing to observe with a travel writer's sensibility. Examples of such writings include Lawrence Durrell's *Bitter Lemons* (1957), Bruce Chatwin's widely acclaimed *In Patagonia* (1977) and *The Songlines* (1987), Deborah Tall's *The Island of the White Cow: Memories of an Irish Island* (1986), and Peter Mayle's best-selling *A Year in Provence* (1989) and its sequels.

Travel and nature writing merge in many of the works by Sally Carrighar, Gerald Durrell and Ivan T. Sanderson. Sally Carrighar's works include *One Day at Teton Marsh* (1965), *Home to the Wilderness* (1973), and *Wild Heritage* (1965). Gerald Durrell's *My Family and Other Animals* (1956) is an autobiographical work by the British naturalist. It tells of the years that he lived as a child with his siblings and widowed mother on the Greek island of Corfu between 1935 and 1939. It describes the life of the Durrell family in a humorous manner, and explores the fauna of the island. It is the first and most well-known of Durrell's "Corfu trilogy", together with *Birds, Beasts, and Relatives* and *The Garden of the Gods* (1978).

Ivan T. Sanderson published *Animal Treasure*, a report of an expedition to the jungles of then-British West Africa; *Caribbean Treasure*, an account of an expedition to Trinidad, Haiti, and Surinam, begun in late 1936 and ending in late 1938; and *Living Treasure*, an account of an expedition to Jamaica, British Honduras (now Belize) and the Yucatán. These authors are naturalists, who write in support of their fields of study.

Another naturalist, Charles Darwin, wrote his famous account of the journey of HMS Beagle at the intersection of science, natural history and travel.

A number of writers famous in other fields have written about their travel experiences. Examples are Samuel Johnson's *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775); Charles

Dickens' *American Notes for General Circulation* (1842); Mary Wollstonecraft's *Letters Written during a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark* (1796); Hilaire Belloc's *The Path To Rome* (1902); D. H. Lawrence's *Twilight in Italy and Other Essays* (1916); *Mornings in Mexico and Other Essays* (1927); Rebecca West's *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* (1941); and John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley: In Search of America* (1962). The Dutch writer Cees Nooteboom is a prolific travel writer. Among his many travel books is the acclaimed *Roads to Santiago*. Englishmen Eric Newby, H. V. Morton, the Americans Bill Bryson and Paul Theroux, and Welsh author Jan Morris are or were widely acclaimed as travel writers (though Morris has frequently claimed herself as a writer of 'place' rather than travel *per se*). Canadian travel writer Robin Esrock has written a series of books about discovering unique experiences in Canada, Australia and around the world. Bill Bryson in 2011 won the Golden Eagle Award from the Outdoor Writers and Photographers Guild. On 22 November 2012, Durham University officially renamed the Main Library the Bill Bryson Library for his contributions as the university's 11th chancellor (2005–11). Paul Theroux was awarded the 1981 James Tait Black Memorial Prize for his novel *The Mosquito Coast*, which was adapted for the 1986 movie of the same name. He was also awarded in 1989 the Thomas Cook Travel Book Award for *Riding the Iron Rooster*.

In 2005, Jan Morris was awarded the Golden PEN Award by English PEN for "a Lifetime's Distinguished Service to Literature".

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### 13.5 Adventure Literature

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In the world of sailing Frank Cowper's *Sailing Tours* (1892–1896) and Joshua Slocum's *Sailing Alone Around the World* (1900) are classics of outdoor adventure literature. In April 1895, Joshua Slocum set sail from Boston, Massachusetts and in *Sailing Alone Around the World*, he described his departure in the following manner:

I had resolved on a voyage around the world, and as the wind on the morning of April 24, 1895 was fair, at noon I weighed anchor, set sail, and filled away from Boston, where the *Spray* had been moored snugly all winter. ... A thrilling pulse beat high in me. My step was light on deck in the crisp air. I felt there could be no turning back, and that I was engaging in an adventure the meaning of which I thoroughly understood.

More than three years later, Slocum returned to Island, having circumnavigated the world on June 27, 1898.

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### 13.6 Guide Books

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A guide book or travel guide is "a book of information about a place, designed for the use of visitors or tourists". An early example is Thomas West's guide to the English Lake District, published in 1778. Thomas West, an English priest, popularized the idea of walking for pleasure in his guide to the Lake District of 1778. In the introduction he wrote that he aimed: to encourage

the taste of visiting the lakes by furnishing the traveller with a Guide; and for that purpose, the writer has here collected and laid before him, all the select stations and points of view, noticed by those authors who have last made the tour of the lakes, verified by his own repeated observations.

To this end he included various 'stations' or viewpoints around the lakes, from which tourists would be encouraged to appreciate the views in terms of their aesthetic qualities. Published in 1778 the book was a major success. Mariana Starke popularized what became the standard travel guide, a reference book that can include information relating to accommodation, restaurants, transportation, and activities. Maps of varying detail and historical and cultural information are also often included. Different kinds of guide books exist, focusing on different aspects of travel, from adventure travel to relaxation, or aimed at travelers with different incomes, or focusing on sexual orientation or types of diet. Travel guides can also take the form of travel websites.

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## 13.7 Travel Journals

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A travel journal, also called road journal, is a record made by a traveller, sometimes in diary form, of the traveler's experiences, written during the course of the journey and later edited for publication. This is a long-established literary format; an early example is the writing of Pausanias (2nd century CE) who produced his *Description of Greece* based on his own observations. James Boswell published his *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* in 1786 and Goethe published his *Italian Journey*, based on diaries, in 1816. Fray Ilarione da Bergamo and Fray Francisco de Ajofrín wrote travel accounts of colonial Mexico in the 1760s. Fannie Calderón de la Barca, the Scottish-born wife of the Spanish ambassador to Mexico 1839–1842, wrote *Life in Mexico*, an important travel narrative of her time there, with many observations of local life.

A British traveller, Mrs Alec Tweedie, published a number of travelogues, ranging from Denmark (1895) and Finland (1897), to the U.S. (1913), several on Mexico (1901, 1906, 1917), and one on Russia, Siberia, and China (1926). A more recent example is Che Guevara's *The Motorcycle Diaries*. A travelogue is a film, book written up from a travel diary, or illustrated talk describing the experiences of and places visited by traveller. American writer Paul Theroux has published many works of travel literature, the first success being *The Great Railway Bazaar*.

In addition to published travel journals, archive records show that it was historically common for travellers to record their journey in diary format, with no apparent intention of future publication, but as a personal record of their experiences. This practice is particularly visible in nineteenth-century European travel diaries. Anglo-American Bill Bryson is known for *A Walk in the Woods*, made into a Hollywood film of the same name.

### Check Your Progress

1. Discuss the travel journals present in the 28<sup>th</sup> century.
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## 13.8 Summary

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The systematic study of travel literature emerged as a field of scholarly inquiry in the mid-1990s, with its own conferences, organizations, journals, monographs, anthologies, and encyclopedias. Important, pre-1995 monographs are: *Abroad* (1980) by Paul Fussell, an exploration of British interwar travel writing as escapism; *Gone Primitive: Modern Intellectuals, Savage Minds* (1990) by Marianna Torgovnick, an inquiry into the primitivist presentations of foreign cultures; *Haunted Journeys: Desire and Transgression in European Travel Writing* (1991) by Dennis Porter, a close look at the psychological correlatives of travel; *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing* by Sara Mills, an inquiry into the intersection of gender and colonialism during the 19th century; *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992), Mary Louise Pratt's influential study of Victorian travel writing's dissemination of a colonial mind-set; and *Belated Travelers* (1994), an analysis of colonial anxiety by Ali Behdad.

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## 13.9 Key Terms

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- **Activities and sightseeing**– This is a description or a list of the activities one engaged in and the sites they visited.
- **Cultural experiences**– This could be a list or description of an individual's interactions with the local culture, such as trying traditional foods, festivals etc.
- **Personal reflections**– This consists of the individual's thoughts, feelings, and impressions about their experiences.
- **Memorable moments**– To record the moments that stood out or encounters that made a lasting impression, the user will note down these events in this section . These could be positive experiences, surprises, or even unexpected challenges throughout the journey.

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## 13.10 Review Questions

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1. What do you mean by travel narrative?
2. Discuss the origin of travel narratives.
3. Trace out the adventure literature under travel narratives.
4. Comment on the different types of travel narratives written recently in 20<sup>th</sup> century.
5. Discuss the narrative style of travel literature

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## 13.11 References

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## UNIT 14: JONATHAN SWIFT AND GULLIVER’S TRAVELS

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### STRUCTURE

- 14.1 Objectives
- 14.2 Introduction
- 14.3 Jonathan Swift – Early Life
- 14.4 Main Idea of Gulliver’s Travels
- 14.5 Gulliver’s Travels Characters
- 14.6 Plot
- 14.7 Chapter Analysis
- 14.8 Major Themes
- 14.9 Stylistic Devices
- 14.10 Summary
- 14.11 Key Terms
- 14.12 Review Questions
- 14.13 References

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### 14.1 Objectives

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The learners shall know about the following:

- Jonathan Swift and his writings.
- The very famous book Gulliver’s Travels
- Stylistic devices used in the novel.
- About the political scenario of the age.

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### 14.2 Introduction

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Jonathan Swift’s Gulliver’s Travels was released in 1726 and is possibly his most well-known book. It was an instant hit, selling out in less than a week, and has never gone out of print, despite being altered numerous times.

On the Antelope, Lemuel Gulliver, an English surgeon, is shipwrecked and washed up on the island of Lilliput, where the people are all under six inches tall. The Lilliputians focus on the details of life, most notably the schism that has grown over which end of a cooked egg gets opened at breakfast—the big end or the little end—in this section of the novel, which is a thinly veiled satire on the political classes of the time. He’s been abandoned on a giants’ island, where he’s sold as a novelty at local markets and fairs. On his third voyage, he is stranded by pirates and rescued by residents of a floating island dedicated to music, mathematics, and astronomy. He meets the Houyhnhnms, a race of talking horses that have defeated the Yahoos, human-like

beings, on his final journey. Gulliver returns to England with a new vision on life and a new perspective on humanity.

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### 14.3 Jonathan Swift – Early Life

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Jonathan Swift, son of the English lawyer Jonathan Swift the elder, was born in Dublin, Ireland, on November 30, 1667. He grew up there in the care of his uncle before attending Trinity College at the age of fourteen, where he stayed for seven years, graduating in 1688. In that year, he became the secretary of Sir William Temple, an English politician and member of the Whig party. In 1694, he took religious orders in the Church of Ireland and then spent a year as a country parson. He then spent further time in the service of Temple before returning to Ireland to become the chaplain of the earl of Berkeley. Meanwhile, he had begun to write satires on the political and religious corruption surrounding him, working on *A Tale of a Tub*, which supports the position of the Anglican Church against its critics on the left and the right, and *The Battle of the Books*, which argues for the supremacy of the classics against modern thought and literature. He also wrote a number of political pamphlets in favour of the Whig party. In 1709 he went to London to campaign for the Irish church but was unsuccessful. After some conflicts with the Whig party, mostly because of Swift's strong allegiance to the church, he became a member of the more conservative Tory party in 1710.

Unfortunately for Swift, the Tory government fell out of power in 1714 and Swift, despite his fame for his writings, fell out of favour. Swift, who had been hoping to be assigned a position in the Church of England, instead returned to Dublin, where he became the dean of St. Patrick's. During his brief time in England, Swift had become friends with writers such as Alexander Pope, and during a meeting of their literary club, the *Martinus Scriblerus Club*, they decided to write satires of modern learning. The third voyage of *Gulliver's Travels* is assembled from the work Swift did during this time. However, the final work was not completed until 1726, and the narrative of the third voyage was actually the last one completed. After his return to Ireland, Swift became a staunch supporter of the Irish against English attempts to weaken their economy and political power, writing pamphlets such as the satirical *A Modest Proposal*, in which he suggests that the Irish problems of famine and overpopulation could be easily solved by having the babies of poor Irish subjects sold as delicacies to feed the rich.

*Gulliver's Travels* was a controversial work when it was first published in 1726. In fact, it was not until almost ten years after its first printing that the book appeared with the entire text that Swift had originally intended it to have. Ever since, editors have excised many of the passages, particularly the more caustic ones dealing with bodily functions. Even without those passages, however, *Gulliver's Travels* serves as a biting satire, and Swift ensures that it is both humorous and critical, constantly attacking British and European society through its descriptions of imaginary countries.

Late in life, Swift seemed to many observers to become even more caustic and bitter than he had been. Three years before his death, he was declared unable to care for himself, and guardians were appointed. Based on these facts and on a comparison between Swift's fate and that of his

character Gulliver, some people have concluded that he gradually became insane and that his insanity was a natural outgrowth of his indignation and outrage against humankind. However, the truth seems to be that Swift was suddenly incapacitated by a paralytic stroke late in life, and that prior to this incident his mental capacities were unimpaired. *Gulliver's Travels* is about a specific set of political conflicts, but if it were nothing more than that it would long ago have been forgotten. The staying power of the work comes from its depiction of the human condition and its often despairing, but occasionally hopeful, sketch of the possibilities for humanity to rein in its baser instincts.

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## 14.4 Main Idea of Gulliver's Travels

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*Gulliver's Travels'* main idea is the inherent amusement of human tradition and habit, as well as the relative nature of ethics and society dependent on historical precedent. *Gulliver's Travels*, like so many of Jonathan Swift's works, is primarily a satire of British monarchy and Imperialism. Swift's main purpose in *Gulliver's Travels* was to illustrate how the English government and society needed a reformation. As an Irish patriot and a former admirer of the English government and life, Swift now sees England and all its glory in a very different way.

*Gulliver's Travels* recounts the story of Lemuel Gulliver, a practical-minded Englishman trained as a surgeon who takes to the seas when his business fails. In a deadpan first-person narrative that rarely shows any signs of self-reflection or deep emotional response, Gulliver narrates the adventures that befall him on these travels.

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## 14.5 Gulliver's Travels Characters

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**Gulliver:** Lemuel Gulliver is a ship's surgeon. His most recent journeys are the craziest he has ever experienced. A race of small men known as the Lilliputians kidnaps him. The giants of Brobdingnag adopt him as a pet. Later, he travels to Laputa, a metropolis on a floating island in the sky, and to the odd academies of Balnibarbi, Laputa's sister island below. On Glubbdbudrib, he converses with the dead, while on Luggnagg, he meets immortals. His final voyage sees him living with horses known as Houyhnhnms and learning about the human race's defects, or Yahoos, primitive humanlike beings. Gulliver regretfully returns home after learning about the atrocities of his own species.

**Emperor of Lilliput :** Gulliver is treated favorably by the Emperor of Lilliput as long as he feels Gulliver is giving him respect and loyalty. In reality, everyone in the emperor's court is expected to obey him. The treason charges made against Gulliver—the outcome of Gulliver's civility toward visitors from a neighboring kingdom during peace talks—and the danger Gulliver's buddy suffers in telling him about the allegations show that disobedience is punishable by death.

**Glumdalclitch :** Gulliver gives the farm girl who becomes his caregiver the name Glumdalclitch, which means “little nurse.” Gulliver’s daughter is dedicated to him, keeping him comfortable while her father works him to death by forcing him to act for money. Despite the social benefits of her acceptability at court, Glumdalclitch makes the presumably tough decision to leave her family behind in order to safeguard Gulliver after the queen purchases him. Gulliver has a pleasant and secure existence in Brobdingnag because to her care and devotion.

**King of Laputa:** Like his subjects, the monarch of Laputa is absorbed in abstract meanderings of science, mathematics, and astronomy. At the same time, he is a monarch, vulnerable to the abuse of power that all rulers do in Gulliver’s Travels to some extent. Despite the fact that his ministers limit his power, he is not above intimidating the kingdoms he controls below with the prospect of using the floating island of Laputa against them.

**Houyhnhnm Master:** In keeping with Houyhnhnm values of charity and hospitality, the Houyhnhnm Master regards Gulliver with compassion and equips him with a home and food. Gulliver, he thinks, is an inferior creature, not as basic as the island Yahoos, but also not as advanced. Gulliver’s portrayals of life in Europe are heavily criticized, and his assessment eventually reminds Gulliver of his own inadequacy.

**Governor of Glubbudrib:** The governor is a mystery man who is dreaded by those who are familiar with him. He is a vampire, which means he has the ability to raise the corpses to serve him. He also extends total hospitality to Gulliver, going above and beyond the customary offerings of food and shelter by promising to use his magical abilities to provide Gulliver with an incredible and reality opportunity to speak with dead leaders and academics from across history.

**Blefusdians :** They live on a nearby island and are sworn adversaries of the Lilliputians. When the Lilliputians accuse Gulliver of treason, he escapes to their island.

**Flimnap:** At Lilliput, Gulliver’s foe accuses him of flirting with his wife. At Lilliput, Gulliver’s foe accuses him of flirting with his wife.

**Houyhnhnms: Horses** with a great deal of goodness and virtue. Gulliver spends several years with them and is adamant about returning to England.

**Munodi:** Gulliver is shown about the island by the Balnibarbi Lord, who explains why it is so desolate.

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## 14.6 Plot

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Gulliver’s adventure in Lilliput begins when he wakes after his shipwreck to find himself bound by innumerable tiny threads and addressed by tiny captors who are in awe of him but fiercely protective of their kingdom. They are not afraid to use violence against Gulliver, though their arrows are little more than pinpricks. But overall, they are hospitable, risking famine in their land by feeding Gulliver, who consumes more food than a thousand Lilliputians combined could. Gulliver is taken into the capital city by a vast wagon the Lilliputians have specially built. He is presented to the emperor, who is entertained by Gulliver, just as Gulliver is flattered by the attention of royalty. Eventually Gulliver becomes a national resource, used by the army in its war against the people of Blefuscu, whom the Lilliputians hate for doctrinal differences concerning the proper way to crack eggs. But things change when Gulliver is convicted of treason for putting out a fire in the royal palace with his urine and is condemned to be shot in the eyes and starved to death. Gulliver escapes to Blefuscu, where he is able to repair a boat he

finds and set sail for England.

After staying in England with his wife and family for two months, Gulliver undertakes his next sea voyage, which takes him to a land of giants called Brobdingnag. Here, a field worker discovers him. The farmer initially treats him as little more than an animal, keeping him for amusement. The farmer eventually sells Gulliver to the queen, who makes him a courtly diversion and is entertained by his musical talents. Social life is easy for Gulliver after his discovery by the court, but not particularly enjoyable. Gulliver is often repulsed by the physicality of the Brobdingnagians, whose ordinary flaws are many times magnified by their huge size. Thus, when a couple of courtly ladies let him play on their naked bodies, he is not attracted to them but rather disgusted by their enormous skin pores and the sound of their torrential urination. He is generally startled by the ignorance of the people here—even the king knows nothing about politics. More unsettling findings in Brobdingnag come in the form of various animals of the realm that endanger his life. Even Brobdingnagian insects leave slimy trails on his food that make eating difficult. On a trip to the frontier, accompanying the royal couple, Gulliver leaves Brobdingnag when his cage is plucked up by an eagle and dropped into the sea.

Next, Gulliver sets sail again and, after an attack by pirates, ends up in Laputa, where a floating island inhabited by theoreticians and academics oppresses the land below, called Balnibarbi. The scientific research undertaken in Laputa and in Balnibarbi seems totally inane and impractical, and its residents too appear wholly out of touch with reality. Taking a short side trip to Glubbudbrib, Gulliver is able to witness the conjuring up of figures from history, such as Julius Caesar and other military leaders, whom he finds much less impressive than in books. After visiting the Luggnaggians and the Struldbrugs, the latter of which are senile immortals who prove that age does not bring wisdom, he is able to sail to Japan and from there back to England.

Finally, on his fourth journey, Gulliver sets out as captain of a ship, but after the mutiny of his crew and a long confinement in his cabin, he arrives in an unknown land. This land is populated by Houyhnhnms, rational-thinking horses who rule, and by Yahoos, brutish humanlike creatures who serve the Houyhnhnms. Gulliver sets about learning their language, and when he can speak, he narrates his voyages to them and explains the constitution of England. He is treated with great courtesy and kindness by the horses and is enlightened by his many conversations with them and by his exposure to their noble culture. He wants to stay with the Houyhnhnms, but his bared body reveals to the horses that he is very much like a Yahoo, and he is banished. Gulliver is grief-stricken but agrees to leave. He fashions a canoe and makes his way to a nearby island, where he is picked up by a Portuguese ship captain who treats him well, though Gulliver cannot help now seeing the captain—and all humans—as shamefully Yahoo-like. Gulliver then concludes his narrative with a claim that the lands he has visited belong by rights to England, as her colonies, even though he questions the whole idea of colonialism.

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## 14.7 Chapter Analysis

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## Part I: Chapter I

The novel begins with Lemuel Gulliver recounting the story of his life, beginning with his family history. He is born to a family in Nottinghamshire, the third of five sons. Although he studies at Cambridge as a teenager, his family is too poor to keep him there, so he is sent to London to be a surgeon's apprentice. There, under a man named James Bates, he learns mathematics and navigation with the hope of travelling. When his apprenticeship ends, he studies physics at Leyden.

He then becomes a surgeon aboard a ship called the *Swallow* for three years.

Afterward, he settles in London, working as a doctor, and marries a woman named Mary Burton. His business begins to fail when his patron dies, so he decides to go to sea again and travels for six years. Although he has planned to return home at the end of this time, he decides to accept one last job on a ship called the *Antelope*.

In the East Indies, the *Antelope* encounters a violent storm in which twelve crewmen die. Six of the crewmembers, including Gulliver, board a small rowboat to escape. Soon the rowboat capsizes, and Gulliver loses track of his companions. They are never seen again. Gulliver, however, swims safely to shore.

Gulliver lies down on the grass to rest, and soon he falls asleep. When he wakes up, he finds that his arms, legs, and long hair have been tied to the ground with pieces of thread. He can only look up, and the bright sun prevents him from seeing anything. He feels something move across his leg and over his chest. He looks down and sees, to his surprise, a six-inch-tall human carrying a bow and arrow. At least forty more little people climb onto his body. He is surprised and shouts loudly, frightening the little people away. They return, however, and one of the little men cries out, "Hekinah Degul."

Gulliver struggles to get loose and finally succeeds in breaking the strings binding his left arm. He loosens the ropes tying his hair so he can turn to the left. In response, the little people fire a volley of arrows into his hand and violently attack his body and face. He decides that the safest thing to do is to lie still until nightfall. The noise increases as the little people build a stage next to Gulliver about a foot and a half off the ground. One of them climbs onto it and makes a speech in a language that Gulliver does not understand.

Gulliver indicates that he is hungry, and the little people bring him baskets of meat.

He devours it all and then shows that he is thirsty, so they bring him two large barrels of wine. Gulliver is tempted to pick up forty or fifty of the little people and throw them against the ground, but he decides that he has made them a promise of goodwill and is grateful for their hospitality. He is also struck by their bravery, since they climb onto his body despite his great size.

An official climb onto Gulliver's body and tells him that he is to be carried to the capital city. Gulliver wants to walk, but they tell him that that will not be permitted. Instead, they bring a frame of wood raised three inches off the ground and carried by twenty-two wheels. Nine hundred men pull this cart about half a mile to the city. Gulliver's left leg is then padlocked to



a large temple, giving him only enough freedom to walk around the building in a semicircle and lie down inside the temple.

## Overall Analysis

Gulliver's narrative begins much like other travel records of his time. The description of his youth and education provides background knowledge, establishes Gulliver's position in English society, and causes the novel to resemble true-life accounts of travels at sea published during Swift's lifetime. Swift imitates the style of a standard travelogue throughout the novel to heighten the satire. Here he creates a set of expectations in our minds, namely a short-lived belief in the truth of Gulliver's observations. Later in the novel, Swift uses the style of the travelogue to exaggerate the absurdity of the people and places with which Gulliver comes into contact. A fantastical style—one that made no attempt to seem truthful, accurate, or traditional—would have weakened the satire by making it irrelevant, but the factual, reportorial style of *Gulliver's Travels* does the opposite.

Gulliver is surprised to discover the Lilliputians but is not particularly shocked. This encounter is only the first of many in the novel in which we are asked to accept Gulliver's extraordinary experiences as merely unusual. Seeing the world through Gulliver's eyes, we also adopt, for a moment, Gulliver's view of the world. But at the same time, we can step back and recognize that the Lilliputians are nothing but a figment of Swift's imagination. The distance between these two stances—the gullible Gulliver and the sceptical reader—is where the narrative's multiple levels of meaning are created: on one level, we have a true-life story of adventure; on another, a purely fictional fairy tale; and on a third level, transcending the first two and closest to Swift's original intention, a satirical critique of European pretensions to rationality and goodwill.

Swift wrote *Gulliver's Travels* at a time when Europe was the world's dominant power, and when England, despite its small size, was rising in power on the basis of its formidable fleet. England's growing military and economic power brought it into contact with a wide variety of new animals, plants, places, and things, but the most significant change wrought by European expansion was the encounter with previously unknown people—like the inhabitants of the Americas—with radically different modes of existence. The miniature stature of the Lilliputians can be interpreted as a physical incarnation of exactly these kinds of cultural differences.

The choice of physical size as the way of manifesting cultural differences has a number of important consequences. The main consequence is the radical difference in power between Gulliver and the Lilliputian nation. His physical size and strength put Gulliver in a unique position within Lilliputian society and give him obligations and capabilities far beyond those of the people who keep him prisoner. Despite Gulliver's fear of the Lilliputians' arrows, there is an element of condescension in his willingness to be held prisoner by them. The power differential may represent England's position with respect to the people it was in the process of colonizing. It may also be a way for Swift to reveal the importance of might in a society supposedly guided by right. Finally, it may be a way of destabilizing humanity's position at the centre of the universe by demonstrating that size, power, and significance are all relative. Although the Lilliputians are almost pitifully small in Gulliver's eyes, they are unwilling to see

themselves that way; rather, they think of themselves as normal and of Gulliver as a freakish giant. That Gulliver may himself be the Lilliputian to some other nation's Englishman—a notion elaborated fully in Part II—is already implied in the first chapter.

## **Chapter II**

Once the Lilliputians chain Gulliver to the building, he is finally allowed to stand up and view the entire countryside, which he discovers is beautiful and rustic. The tallest trees are seven feet tall, and the whole area looks to him like a theatre set.

Gulliver meticulously describes his process of relieving himself, which initially involves walking inside the building to the edge of his chain. After the first time, he makes sure to relieve himself in open air, and servants carry away his excrement in wheelbarrows. He says that he describes this process in order to establish his cleanliness, which has been called into question by his critics.

The emperor visits on horseback from his tower. He orders his servants to give Gulliver food and drink. The emperor is dressed plainly and carries a sword to defend himself. He and Gulliver converse, though they cannot understand each other. Gulliver tries to speak every language he knows, but nothing works. After two hours, Gulliver is left with a group of soldiers guarding him. Some of them, disobeying orders, try to shoot arrows at him. As a punishment, the brigadier ties up six of these offenders and places them in Gulliver's hand. Gulliver puts five of them into his pocket and pretends that he is going to eat the sixth, but then cuts loose his ropes and sets him free. He does the same with the other five, which pleases the court.

After two weeks, a bed is made for Gulliver. It consists of 600 small beds sewn together. News of his arrival also spreads throughout the kingdom and curious people from the villages come to see him. Meanwhile, the government tries to decide what to do with him. Frequent councils bring up various concerns: that he will break loose, for instance, or that he will eat enough to cause a famine. Some suggest that they starve him or shoot him in the face to kill him, but others argue that doing so would leave them with a giant corpse and a large health risk.

Officers who witnessed Gulliver's lenient treatment of the six offending soldiers report to the council, and the emperor and his court decide to respond with kindness. They arrange to deliver large amounts of food to Gulliver every morning, supply him with servants to wait on him, hire tailors to make him clothing, and offer teachers to instruct him in their language.

Every morning Gulliver asks the emperor to set him free, but the emperor refuses, saying that Gulliver must be patient. The emperor also orders him to be searched to ensure that he does not have any weapons. Gulliver agrees to this search, and the Lilliputians take an inventory of his possessions. In the process, all of his weapons are taken away.

## **Chapter III**

Gulliver hopes to be set free, as he is getting along well with the Lilliputians and earning their trust. The emperor decides to entertain him with shows, including a performance by Rope-Dancers, who are Lilliputians seeking employment in the government. For the performance,

which doubles as a sort of competitive entrance examination, the candidates dance on “ropes”—slender threads suspended two feet above the ground.

When a vacancy occurs, candidates petition the emperor to entertain him with a dance, and whoever jumps the highest earns the office. The current ministers continue this practice as well, in order to show that they have not lost their skill.

As another diversion for Gulliver, the emperor lays three silken threads of different colors on a table. He then holds out a stick, and candidates are asked to leap over it or creep under it. Whoever shows the most dexterity wins one of the ribbons.

Gulliver builds a platform from sticks and his handkerchief and invites horsemen to exercise upon it. The emperor greatly enjoys watching this new entertainment, but it is cut short when a horse steps through the handkerchief, after which Gulliver decides that it is too dangerous for them to keep riding on the cloth.

Some Lilliputians discover Gulliver’s hat, which washed ashore after him, and he asks them to bring it back. Soon after, the emperor asks Gulliver to pose like a colossus, or giant statue, so that his troops might march under Gulliver.

Gulliver’s petitions for freedom are finally answered. Gulliver must swear to obey the articles put forth, which include stipulations that he must assist the Lilliputians in times of war, survey the land around them, help with construction, and deliver urgent messages. Gulliver agrees and his chains are removed.

### **Overall Analysis (Part I, Chapters II–III)**

In these chapters, Gulliver learns more about Lilliputian culture, and the great difference in size between him and the Lilliputians is emphasized by a number of examples, many of which are explicit satires of British government. For instance, Lilliputian government officials are chosen by their skill at rope-dancing, which the Lilliputians see as relevant but which Gulliver recognizes as arbitrary and ridiculous. The would-be officials are almost literally forced to jump through hoops in order to qualify for their positions. Clearly, Swift intends for us to understand this episode as a satire of England’s system of political appointments and to infer that England’s system is similarly arbitrary. Gulliver, however, never suggests that he finds the Lilliputians ridiculous. Throughout the entire novel, Gulliver tends to be very sympathetic in his descriptions of the cultures he visits, never criticizing them or finding anything funny, no matter how ludicrous certain customs seem to us. Nor does Gulliver point out the similarities between the ridiculous practices he observes in his travels and the ridiculous customs of Europe. Instead, Swift leaves us to infer all of the satire based on the difference between how things appear to us and how they appear to Gulliver.

The difference in size between Gulliver and the Lilliputians helps to emphasize the importance of physical power, a theme that recurs throughout the novel. Over time, Gulliver begins to earn the Lilliputians’ trust, but it is clearly unnecessary: for all their threats, Gulliver could crush the Lilliputians by simply walking carelessly. The humor comes from the Lilliputians’ view of the situation: despite the evidence before their eyes, they never realize their own insignificance. They keep Gulliver tied up, believing that they can control him, while in truth he could destroy them effortlessly. In this way, Swift satirizes humanity’s pretensions

to power and significance.

## **Chapter IV**

After regaining his freedom, Gulliver goes to Mildendo, the capital city of the Lilliputians. The residents are told to stay indoors, and they all sit on their roofs and in their garret windows to see him. The town is 500 feet square with a wall surrounding it, and can hold 500,000 people. The emperor wants Gulliver to see the magnificence of his palace, which is at the centre of the city, so Gulliver cuts down trees to make himself a stool, which he carries around with him so that he can sit down and see things from a shorter distance than a standing position allows.

About two weeks after Gulliver obtains his liberty, a government official, Reldresal, comes to see him. He tells Gulliver that two forces, one rebel group and one foreign empire, threaten the kingdom. The rebel group exists because the kingdom is divided into two factions, called Tramecksan and Slamecksan. The people in the two factions are distinguished by the heights of their heels.

Reldresal tells Gulliver that the current emperor has chosen to employ primarily the low-heeled Slamecksan in his administration. He adds that the emperor himself has lower heels than all of his officials but that his heir has one heel higher than the other, which makes him walk unevenly. At the same time, the Lilliputians fear an invasion from the Island of Blefuscu, which Reldresal calls the “Other Great Empire of the Universe.” He adds that the philosophers of Lilliput do not believe Gulliver’s claim that there are other countries in the world inhabited by other people of his size, preferring to think that Gulliver dropped from the moon or a star.

Reldresal describes the history of the two nations. The conflict between them, he tells Gulliver, began years ago, when the emperor’s grandfather, then in command of the country, commanded all Lilliputians to break their eggs on the small end first. He made this decision after breaking an egg in the old way, large end first, and cutting his finger. The people resented the law, and six rebellions were started in protest. The monarchs of Blefuscu fueled these rebellions, and when they were over the rebels fled to that country to seek refuge. Eleven thousand people chose death rather than submit to the law. Many books were written on the controversy, but books written by the Big-Endians were banned in Lilliput. The government of Blefuscu accused the Lilliputians of disobeying their religious doctrine, the Brundrecral, by breaking their eggs at the small end. The Lilliputians argued that the doctrine reads, “That all true believers shall break their eggs at the convenient end,” which could be interpreted as the small end.

Reldresal continues that the exiles gained support in Blefuscu to launch a war against Lilliput and were aided by rebel forces inside Lilliput. A war has been raging between the two nations ever since, and Gulliver is asked to help defend Lilliput against its enemies.

Gulliver does not feel that it is appropriate to intervene, but he nonetheless offers his services to the emperor.

## **Chapter V**

Gulliver spies on the empire of Blefuscu and devises a plan. He asks for cables and bars of iron, out of which he makes hooks with cables attached. He then wades and swims the channel to

Blefuscu and catches their ships at port. The people are so frightened that they leap out of their ships and swim to shore. Gulliver attaches a hook to each ship and ties them together. The Blefuscu soldiers fire arrows at him, but he keeps working, protecting his eyes by putting on the spectacles he keeps in his coat pocket. He tries to pull the ships away, but they are anchored too tightly, so he cuts them away with his pocketknife and pulls the ships back to Lilliput.

In Lilliput, Gulliver is greeted as a hero. The emperor asks him to go back to retrieve the other ships, intending to destroy Blefuscu's military strength and make it a province in his empire. Gulliver dissuades him from this action, saying that he does not want to encourage slavery or injustice. This position causes great disagreement in the government, with some officials turning staunchly against Gulliver and calling for his destruction.

Three weeks later, a delegation arrives from Blefuscu, and the war ends with Blefuscu's surrender. The Blefuscu delegates are privately told of Gulliver's kindness toward the Lilliputians, and they ask him to visit their kingdom. He wishes to do so, and the emperor reluctantly allows it.

As a Nardac, or person of high rank, Gulliver no longer has to perform all the duties laid down in his contract. He does, however, have the opportunity to help the Lilliputians when the emperor's wife's room catches fire. He forgets his coat and cannot put the flames out with his clothing, so instead he thinks of a new plan: he urinates on the palace, putting out the fire entirely. He worries afterward that since the act of public urination is a crime in Lilliput he will be prosecuted, but the emperor tells him he will be pardoned. He is told, however, that the emperor's wife can no longer tolerate living in her rescued quarters.

### **Overall Analysis (Part I, Chapters IV–V)**

Despite the fact that the history of the conflict between Lilliput and Blefuscu is blatantly ridiculous, Gulliver reports it with complete seriousness. The more serious the tone, the more laughable this conflict appears. But Swift expects us to understand immediately that the entire history Gulliver relates parallels European history exactly, down to the smallest details. The High-Heels and the Low-Heels correspond to the Whigs and Tories of English politics. Lilliput and Blefuscu represent England and France. The violent conflict between Big-Endians and Little-Endians represents the Protestant Reformation and the centuries of warfare between Catholics and Protestants.

By recasting European history as a series of brutal wars over meaningless and arbitrary disagreements, Swift implies that the differences between Protestants and Catholics, between Whigs and Tories, and between France and England are as silly and meaningless as how a person chooses to crack an egg. Once we make this connection, though, we face the question of why Swift thinks that these conflicts are trivial and irrelevant. After all, religion, politics, and national identity would have been considered the most important issues in Swift's time, and we continue to think of these things as important today. The answer to this question is less obvious, and the text does not give us a simple explanation. The debate between the Big-Endians and Little-Endians does provide some clues, however. The egg controversy is ridiculous because there cannot be any right or wrong way to crack an egg, so it is unreasonable to legislate how people must do it.

Similarly, we may conclude that there is no right or wrong way to worship God—at least, there is no way to prove that one way is right and another way is wrong. Moreover, the Big-Endians and Little-Endians both share the same religious text, but they disagree on how to interpret a passage that can clearly be interpreted two ways. Similarly, Swift is suggesting that the Christian Bible can be interpreted in more than one way, and that it is ridiculous for people to fight over how to interpret it when no one can really be certain that one interpretation is right and others are wrong.

The text contains a number of allusions to events in Swift's life and to the politics of Europe. For instance, it has been suggested that the empress represents Queen Anne of England, Gulliver's urination on her quarters represents Swift's work *A Tale of a Tub*, and the empress's disgust at Gulliver's urination is analogous to Queen Anne's criticism of Swift's work and her attempts to limit his prospects in the Church of England. Within the story, Gulliver's urination on the palace is not merely an offense to the Lilliputians' sense of decency, it is also a suggestion of their insignificance, to which they respond indignantly.

Although Gulliver's urination is intended to prevent a disaster, it is also an assertion of his ability to control the Lilliputians—even by the most profane of actions. The episode illustrates again the importance of physical power, which can turn a normally insignificant and vulgar action into a lifesaving act.

Gulliver's refusal to obey the emperor's orders to destroy the fleet of Blefuscu is a sign that he feels some responsibility toward all beings. However small, the inhabitants of Blefuscu still have rights, one of which is freedom from tyranny. Granted almost godlike power by his unusual size, Gulliver finds himself in a position to change the Lilliputians' society forever.

## Chapter VI

Gulliver describes the general customs and practices of Lilliput in more detail, beginning by explaining that everything in Lilliput—their animals, trees, and plants—is sized in proportion to the Lilliputians. Their eyesight is also adapted to their scale: Gulliver cannot see as clearly close-up as they can, while they cannot see as far as he can.

The Lilliputians are well educated, but their writing system is odd to Gulliver, who jokes that they write not left to right like the Europeans or top to bottom like the Chinese, but from one corner of the page to the other, "like the ladies in England."

The dead are buried with their heads pointing directly downward, because the Lilliputians believe that eventually the dead will rise again and that the Earth, which they think is flat, will turn upside down. Gulliver adds that the better-educated Lilliputians no longer believe in this custom.

Gulliver describes some of the other laws of Lilliput, such as a tradition by which anyone who falsely accuses someone else of a crime against the state is put to death. Deceit is considered worse than theft, because honest people are more vulnerable to liars than to thieves, since commerce requires people to trust one another. The law provides not only for punishment but also for rewards of special titles and privileges for good behaviour.

Children are raised not by individual parents but by the kingdom as a whole. They are sent to

live in schools at a very young age. The schools are chosen according to the station of their parents, whom they see only twice a year. Only the labourers' children stay home, since their job is to farm. There are no beggars at all, since the poor are well looked after.

## **Chapter VII**

Gulliver goes on to describe the “intrigue” that precipitates his departure from Lilliput. While he prepares to make his trip to Blefuscu, a court official tells Gulliver that he has been charged with treason by enemies in the government. He shows Gulliver the document calling for his execution: Gulliver is charged with public urination, refusing to obey the emperor's orders to seize the remaining Blefuscu ships, aiding enemy ambassadors, and travelling to Blefuscu.

Gulliver is told that Reldresal has asked for his sentence to be reduced, calling not for execution but for putting his eyes out. This punishment has been agreed upon, along with a plan to starve him to death slowly. The official tells Gulliver that the operation to blind him will take place in three days. Fearing this resolution, Gulliver crosses the channel and arrives in Blefuscu.

## **Chapter VIII**

Three days later, he sees a boat of normal size—that is, big enough to carry him—overturned in the water. He asks the emperor of Blefuscu to help him fix it. At the same time, the emperor of Lilliput sends an envoy with the articles commanding Gulliver to give up his eyesight. The emperor of Blefuscu sends it back with the message that Gulliver will soon be leaving both their kingdoms. After about a month, the boat is ready and Gulliver sets sail. He arrives safely back in England, where he makes a good profit showing miniature farm animals that he carried away from Blefuscu in his pockets.

## **Overall Analysis (Part I, Chapters VI–VIII)**

Throughout much of Part I, Swift satirizes European practices by implicitly comparing them to outrageous Lilliputian customs. In Chapter VI, however, Gulliver describes a number of unusual Lilliputian customs that he presents as reasonable and sensible. This chapter, which describes improvements that could be made in European society, is less satirical and ironic than the previous chapters. We may infer that Swift approves of many of these institutions. Clearly, there is a good case to be made for treating fraud as a more serious crime than theft and for making false testimony a capital crime. The very fabric of society depends upon trust, so dishonesty may be even more damaging than theft and violence.

In general, the customs of Lilliput that Swift presents as good are those that contribute to the good of the community or the nation as opposed to those that promote individual rights or freedoms. Ingratitude is punishable by death, for instance, because anybody who would treat a benefactor badly must be an enemy to all mankind. Children are raised by the community rather than by their parents because parents are thinking only of their own appetites when they conceive children. Children are raised in public nurseries, but parents are financially penalized if they burden society by bringing children for whom they cannot pay into the world.

Gulliver's analysis of Lilliputian customs also serves to illuminate the arbitrary nature of such practices, as well as the fact that societies tend to assume, nonetheless, that certain customs are

simply natural. The Lilliputians do not question their cultural norms because they have no reason to believe that there is any other way to conduct affairs. When alternatives are discussed, as in the case of the egg-breaking controversy, the discussion ends in violent conflict.

The articles of accusation against Gulliver, like the inventory of his possessions and the articles of his freedom in the previous chapters are written in formal language that serves only to emphasize their absurdity. Swift makes a mockery of formal language by showing how it can be used to mask simple fears and desires, such as the Lilliputians' desire to eliminate the threat that Gulliver poses. The help that Gulliver gets from Reldresal is an illustration of a persistent motif in *Gulliver's Travels*: the good person surrounded by a corrupt society.

## **Part II: Chapter I**

Two months after returning to England, Gulliver is restless again. He sets sail on a ship called the *Adventure*, travelling to the Cape of Good Hope and Madagascar before encountering a monsoon that draws the ship off course. The ship eventually arrives at an unknown land mass. There are no inhabitants about, and the landscape is barren and rocky. Gulliver is walking back to the boat when he sees that it has already left without him. He tries to chase after it, but then he sees that a giant is following the boat. Gulliver runs away, and when he stops, he is on a steep hill from which he can see the countryside. He is shocked to see that the grass is about twenty feet high.

He walks down what looks like a high road but turns out to be a footpath through a field of barley. He walks for a long time but cannot see anything beyond the stalks of corn, which are forty feet high. He tries to climb a set of steps into the next field, but he cannot mount them because they are too high. As he is trying to climb up the stairs, he sees another one of the island's giant inhabitants. He hides from the giant, but it calls for more people to come, and they begin to harvest the crop with scythes. Gulliver lies down and bemoans his state, thinking about how insignificant he must be to these giant creatures.

One of the servants comes close to Gulliver with both his foot and his scythe, so Gulliver screams as loudly as he can. The giant finally notices him, and picks him up between his fingers to get a closer look. Gulliver tries to speak to him in plaintive tones, bringing his hands together, and the giant seems pleased. Gulliver makes it clear that the giant's fingers are hurting him, and the giant places him in his pocket and begins to walk toward his master.

The giant's master, the farmer of these fields, takes Gulliver from his servant and observes him more closely. He asks the other servants if they have ever seen anything like Gulliver, then places him onto the ground. They sit around him in a circle. Gulliver kneels down and begins to speak as loudly as he can, taking off his hat and bowing to the farmer. He presents a purse full of gold to the farmer, which the farmer takes into his palm. He cannot figure out what it is, even after Gulliver empties the coins into his hand.

The farmer takes Gulliver back to his wife, who is frightened of him. The servant brings in dinner, and they all sit down to eat, Gulliver sitting on the table not far from the farmer's plate. They give him tiny bits of their food, and he pulls out his knife and fork to eat, which delights the giants. The farmer's son picks Gulliver up and scares him, but the farmer takes Gulliver from the boy's hands and strikes his son. Gulliver makes a sign that the



boy should be forgiven, and kisses his hand. After dinner, the farmer's wife lets Gulliver nap in her own bed. When he wakes up he finds two rats attacking him, and he defends himself with his "hanger," or sword.

## **Chapter II**

The farmer's nine-year-old daughter, whom Gulliver calls Glumdalclitch, or "nursemaid," has a doll's cradle that becomes Gulliver's permanent bed. Glumdalclitch places the cradle inside a drawer to keep Gulliver safe from the rats. She becomes Gulliver's caretaker and guardian, sewing clothes for him and teaching him the giants' language. The farmer begins to talk about Gulliver in town, and a friend of the farmer's comes to see him. He looks at Gulliver through his glasses, and Gulliver begins to laugh at the sight of the man's eyes through the glass. The man becomes angry and advises the farmer to take Gulliver into the market to display him. He agrees, and Gulliver is taken to town in a carriage, which he finds very uncomfortable. There, he is placed on a table while Glumdalclitch sits down on a stool beside him, with thirty people at a time walking through as he performs "tricks."

Gulliver is exhausted by the journey to the marketplace, but upon returning to the farmer's house, he finds that he is to be shown there as well. People come from miles around and are charged great sums to view him. Thinking that Gulliver can make him a great fortune, the farmer takes him and Glumdalclitch on a trip to the largest cities.

The three arrive in the largest city, Lorbrulgrud, and the farmer rents a room with a table for displaying Gulliver. By now, Gulliver can understand their language and speak it fairly well. He is shown ten times a day and pleases the visitors greatly.

## **Overall Analysis (Part II, Chapters I–II)**

In Gulliver's adventure in Brobdingnag, many of the same issues that are brought up in the Lilliputian adventure are now brought up again, but this time Gulliver is in the exact opposite situation. Many of the jokes from Gulliver's adventure in Lilliput are played in reverse: instead of worrying about trampling on the Lilliputians, Gulliver is now at risk of being trampled upon; instead of being feared and admired for his gargantuan size, he is treated as a miniscule and insignificant curiosity; instead of displaying miniature livestock in England to make money, he is put on display for money by the farmer. As a whole, the second voyage serves to emphasize the importance of size and the relativity of human culture.

Gulliver's initial experiences with the Brobdingnagians are not positive. First, they almost trample him, then the farmer virtually enslaves him, forcing him to perform tricks for paying spectators. This enslavement emphasizes the fundamental humanity of the Brobdingnagians—just like Europeans, they are happy to make a quick buck when the opportunity arises—and also makes concrete Gulliver's lowly status. Whereas in Lilliput, his size gives him almost godlike powers, allowing him to become a hero and a Nardac to the Lilliputian people, in Brobdingnag his different size has exactly the opposite effect. Even his small acts of heroism, like his battle against the rats, are seen by the Brobdingnagians as, at best, "tricks."

Swift continues to play with language in a way that both emphasizes his main satirical points about politics, ethics, and culture and makes fun of language itself. In the first few pages of this

section, while Gulliver is still at sea, he describes in complicated naval jargon the various attempts his ship makes to deal with an oncoming storm. The rush of words is nearly incomprehensible, and it is meant to be so—the point is to satirize the jargon used by writers of travel books and sailing accounts, which in Swift’s view was often overblown and ridiculous. By taking the tendency to use jargon to an extreme and putting it in the mouth of the gullible and straightforward Gulliver, Swift makes a mockery of those who would try to demonstrate their expertise through convoluted language. Attacks like this one, which are repeated elsewhere in the novel, are part of Swift’s larger mission: to criticize the validity of various kinds of expert knowledge that are showier than helpful, whether legal, naval, or, as in the third voyage, scientific.

### **Chapter III**

The strain of travelling and performing “tricks” takes its toll on Gulliver, and he begins to grow very thin. The farmer notices Gulliver’s condition and resolves to make as much money as possible before Gulliver dies. Meanwhile, an order comes from the court, commanding the farmer to bring Gulliver to the queen for her entertainment.

The queen is delighted with Gulliver’s behaviour and buys him from the farmer for 1,000 gold pieces. Gulliver requests that Glumdalclitch be allowed to live in the palace as well. Gulliver explains his suffering to the queen, and she is impressed by his intelligence. She takes him to the king, who at first thinks he is a mechanical creation. He sends for great scholars to observe Gulliver, and they decide that he is unfit for survival, since there is no way, he could feed himself. Gulliver tries to explain that he comes from a country in which everything is in proportion to himself, but they do not seem to believe him.

Glumdalclitch is given an apartment in the palace and a governess to teach her, and special quarters are built for Gulliver out of a box. They also have clothes made for him from fine silk, but Gulliver finds them very cumbersome. The queen grows quite accustomed to his company, finding him very entertaining at dinner, especially when he cuts and eats his meat. He finds her way of eating repulsive, since her size allows her to swallow huge amounts of food in a single gulp.

The king converses with Gulliver on issues of politics, and laughs at his descriptions of the goings-on in Europe. He finds it amusing that people of such small stature should think themselves so important, and Gulliver is at first offended. He then comes to realize that he too has begun to think of his world as ridiculous.

The queen’s dwarf is not happy with Gulliver, since he is used to being the smallest person in the palace and a source of diversion for the royal court. He drops Gulliver into a bowl of cream, but Gulliver is able to swim to safety and the dwarf is punished. At another point, the dwarf sticks Gulliver into a marrowbone, where he is forced to remain until someone pulls him out.

### **Chapter IV**

Gulliver describes the geography of Brobdingnag, noting first that since the land stretches out about 6,000 miles there must be a severe error in European maps. The kingdom is bounded on one side by mountains and on the other three sides by the sea. The water is so rough that there is no trade with other nations. The rivers are well stocked with giant fish, but the fish in the sea

are of the same size as those in the rest of the world—and therefore not worth catching.

Gulliver is carried around the city in a special travelling-box, and people always crowd around to see him. He asks to see the largest temple in the country and is not overwhelmed by its size, since at a height of 3,000 feet it is proportionally smaller than the largest steeple in England.

## **Chapter V**

Gulliver is happy in Brobdingnag except for the many mishaps that befall him because of his diminutive size. In one unpleasant incident, the dwarf, angry at Gulliver for teasing him, shakes an apple tree over his head. One of the apples strikes Gulliver in the back and knocks him over. Another time, he is left outside during a hailstorm and is so bruised and battered that he cannot leave the house for ten days.

Gulliver and his nursemaid are often invited to the apartments of the ladies of the court, and there he is treated as a plaything of little significance. They enjoy stripping his clothes and placing him in their bosoms, and he is appalled by their strong smell, noting that a Lilliputian told him that he smelled quite repulsive to them. The women also strip their own clothes in front of him, and he finds their skin extremely ugly and uneven.

The queen orders a special boat to be built for Gulliver. The boat is placed in a cistern, and Gulliver rows in it for his own enjoyment and for the amusement of the queen and her court.

Yet another danger arises in the form of a monkey, which takes Gulliver up a ladder, holding him like a baby and force-feeding him. He is rescued from the monkey, and Glumdalclitch pries the food from his mouth with a needle, after which Gulliver vomits. He is so weak and bruised that he stays in bed for two weeks. The monkey is killed and orders are sent out that no other monkeys be kept in the palace.

## **Overall Analysis (Part II, Chapters III–V)**

Gulliver's continued adventures in Brobdingnag serve to illustrate the importance of physical size. Reduced to a twelfth of the size of the people who surround him, Gulliver finds all of his pride and importance withering away. Without physical power to back him up— whether the normal level that he experiences in England or the extraordinary level of his time in Lilliput—it is impossible for Gulliver to maintain the illusion of his own importance.

These chapters contain, in addition to the continuing satire of European culture, some of the most entertaining portions of the novel. Gulliver is treated like a doll, tormented by the court dwarf, and adopted, briefly, by a monkey. For the most part, these scenes serve to hammer home the image of Gulliver's miniscule size as compared to the Brobdingnagians, but they also achieve several more significant accomplishments. The conflict with the dwarf is a good example of such a point. The dwarf, unable to gain the power that generally accompanies great physical size, has tried to make a place for himself in society by capitalizing instead on the distinctive lack of power that accompanies his tiny size. When Gulliver enters the court, he challenges the dwarf's distinctiveness, and the dwarf responds aggressively. If there is a moral to the episode, it is that the politics of those who attempt to achieve power not through physical strength but through their distinctiveness can be just as immoral as the mainstream.

Another key episode takes place with Gulliver's visit to the ladies of the court. The fantasy of domination and submission—realized when Gulliver becomes the sexual plaything of the ladies—is overshadowed by his outright disgust at their smell and appearance. He knows, theoretically, that if he were their size they would be just as attractive as the well-pampered court ladies of England, but since he is not, their flaws are literally magnified, and they appear to him malodorous, blemished, and crude. Swift's point is that anything, even the smoothest skin or the most appealing political system, has imperfections, and these imperfections are bound to be exposed under close enough scrutiny. In a sense, what looks perfect to us is not actually perfect—it is simply not imperfect enough for our limited senses to notice.

At the time that Swift was writing *Gulliver's Travels*, however, technology that could accentuate these imperfect senses was burgeoning, and Gulliver's microscopic view of flies and flesh may be a reference to the relatively recent discovery of the microscope. The late seventeenth century saw the first publication of books containing magnified images illustrating that various items—fleas, hair, skin—contained details and flaws that had previously been hidden. Gulliver lives this microscopic experience directly. In a magnified world, everything takes on new levels of complexity and imperfection, demonstrating that the truth about objects is heavily influenced by the observer's perspective.

## **Chapter VI**

Gulliver makes himself a comb from the stumps of hair left after the king has been shaved. He also collects hairs from the king and uses them to weave the backs of two small chairs, which he gives to the queen as curiosities. Gulliver is brought to a musical performance, but it is so loud that he can hardly make it out. Gulliver decides to play the spinet for the royal family, but must contrive a novel way to do it, since the instrument is so big. He uses large sticks and runs over the keyboard with them, but he can still strike only sixteen keys.

Thinking that the king has unjustly come to regard England as insignificant and laughable, Gulliver tries to tell him more about England, describing the government and culture there. The king asks many questions and is particularly struck by the violence of the history Gulliver describes. He then takes Gulliver into his hand and, explaining that he finds the world that Gulliver describes to be ridiculous, contemptuous, and strange, tells him that he concludes that most Englishmen sound like "odious Vermin."

## **Chapter VII**

Gulliver is disturbed by the king's evaluation of England. He tries to tell him about gunpowder, describing it as a great invention and offering it to the king as a gesture of friendship. The king is appalled by the proposal, and Gulliver is taken aback, thinking that the king has refused a great opportunity. He thinks that the king is unnecessarily scrupulous and narrow-minded for not being more open to the inventions of Gulliver's world.

Gulliver finds the people of Brobdingnag in general to be ignorant and poorly educated. Their laws are not allowed to exceed in words the number of letters in their alphabet, and no arguments may be written about them. They know the art of printing but do not have many books, and their writing is simple and straightforward. One text describes the insignificance and weakness of

Brobdingnagians and even argues that at one point they must have been much larger.

## **Chapter VIII**

Gulliver wants to recover his freedom. The king orders any small ship to be brought to the city, hoping that they might find a woman with whom Gulliver can propagate. Gulliver fears that any offspring thus produced would be kept in cages or given to the nobility as pets. He has been in Brobdingnag for two years and wants to be among his own kind again.

Gulliver is taken to the south coast, and both Glumdalclitch and Gulliver fall ill.

Gulliver says that he wants fresh air, and a page carries him out to the shore in his traveling-box. He asks to be left to sleep in his hammock, and the boy wanders off. An eagle grabs hold of Gulliver's box and flies off with him, and then suddenly Gulliver feels himself falling and lands in the water. He worries that he will drown or starve to death, but then feels the box being pulled. He hears a voice telling him that his box is tied to a ship and that a carpenter will come to drill a hole in the top. Gulliver says that they can simply use a finger to pry it open, and he hears laughter. He realizes that he is speaking to people of his own height and climbs a ladder out of his box and onto their ship.

Gulliver begins to recover on the ship, and he tries to tell the sailors the story of his recent journey. He shows them things he saved from Brobdingnag, like his comb and a tooth pulled from a footman. He has trouble adjusting to the sailors' small size, and he finds himself shouting all the time. When he reaches home, it takes him some time to grow accustomed to his old life, and his wife asks him to never go to sea again.

## **Overall Analysis (Part II, Chapters VI–VIII)**

In the previous section, Gulliver's personal insignificance is illustrated by his reduction to the status of a plaything in the court. In this section, the same lesson is repeated on a larger scale when he describes the culture and politics of Europe to the king of Brobdingnag. Suddenly, all of the life-and-death issues that seemed so important when Gulliver was in Europe are revealed to be the trivial conflicts of miniscule people. They are not only insignificant, but the king also derides them as "odious." In his eyes, the tiny size of the Europeans is matched by their moral weakness. Gulliver's long discussions with the king leave him feeling humiliated.

Nonetheless, Gulliver manages to maintain some sense of the importance of England in the face of the king's criticisms. But his protests seem so transparently groundless that each argument he gives for England's superiority, including his argument that the king is too dull-witted to see the beauty of English culture, serves only to emphasize the futility of his resistance. In the end, the king's assessment of the Europeans as "odious vermin" wins the day. Gulliver's personality plays an important role in pushing this satirical point home. His naïveté, his gullibility, and his ingenuous praise for England all accentuate his similarity to the Lilliputians: convinced of his own significance, he is unable to realize the pettiness and imperfection of the society he represents.

This imperfection is not just one of organization or law. If that were the only problem with English society as Swift saw it, then Gulliver's Travels would have been a much more boring and less significant work. The imperfection, rather, is fundamentally one of morals: the British,

and by extension humanity in general, are not only bad at getting what they want, they also want bad things. This truth is illustrated in Gulliver's offer of the secret of gunpowder to the king. The king refuses without a second thought, not because the Brobdingnagians have superior technology, but because he is horrified by the potential moral and physical consequences of gunpowder. Most preindustrial societies would treat gunpowder as an achievement of high order. But the king indicates that he feels it would be better to live where violence and destruction are minimized instead of exaggerated.

Gulliver's inability to understand the king's position—he sees the refusal as a weakness in the king's understanding—illustrates how the values of a violent society are deeply ingrained in Gulliver. Observing both the king and Gulliver, we are invited to choose between them.

Nevertheless, the Brobdingnagians are not perfect, however much more developed their moral sense may be than Gulliver's. They are, rather, humans who have achieved a gargantuan level of moral achievement. Unlike the petty and miniscule Lilliputians, in whom the human vices of pride and self-righteousness are exaggerated, the Brobdingnagians have constructed a society in which those vices are minimized as much as possible. They still exist—for instance, the farmer exploits Gulliver by showing him off for profit—but they are not, as they are in England, encoded in the structure of government itself. The Brobdingnagians—more moral than the Lilliputians, more practical than the Laputans of the third voyage, and more human than the Houyhnhnms of the fourth voyage—are in some ways the most admirable of the societies Gulliver encounters.

### **Part III: Chapter I**

Gulliver has been home in England only ten days when a visitor comes to his house, asking him to sail aboard his ship in two months' time. Gulliver agrees and prepares to set out for the East Indies. On the voyage, pirates attack the ship. Gulliver hears a Dutch voice among them and speaks to the pirate in Dutch, begging to be set free since he and the pirate are both Christians. A Japanese pirate tells them they will not die, and Gulliver tells the Dutchman that he is surprised to find more mercy in a heathen than in a Christian. The Dutchman grows angry and punishes Gulliver by sending him out to sea in a small boat with only four days' worth of food.

Gulliver finds some islands and goes ashore on one of them. He sets up camp but then notices something strange: the sun is mysteriously obscured for some time. He then sees a landmass dropping down from the sky and notices that it is crawling with people. He is baffled by this floating island and shouts up to its inhabitants. They lower the island and send down a chain by which he is drawn up.

### **Chapter II**

Gulliver is immediately surrounded by people and notices that they are all quite odd. Their heads are all tilted to one side or the other, with one eye turned inward and the other looking up. Their clothes are adorned with images of celestial bodies and musical instruments. Some of the people are servants, and each of them carries a "flapper" made of a stick with a pouch tied to the end. Their job is to aid conversation by striking the ear of the listener and the mouth of the speaker at the appropriate times to prevent their masters' minds from wandering off.

Gulliver is conveyed to the king, who sits behind a table loaded with mathematical instruments. They wait an hour before there is some opportunity to arouse the king from his thoughts, at which point he is struck with the flapper. The king says something, and Gulliver's ear is struck with the flapper as well, even though he tries to explain that he does not require such actions. It becomes clear that he and the king cannot speak any of the same languages, so Gulliver is taken to an apartment and served dinner.

A teacher is sent to instruct Gulliver in the language of the island, and he is able to learn several sentences. He discovers that the name of the island is Laputa, which in their language means "floating island." A tailor is also sent to provide him with new clothes, and while he is waiting for these clothes, the king orders the island to be moved. It is taken to a point above the capital city of the kingdom, Lagado, passing villages along the way and collecting petitions from the king's subjects by means of ropes sent down to the lands below.

The language of the Laputans relies heavily on mathematical and musical concepts, as they value these theoretical disciplines above everything. The Laputans despise practical geometry, thinking it vulgar—so much so that they make sure that there are no right angles in their buildings. They are very good with charts and figures but very clumsy in practical matters. They practice astrology and dread changes in the celestial bodies.

### **Chapter III**

The island is exactly circular and consists of 10,000 acres of land. At the center there is a cave for astronomers, containing all their instruments and a lodestone six yards long. It moves the island with its magnetic force, since it has two charges that can be reversed by means of an attached control. The mineral that acts upon the magnet is large enough to allow it to move only over the country directly beneath it. When the king wants to punish a particular region of the country, he can keep the island above it, depriving the lands below of sun and rain. Such measures failed to work in one town, where the rebellious inhabitants had stored provisions of food in advance. They planned to force the island to come so low that it would be trapped forever and to kill the king and his officials in order to take over the government. Instead, the king ordered the island to stop descending and gave in to the town's demands. The king is not allowed to leave the floating island, nor is his family.

### **Overall Analysis (Part III, Chapters I–III)**

Gulliver's third voyage is more scattered than the others, involving stops at Laputa, Balnibarbi, Glubbubdrib, Luggnagg, and Japan. Swift completed the account of this voyage after that of the fourth voyage was already written, and there are hints that it was assembled from notes that Swift had made for an earlier satire of abstract knowledge.

Nonetheless, it plays a crucial role in the novel as a whole. Whereas the first two voyages are mostly satires of politics and ethics, the third voyage extends Swift's attack to science, learning, and abstract thought, offering a critique of excessive rationalism, or reliance on theory, during the Enlightenment.

Laputa is more complex than Lilliput or Brobdingnag because its strangeness is not based on differences of size but, instead, on the primacy of abstract theoretical concerns over concrete practical concerns in Laputan culture. Nonetheless, physical power is just as important in Laputa

as it is in Lilliput and Brobdingnag. Here, power is exercised not through physical size but through technology. The government floats over the rest of the kingdom, using technology to gain advantage over its subjects. The floating island is both a formidable weapon and an allegorical image that represents the distance between the government and the people it governs. The king is oblivious to the real concerns of the people below—indeed, he has never even been below. The nobility and scientific thinkers of the island are similarly far removed from the people and their concerns, so much so that they need to be aroused from their thoughts and daydreams by their servants. The need to regulate when people listen and when they talk by means of such intermediaries as the servants with their flappers is absurd, and the mechanized quality of this system demonstrates how nonhuman these people are. Indeed, abstract theory dominates all aspects of Laputan life, from language to architecture to geography. We are compelled to wonder whether the Laputans' rigid adherence to such principles—their disdain for practical geometry, for example, leads them to renounce right angles—limits their society. Swift continues to satirize specialized language in his description of the technique used to move the island from one place to another. The method of assigning letters to parts of a mechanism and then describing the movement of these parts from one point to another resembles the mechanistic philosophical and scientific descriptions of Swift's time. The use of this technique does nothing but obscure what Gulliver is trying to say, but he is so enamoured of its supposed geometrical rigor that he uses it to excess, as he does earlier with naval language.

## **Chapter IV**

Gulliver feels neglected on Laputa, since the inhabitants seem interested only in mathematics and music and are far superior to him in their knowledge. He is bored by their conversation and wants to leave. There is one lord of the court whom Gulliver finds to be intelligent and curious, but who is regarded by the other inhabitants of Laputa as stupid because he has no ear for music. Gulliver asks this lord to petition the king to let him leave the island. The petition succeeds, and he is let down on the mountains above Lagado. He visits another lord, named Munodi, and is invited to stay at his home.

Gulliver and Munodi visit a nearby town, which Gulliver finds to be populated by poorly-dressed inhabitants living in shabby houses. The soil is badly cultivated and the people appear miserable. They then travel to Munodi's country house, first passing many barren fields but then arriving in a lush green area that Munodi says belongs to his estate. He says that the other lords criticize him heavily for the "mismanagement" of his land.

Munodi explains that forty years ago some people went to Laputa and returned with new ideas about mathematics and art. They decided to establish an academy in Lagado to develop new theories on agriculture and construction and to initiate projects to improve the lives of the city's inhabitants. However, the theories have never produced any results and the new techniques have left the country in ruin. He encourages Gulliver to visit the academy, which Gulliver is glad to do since he was once intrigued by projects of this sort himself.

## **Chapter V**

Gulliver visits the academy, where he meets a man engaged in a project to extract sunbeams from cucumbers. He also meets a scientist trying to turn excrement back into food. Another is



attempting to turn ice into gunpowder and is writing a treatise about the malleability of fire, hoping to have it published. An architect is designing a way to build houses from the roof down, and a blind master is teaching his blind apprentices to mix colours for painters according to smell and touch. An agronomist is designing a method of plowing fields with hogs by first burying food in the ground and then letting the hogs loose to dig it out. A doctor in another room tries to cure patients by blowing air through them. Gulliver leaves him trying to revive a dog that he has killed by supposedly curing it in this way.

On the other side of the academy there are people engaged in speculative learning. One professor has a class full of boys working from a machine that produces random sets of words. Using this machine, the teacher claims, anyone can write a book on philosophy or politics. A linguist in another room is attempting to remove all the elements of language except nouns. Such pruning, he claims, would make language more concise and prolong lives, since every word spoken is detrimental to the human body. Since nouns are only things, furthermore, it would be even easier to carry things and never speak at all. Another professor tries to teach mathematics by having his students eat wafers that have mathematical proofs written on them.

## **Chapter VI**

Gulliver then visits professors who are studying issues of government. One claims that women should be taxed according to their beauty and skill at dressing, and another claims that conspiracies against the government could be discovered by studying the excrement of subjects. Gulliver grows tired of the academy and begins to yearn for a return to England.

## **Chapter VII**

Gulliver tries to travel to Luggnagg, but he finds no ship available. Since he has to wait a month, he is advised to take a trip to Glubbdubdrib, the island of magicians. Gulliver visits the governor of Glubbdubdrib, and he finds that servants who appear and disappear like spirits attend the governor. The governor tells Gulliver that he has the power to call up any shade he would like. Gulliver chooses Alexander the Great, who assures him that he died not from poison but from excessive drinking. He then sees the Carthaginian general Hannibal and the Roman leaders Caesar, Pompey, and Brutus.

## **Chapter VIII**

Gulliver sets apart one day to speak with the most venerated people in history, starting with Homer and Aristotle. He asks the French philosophers René Descartes and Pierre Gassendi to describe their systems to Aristotle, who freely acknowledges his own mistakes while pointing out that systems of nature will always vary from age to age.

## **Chapter IX**

Gulliver then returns to Luggnagg, where he is confined despite his desire to return to England. He is ordered to appear at the king's court and is given lodging and an allowance. He learns that subjects are expected to lick the floor as they approach the king, and that the king sometimes gets rid of opponents in the court by coating the floor with poison.

## Chapter X

The Luggnaggians tell Gulliver about certain immortal people, children born with a red spot on their foreheads who are called Struldbrugs. Gulliver devises a whole system of what he would do if he were immortal, starting with the acquisition of riches and knowledge. Contrary to his fantasy, however, he is told that after the age of thirty, most Struldbrugs grow sad and dejected, and by eighty, they are incapable of affection and envious of those who are able to die. If two of the Struldbrugs marry, the marriage is dissolved when one reaches eighty, because “those who are condemned without any fault of their own to a perpetual continuance in the world should not have their misery doubled by the load of a wife.” He meets some of these people and finds them to be unhappy and unpleasant, and he regrets ever wishing for their state.

## Chapter XI

Gulliver is finally able to depart from Luggnagg, after refusing employment there, and he arrives safely in Japan. From there he gains passage on a Dutch ship by pretending to be from Holland and sets sail from Amsterdam to England, where he finds his family in good health.

## Overall Analysis (Part III, Chapters IV–XI)

Swift continues his mockery of academia by describing the projects carried out in the cities below Laputa. The academy serves to create entirely useless projects while the people starve outside its walls. Each project described, such as the extraction of sunbeams from a cucumber, is not only impossibly flawed but also purposeless. Even if its scientific foundations were correct, it would still serve no real purpose for the people meant to gain from it. The result is a society in which science is promoted for no real reason and time is wasted as a matter of course.

Much of Swift’s inspiration for the scientists in this voyage came from the Royal Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge, a scientific society founded in 1660 that had an important effect on the development of science in Europe. The prominent early scientists Robert Boyle, Robert Hooke, and Isaac Newton were all members of the Royal Society. All of them, but particularly Newton, were influential promoters of scientific theories that were at the heart of the Scientific Revolution. The Royal Society assigned itself the task of using the new techniques of science to improve the crafts, but it was far more successful at discovering natural phenomena than it was at building new, useful technologies. As a result, the Royal Society was open to the parody created by Swift, in which absentminded philosophers ruin a country by forcing its people to follow their novel and wholly useless methods. Interestingly, most of the experiments parodied by Swift had actually been proposed or carried out by British scientists at the time of his writing.

Glubbdubdrib offers the opportunity for Swift to satirize various historical figures, undermining their images as paragons of virtue or learning. Gulliver’s interaction with the dead hearkens back to Dante Alighieri’s fourteenth-century poem *Inferno*, in which Dante himself travels through the various regions of hell and witnesses sinners being punished. This imaginary tour of hell allowed Dante the author to skewer his political opponents and enemies, just as Swift’s imaginary wanderings allow him to ridicule certain aspects of society. Gulliver’s visit to Glubbdubdrib is part of Swift’s attempt in the third voyage to undercut standards of abstract

learning. At the same time, however, Swift does elevate certain people above others. Generally speaking, the ancient Greeks and Romans are held up as truly virtuous, whereas the Europeans who have lived since are held up as somewhat degenerate.

The Struldbrugs of Luggnagg provide an opportunity for Swift to satirize human desires. Many would seek eternal life, and the primary benefit of old age, as Gulliver sees it, is the ability to use one's accumulated wisdom to help humanity. The reality is much less glorious—instead of growing in wisdom, the immortal Struldbrugs grow only more prejudiced and selfish, eventually becoming a detriment to the whole Luggnaggian society. Furthermore, the Struldbrugs' immense sadness despite their seeming advantage shows the emptiness of Gulliver's desire—a desire prominent in Western society—to acquire riches.

Swift denounces such self-absorbed goals as the province of small minds unconcerned with the good of society as a whole.

## **Part IV: Chapter I**

Gulliver stays home for five months, but he then leaves his pregnant wife to set sail again, this time as the captain of a ship called the *Adventure*. Many of his sailors die of illness, so he recruits more along the way. His crewmembers mutiny under the influence of these new sailors and become pirates. Gulliver is left on an unknown shore, after being confined to his cabin for several days. In the distance, he sees animals with long hair, goatlike beards, and sharp claws, which they use to climb trees. Gulliver decides that these animals are extremely ugly and sets forth to find settlers, but he encounters one of the animals on his way.

Gulliver takes out his sword and hits the animal with the flat side of it. The animal roars loudly, and a herd of others like it attack Gulliver by attempting to defecate on him. He hides, but then he sees them hurrying away. He emerges from his hiding place to see that the beasts have been scared away by a horse. The horse observes Gulliver carefully, and then it neighs in a complicated cadence. Another horse joins the first and the two seem to be involved in a discussion. Gulliver tries to leave, but one of the horses calls him back.

The horses appear to be so intelligent that Gulliver concludes that they are magicians who have transformed themselves into horses. He addresses them directly and asks to be taken to a house or village. The horses use the words “Yahoo” and “Houyhnhnm,” which Gulliver tries to pronounce.

## **Chapter II**

Gulliver is led to a house, and he takes out gifts, expecting to meet people. He finds instead that there are more horses in the house, sitting down and engaged in various activities. He thinks that the house belongs to a person of great importance, and he wonders why they should have horses for servants. A horse looks Gulliver over and says the word “Yahoo.” Gulliver is led out to the courtyard, where a few of the ugly creatures Gulliver has seen are tied up. Gulliver is lined up and compared with one of the creatures, and Gulliver finds that the creature does look quite human. The horses test Gulliver by offering him various foods: hay, which he refuses, and flesh, which he finds repulsive but which the Yahoo devours. The horses determine that he likes milk and give him large amounts of it to drink.

Another horse comes to dine, and they all take great pleasure in teaching Gulliver to pronounce words in their language. They cannot determine what he might like to eat until Gulliver suggests that he could make bread from their oats. He is given a place to sleep with straw for the time being.

### **Chapter III**

Gulliver endeavours to learn the horses' language, and they are impressed by his intellect and curiosity. After three months, he can answer most of their questions and tries to explain that he comes from across the sea, but the horses, or Houyhnhnms, do not believe that such a thing is possible. They think that Gulliver is some kind of Yahoo, though superior to the rest of his species. He asks them to stop using that word to refer to him, and they consent.

### **Chapter IV**

Gulliver tries to explain that the Yahoos are the governing creatures where he comes from, and the Houyhnhnms ask how their horses are employed. Gulliver explains that they are used for travelling, racing, and drawing chariots, and the Houyhnhnms express disbelief that anything as weak as a Yahoo would dare to mount a horse that was so much stronger than it. Gulliver explains that the horses are trained from a young age to be tame and obedient. He describes the state of humanity in Europe and is asked to speak more specifically of his own country.

### **Overall Analysis (Part IV, Chapters I–IV)**

In the fourth voyage, Gulliver reaches a stage at which he no longer cares for humankind at all, though in this section we see only the beginnings of his transformation. After visiting countries in which he is too large, too small, and too down-to-earth, he finds himself in a country where he is neither rational nor moral enough, stuck in the limbo between the humane Houyhnhnms and the untamed, unruly Yahoos. In these chapters we see the rough outline of Houyhnhnm society, which Gulliver finds pleasant but still alien. In the next section, he attempts to become a part of this society.

In the meantime, we are treated to a description of the Houyhnhnms' society. Swift plays a clever trick in the first two chapters, obscuring the true nature of the Houyhnhnms so that we follow Gulliver in his mistaken belief that the horses are magicians or the servants of a magician. Instead of telling us outright that the horses are intelligent, Swift allows us to discover this fact through Gulliver's eyes. As a result, what looks strange to Gulliver also looks strange to us, and at some point in the description of the horses' behavior, we realize that there is nothing more to these creatures than meets the eye.

Instead of being tools of humans, the horses are revealed to be intelligent in their own right. In one stroke, they go from being a manifestation of humanity to something utterly nonhuman.

There are a number of differences between the first three voyages and the fourth. Three of these differences are particularly important because they signal changes in the overall satirical thrust of the novel: Gulliver finds himself not among fellow humans, however distorted in size or culture, but among a race of horses; instead of being happy to leave, he is eager to stay; and

instead of seeing the world through his eyes, we are forced to step back and look at Gulliver himself as an important, though not always sympathetic, player in the drama.

In other ways, these chapters are similar to the initial chapters of the other voyages.

Gulliver arrives in a strange land, becomes the guest or prisoner of the people who live there, learns their language, and slowly begins to learn about their culture and tell them about European culture. The major difference here is that the humans, or Yahoos, are not his hosts. Instead, they are vile creatures that get nothing but his contempt. In his descriptions of the Yahoos, Swift uses the technique of describing the familiar in unfamiliar terms. Only slowly does it dawn on us that the Yahoos are humans. As with the realization that the Houyhnhnms are intelligent in their own right, the sudden shock—which we experience along with Gulliver—of recognizing the Yahoos for what they are strengthens the impact of the description.

## **Chapter V**

Over the course of two years, Gulliver describes the state of affairs in Europe, speaking to his Houyhnhnm master about the English Revolution and the war with France. He is asked to explain the causes of war, and he does his best to provide reasons. He is also asked to speak of law and the justice system, which he does in some detail, criticizing lawyers severely in the process.

## **Chapter VI**

The discussion then turns to other topics, such as money and the different kinds of food eaten in Europe. Gulliver explains the different occupations in which people are involved, including service professions such as medicine and construction.

## **Chapter VII**

Gulliver develops such a love for the Houyhnhnms that he no longer desires to return to humankind. His master tells him that he has considered all of Gulliver's claims about his home country and has come to the conclusion that Gulliver's people are not so different from the Yahoos as they may at first have seemed. He describes all the flaws of the Yahoos, principally detailing their greed and selfishness. He admits that Gulliver's humans have different systems of learning, law, government, and art but says that their natures are not different from those of the Yahoos.

## **Chapter VIII**

Gulliver wants to observe the similarities between Yahoos and humans for himself, so he asks to go among the Yahoos. He finds them to be very nimble from infancy but unable to learn anything. They are strong, cowardly, and malicious.

The principal virtues of the Houyhnhnms are their friendship and benevolence. They are concerned more with the community than with their own personal advantages, even choosing their mates so as to promote the race as a whole. They breed industriousness, cleanliness, and civility in their young and exercise them for speed and strength.

## **Chapter IX**

Gulliver's master attends a Grand Assembly of Houyhnhnms, where the horses debate whether or not to extinguish the Yahoos from the face of the Earth. Gulliver's master suggests that instead of killing them, they should, as the Europeans do with their horses, merely castrate them. Eventually, unable to breed, the Yahoos will die out, and in the meantime the Houyhnhnms can breed asses to take their place.

Gulliver then describes further aspects of the Houyhnhnms' society. They create excellent poetry, have a sound knowledge of medicinal herbs, build simple houses, and usually live about seventy or seventy-five years, dying of old age. They feel no sorrow about death, accepting it as a routine element of life. They have no writing system and no word to express anything evil.

## **Chapter X**

A room is made for Gulliver, and he furnishes it well. He also makes new clothes for himself and settles into life with the Houyhnhnms quite easily. He begins to think of his friends and family back home as Yahoos. However, he is called by his master and told that others have taken offense at his being kept in the house as a Houyhnhnm. The master has no choice but to ask Gulliver to leave. Gulliver is very upset to hear that he is to be banished. He builds a canoe with the help of a fellow-servant and departs sadly.

## **Chapter XI**

Gulliver does not want to return to Europe, and so he begins to search for an island where he can live as he likes. He finds land and discovers natives there. He is struck by an arrow and tries to escape the natives' darts by paddling out to sea. He sees a sail in the distance and thinks of going toward it, but then decides he would rather live with the barbarians than the European Yahoos, so he hides from the ship. The seamen, including Don Pedro de Mendez, discover him after landing near his hiding place. They question him, laughing at his strange horse-like manner of speaking, and cannot understand his desire to escape from their ship. Don Pedro treats Gulliver hospitably, offering him food, drink, and clothes, but Gulliver can think of him only as a Yahoo and is thus repulsed by him.

Gulliver is forced to travel back to England, where he returns to his family, which has been convinced that he is dead. He is filled with disgust and contempt for them. For a year he cannot stand to be near his wife and children, and he buys two horses and converses with them for four hours each day.

## **Chapter XII**

Gulliver concludes his narrative by acknowledging that the law requires him to report his findings to the government but that he can see no military advantage in attacking any of the locations he discovered. Moreover, he particularly wishes to protect the Houyhnhnms.

## **Overall Analysis (Part IV, Chapters V–XII)**

The desire that Gulliver experiences to live among the animals persists in European literature. This desire is echoed later by the Romantics, who, writing in the nineteenth century, idealized

pastoral simplicity and a return to nature. In the case of the Romantics, however, this love of nature was a response to the urbanization and industrialization of European society. In Swift's case, the return to nature is a two-pronged tool for satire, skewering both human civilization itself and those who would look to animals for a model of how to live.

For the first time, Gulliver finds himself wanting to stay in exile from humanity, but he is not given the choice. He is appalled by the idea of going to live among the Yahoos, and he has so fully adopted the belief system of the Houyhnhnms that he cannot help but see his wife and children as primitive, ugly, beastlike creatures. But at the same time, he realizes that he has been living with the Houyhnhnms on borrowed time, pretending only half- successfully to be as rational as they are. The simplicity of the Houyhnhnms' world attracts him, but it is not a world in which he is allowed to live. In the end, he is forced to return to the world from which he came—a single world that encompasses all of the flaws and complexities he has encountered in his travels. But even there Gulliver cannot rest easy.

Having seen the things, he has; the world of Yahoos is contemptible and disgusting to him. Barely able to tolerate the presence of his family, he retreats into a kind of madness, spending his days talking to the horses in his stable as if to recreate the idyll of Houyhnhnmland.

In the first three voyages, it is easy to identify with Gulliver, but in the last voyage he becomes so alienated from humanity that it is difficult to sympathize with him. This shift in our loyalty is accompanied by a shift in the method of satire. Whereas in the first voyages we can look through Gulliver's eyes—sharing his astonishment at the Lilliputians' miniature society, his discomfort at being the plaything of the Brobdingnagian giants, and his contempt for the tyrannical intellectualism of the Laputans—here, in the fourth voyage, we are forced to step back and look not with Gulliver, but at him.

Although in some ways the Houyhnhnms are the ideal for which Gulliver strives unsuccessfully among his fellow humans, in another way they are just as much the victims of Swift's satire as the peoples of the first three voyages. Paragons of virtue and rationality, the horses are also dull, simple, and lifeless. Their language is impoverished, their mating loveless, and their understanding of the complex play of social forces naïve. What is missing in the horses is exactly that which makes human life rich: the complicated interplay of selfishness, altruism, love, hate, and all other emotions. In other words, the Houyhnhnms' society is perfect for Houyhnhnms, but it is hopeless for humans. Houyhnhnm society is, in stark contrast to the societies of the first three voyages, devoid of all that is human.

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## 14.8 Major Themes

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### Perspective

Above all, *Gulliver's Travels* is a novel about perspective. While the story is abundant with potential morals, the strongest and most consistent message is a lesson in relativism: one's point of view is contingent upon one's own physical and social circumstances and looking at people's circumstances explains a lot about their respective viewpoints. Gulliver explicitly lectures the reader on relativism, explaining how England's ideas of beauty, goodness, and fairness are

radically different from notions of those qualities possessed by the beings he visits in other lands. Until novel's end, Gulliver is able to see merit in his own country's perspective as well as in the perspectives of other nations, a fair-mindedness which he acquires from immersing himself in different cultures and adopting their opposite points of view. Indeed, his travels possess a perfect symmetry: he goes from being a giant among **the Lilliputians** to being a tiny person among the Brobdingnagians; he exploits the world of tiny people for his own profit (by showing off Lilliputian animals for profit in England) and is in turn exploited in the world of the giants (by the Brobdingnagian Farmer who charges people to gawk at Gulliver); he goes from Laputa, where **the Laputians** ignore their bodies to concentrate on abstract knowledge and science, to the land of **the Yahoos**, who are exclusively absorbed by their bodies and the pursuit of crude physical pleasures. Though Gulliver continually marvels at the otherness and strangeness of the foreign people he's landed among, he is also constantly comparing them to people back home in England, finding analogues or points of comparison for even the least familiar customs.

The novel ultimately suggests that one's perspective on reality is even more powerful than reality itself. When Gulliver returns to England from Brobdingnag, he encounters "normal" human-sized life but sees everyone and everything as miniature. He thus misgauges size, misjudges people's health, and generally misunderstands his situation until enough time passes for his perspective to adjust. Likewise, Gulliver's time spent among **the Houyhnhmns** enables him to see his own society in a new way. Though he has been eager to go home after all his prior adventures, he no longer wants to return to England after living amongst the Houyhnhmns, for he has so internalized their perspective that he sees all human beings as Yahoos. He is disgusted even by his own reflection and starts affecting the manner of a horse. Though he is, from a biological standpoint, still fully human, his new perspective has transformed him into a Houyhnhmn and he can no longer function in human society.

## **Moral vs. Physical Power**

By placing **Gulliver** amongst people of extremely different physical circumstances than his own, Gulliver's adventures dramatize the distinction between moral and physical power. In Lilliput, Gulliver's huge size advantage over **the Lilliputians** would make it easy for him to treat them like inhuman vermin and to assert himself against them by physical force (he even imagines squashing them by the handfuls during their initial encounter on the beach). But Gulliver's willingness to empathize, reason with, and respect the Lilliputians despite their diminutive size yields a much more meaningful, rewarding experience (at least until the prince turns against him). Conversely, in Brobdingnag, the Brobdingnagians could easily dehumanize and squash Gulliver, but Gulliver is impressed by their kindness and willingness to listen and empathize with him (though they do treat Gulliver a little more like a cute clown than he would like). Through the example of the Lilliputians' ridiculous, futile battles over how best to crack an egg, the novel suggests the absurdity of all warfare as a means to settle matters of the mind and faith. Through the example of **the Laputian king** and the Luggnaggian king, the novel presents a parody of tyrannical excess and shows the dangers of rulers who assert themselves through physical power. In Laputa, the king is totally out of touch with his people and maintains his hold over the people simply by making himself "taller" than they are by floating above them on his island. In



Luggnagg, the king demands grotesque demonstrations of physical supplication, making subjects crawl on their stomachs licking the dirty floor before him.

As the novel considers the dangers of physical power in society, it also considers the physical character of the individual and reflects on how best to handle one's body. **The Laputians'** and **Lagadans'** obsession with reason and knowledge has rendered them utterly out of touch with their bodies. Their inability to function in the practical, physical world has in turn destroyed their society, and their example indicates that ignoring physical reality inevitably leads to suffering. Among **the Yahoos** and **the Houyhnhnms**, Gulliver learns that the possession of a human body does not automatically elevate a person over the animals. The Yahoos, it turns out, are much more bestial than the animal Houyhnhnms. This directly contradicts the common European assertion of the time that human bodies were automatically superior to animal bodies because the human form necessarily contained moral and rational power. Indeed, the Houyhnhnms possess a stronger moral compass and sense of reason than the Yahoos and the Europeans alike. At each instance, the novel thus shows that true superiority and worthy power come from a moral, rational mind in harmony with the body it inhabits.

## **Society and the State**

As **Gulliver** travels from society to society, he observes each one's organization in detail and compares and contrasts it with the English state. Though all of the societies visited are flawed, several possess some admirable qualities and almost all of them play out the consequences of a particular utopian ideal. Their admirable qualities include the peaceful Brobdingnagian king's disgust at the thought of gunpowder and rule by violent force; the Lilliputian king's initial generosity and warmth towards the foreign Gulliver; the Houyhnhnms' reason-driven peace and order. But the societies also demonstrate the unfortunate outcome of certain utopian ideals. Lilliput separates its children from their birth parents (as Plato himself advised in), but the practice does not end up yielding very mature or reasonable adults. The Lilliputian king and his court are petty grudge-holders, no better than the monarchs of Europe. Laputa dedicates itself to reason and scientific progress but its devotion produces only trivialities and useless inventions, leaving the useful parts of society to decay. The Houyhnhnms practice strict family planning, but the plans leave no room for the passionate and beautiful parts of love and marriage. The Houyhnhnms' also transcend humanity's ills and evils, but this, too, ends up stripping them of personal identity so that their society lacks humanity's rich vividness and seems to the reader a bit too robotic, even as Gulliver professes to love it. Gulliver himself attempts to live the ideal of uniting with nature by living among the Houyhnhnms, but this commitment only dooms him to dissatisfaction and insanity in the human life he must inevitably return to.

Swift never draws up a formula for an ideal state and society because he does not believe that one exists. However, by showing the goods and ills of the vastly different societies Gulliver visits, Swift implicitly points out the errors of human society while also cautioning against the embrace of certain "utopian" solutions.

## **Knowledge**

*Gulliver's Travels* also considers the value of knowledge and its best applications in life. The novel surveys many different kinds of knowledge and examines the effect they have on the people

possessing them. **Gulliver**'s worldly knowledge about other societies and lifestyles makes him tolerant and open-minded person, able to see both sides of most stories while many of the minds around him are more rigid. Still, it's unclear if this knowledge actually serves Gulliver well—it ends up, after all, leaving him dissatisfied and lonely, estranged from his family and his society and wishing futilely that he was one of the Houyhnhnms. In Brobdingnag and the land of **the Houyhnhnms**, the novel considers the kind of political knowledge that both **the Brobdingnagian king** and the Houyhnhnms lack. Yet, while both are ignorant of gunpowder, Machiavellian strategies, and the use of fear and violence to keep people in line, both organize successful, happy societies that seem much more functional than those governed by the more "sophisticated" political knowledge of Europe. The novel also compares practical scientific knowledge, as practiced to valuable effect by **the Lilliputians** and the Houyhnhnms, to abstract scientific knowledge, as practiced to useless effect by the the Laputians. The Laputians' knowledge, Swift shows, may as well be ignorance, for they don't put their theories to any useful purpose and only waste their lives on fruitless experimentation. Finally, the novel considers self-knowledge as it is gradually acquired by Gulliver over the course of the novel, most so in Book 4. One could see Gulliver's end as an awakening to his true self (and the true self of all human beings), which leaves him disgusted with human nature. However, one could also see Gulliver's end as a tragic exaggeration of self-knowledge such that he amplifies human evil beyond its actual proportions and thereby bars himself from integrating productively into the human society he should be a part of.

In most of these instances, knowledge becomes harmful when it approaches an extreme: problems arise if one *only* understands scientific and mathematic abstraction, as the Laputians do, or if one *only* pursues knowledge of foreign lands without spending time at home among one's own people, as in the case of Gulliver himself. Thus, the novel seems implicitly to advocate a moderate balance between practical and abstract knowledge, between knowledge of the outside world and knowledge of one's own position in it.

## Truth and Deception

Much of the novel's plot action is driven by deceptions, and Gulliver takes note of the inhabitants' feelings about truth and lying in every country he visits. Deceptions that drive plot action include **the Lilliputians**' secret plot to starve Gulliver to death and Gulliver's subsequent deceptions to escape Lilliput. Then, in Brobdingnag, Gulliver deliberately conceals as many of his mishaps as he can from Glumdalclitch in order to try to maintain his dignity and freedom. Later, Gulliver lies to **the Japanese emperor** about being Dutch in order to be granted passage to England. Finally, in the land of **the Houyhnhnms**, Gulliver deliberately avoids correcting the Houyhnhnms' misimpression that his **clothes** are a part of his body, which helps distinguish him enough from **the Yahoos** to convince the Houyhnhnms he isn't really one of them.

From society to society, Gulliver also tracks the inhabitants' different attitudes towards truth and falsehood. The Lilliputians' treat fraud as the highest crime and profess a rigorous devotion to honesty (which is, of course, somewhat undercut by the court's deceptive plot against Gulliver). In Glubbdubdrib, Gulliver explores his own culture's attitude towards truth by summoning ghosts of the past and having later thinkers show ancient thinkers like Aristotle the falsehood in their theories while also exposing rampant deception among the English royalty. In the land of the

Houyhnhnms, Gulliver encounters a purely honest society, so committed to truth that its members don't even have a word for 'lying' and only refer to a falsehood as "the thing which is not."

Yet even as the novel raises earnest questions about the value of honesty, it also toys with the reader, suggesting that truth may be more subjective than absolute. As certain as the novel's human readers are that the societies described are pure fantasy, so too do the characters that inhabit those societies refuse to believe Gulliver's descriptions of human society and insist that Europe is make-believe. Further, Swift makes a concerted effort at verisimilitude by including the preface from **Richard Simpson**, which repeatedly alludes to geographical facts omitted, supposedly to prevent boredom. (Earlier editions of the novel took this verisimilitude even further by keeping Swift's name off the book and publishing it under the pseudonym Lemuel Gulliver.) Swift also has Gulliver attest again and again to his own honesty and to the true nature of his account. Beyond insisting that it is the factual count it emphatically isn't, *Gulliver's Travels* also criticizes the novelistic form it is when Gulliver encounters the erosive influence of novels on readers' brains. As with knowledge, then, Swift presents a mixed message on truth: while his work advocates for honesty among individuals and human governments, it also suggests that life will always contain some degree of unknowability and confusion.

### Check Your Progress

#### 1. Discuss the themes of the novel.

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## 14.9 Stylistic Devices

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### Motifs

Motifs are recurring structures, contrasts, and literary devices that can help to develop and inform the text's major themes.

### Excrement

While it may seem a trivial or laughable motif, the recurrent mention of excrement in Gulliver's Travels actually has a serious philosophical significance in the narrative. It symbolizes everything that is crass and ignoble about the human body and about human existence in general, and it obstructs any attempt to view humans as wholly spiritual or mentally transcendent creatures. Since the Enlightenment culture of eighteenth-century England tended to view humans optimistically as noble souls rather than vulgar bodies, Swift's emphasis on the common filth of life is a slap in the face of the philosophers of his day. Thus, when Gulliver

urinates to put out a fire in Lilliput, or when Brobdingnagian flies defecate on his meals, or when the scientist in Lagado works to transform excrement back into food, we are reminded how very little human reason has to do with everyday existence. Swift suggests that the human condition in general is dirtier and lowlier than we might like to believe it is.

## **Foreign Languages**

Gulliver appears to be a gifted linguist, knowing at least the basics of several European languages and even a fair amount of ancient Greek. This knowledge serves him well, as he is able to disguise himself as a Dutchman in order to facilitate his entry into Japan, which at the time only admitted the Dutch. But even more important, his linguistic gifts allow him to learn the languages of the exotic lands he visits with a dazzling speed and, thus, gain access to their culture quickly. He learns the languages of the Lilliputians, the Brobdingnagians, and even the neighing tongue of the Houyhnhnms. He is meticulous in recording the details of language in his narrative, often giving the original as well as the translation. One would expect that such detail would indicate a cross-cultural sensitivity, a kind of anthropologist's awareness of how things vary from culture to culture. Yet surprisingly, Gulliver's mastery of foreign languages generally does not correspond to any real interest in cultural differences. He compares any of the governments he visits to that of his native England, and he rarely even speculates on how or why cultures are different at all. Thus, his facility for translation does not indicate a culturally comparative mind, and we are perhaps meant to yearn for a narrator who is a bit less able to remember the Brobdingnagian word for "lark" and better able to offer a more illuminating kind of cultural analysis.

## **Clothing**

Critics have noted the extraordinary attention that Gulliver pays to clothes throughout his journeys. Every time he gets a rip in his shirt or is forced to adopt some native garment to replace one of his own, he recounts the clothing details with great precision. We are told how his pants are falling apart in Lilliput, so that as the army marches between his legs they get quite an eyeful. We are informed about the mouse skin he wears in Brobdingnag, and how the finest silks of the land are as thick as blankets on him. In one sense, these descriptions are obviously an easy narrative device with which Swift can chart his protagonist's progression from one culture to another: the more ragged his clothes become and the stranger his new wardrobe, the farther he is from the comforts and conventions of England. His journey to new lands is also thus a journey into new clothes.

When he is picked up by Don Pedro after his fourth voyage and offered a new suit of clothes, Gulliver vehemently refuses, preferring his wild animal skins. We sense that Gulliver may well never fully reintegrate into European society.

But the motif of clothing carries a deeper, more psychologically complex meaning as well. Gulliver's intense interest in the state of his clothes may signal a deep-seated anxiety about his identity, or lack thereof. He does not seem to have much selfhood: one critic has called him an "abyss," a void where an individual character should be. If clothes make the man, then perhaps Gulliver's obsession with the state of his wardrobe may suggest that he desperately needs to be fashioned as a personality. Significantly, the two moments when he describes being naked in

the novel are two deeply troubling or humiliating experiences: the first when he is the boy toy of the Brobdingnagian maids who let him cavort nude on their mountainous breasts, and the second when he is assaulted by an eleven-year-old Yahoo girl as he bathes. Both incidents suggest more than mere prudery. Gulliver associate's nudity with extreme vulnerability, even when there is no real danger present—a pre-teen girl is hardly a threat to a grown man, at least in physical terms. The state of nudity may remind Gulliver of how nonexistent he feels without the reassuring cover of clothing.

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## 14.10 Summary

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The author's novel *Gulliver's Travel* is a masterpiece. Many aspects of this novel are intertwined. As it deals with various political allegories, it is a political allegory. It is a thrilling story. The novel is a travelogue because it deals with travel from beginning to conclusion. The novel is referred to as a comic novel because it contains humorous or comedic themes. The novel is a sarcastic work of art since it mocks human vices. In short, the novel succeeds in conveying what the author intended. From whatever aspect, a reader can appreciate the novel heading.

So, after all, we hope that you were able to learn a lot from this novel, such as how to build any artistic work? How can we decipher the novel's deeper meaning? How can we indirectly communicate with society? Etc. We can see from the outside that it is not childish, but we also learn a lot from it.

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## 14.11 Key Terms

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- **Lilliputians:** The inhabitants of Lilliput, the Lilliputians are just a few inches tall. They are engaged in extended battles with their neighbors, the Blefuscans.
- **Urinating :** In *Gulliver's Travels*, excrement symbolizes the crude reality of human flesh, a fact Gulliver faces most prominently in the filthy, feces-flinging bodies of the Yahoos.
- **The Brobdingnagian king:** Though he at first can't believe that Gulliver isn't just a piece of clockwork, the Brobdingnagian King comes around to Gulliver and happily discusses matters of state with him. He comes away from these discussions rather disgusted by humans, though.
- **The Laputians:** The inhabitants of the floating island, the Laputians are totally consumed by complex mathematic, astronomical, and musical theory and so disdain common sense that they lack all practical knowledge and can barely function as bodies in the world.
- **Yahoos:** Filthy, greedy, gluttonous, selfish, and dumb, the Yahoos are the embodiment of everything gross and crude in human nature. Properly speaking, they are degenerate humans who live among the Houyhnhmns. Yet, by novel's end, Gulliver is referring to every other human being as a Yahoo.

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## 14.12 Review Questions


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1. Discuss the novel *Gulliver's Travels* as a Political Satire.
2. How was the experience in Lilliput by Gulliver? Explain.

3. How were the Houyhnhnms different from the humans? Elucidate with reference to the text.
  4. What difference did Gulliver find in Brobdignang island? Explain.
  5. Critically analyze the text of Gulliver's Travels.
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## UNIT 15: NOVELLA AND LITERATURE

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### STRUCTURE

- 15.1 Objectives
- 15.2 Introduction
- 15.3 Definition
- 15.4 Historical Perspective
- 15.5 Characteristics of Novella
- 15.6 Novella: Examples
- 15.7 Novels and Novella
- 15.8 Novella in Literature
- 15.9 Summary
- 15.10 Key Terms
- 15.11 Review Questions
- 15.12 References

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### 15.1 Objectives

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The learners shall know about the following from this unit:

- New term in literature as Novella.
- The beginning of Novella.
- The implications of Novella in literature.
- The major writers of Novella.

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### 15.2 Introduction

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**Novella**, short and well-structured narrative, often realistic and satiric in tone, that influenced the development of the short story and the novel throughout Europe. Originating in Italy during the Middle Ages, the novella was based on local events that were humorous, political, or amorous in nature; the individual tales often were gathered into collections along with anecdotes, legends, and romantic tales. Writers such as Giovanni Boccaccio, Franco Sacchetti, and Matteo Bandello later developed the novella into a psychologically subtle and highly structured short tale, often using a frame story to unify the tales around a common theme.

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### 15.3 Definition

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The Italian term is a feminine of *novello*, which means *new*, similarly to the English word *news*. Merriam-Webster defines a novella as "a work of fiction intermediate in length and complexity between a short story and a novel". There is disagreement regarding the number of pages or words necessary for a story to be considered a novella, a short story or a novel. The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Association defines a novella's word count to be between 17,500 and 40,000 words; at 250 words per page, this equates to 70 to 160 pages.

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## 15.4 Historical Perspectives

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The novella as a literary genre began developing in the Italian literature of the early Renaissance, principally by Giovanni Boccaccio, author of *The Decameron* (1353). *The Decameron* featured 100 tales (named novellas) told by ten people (seven women and three men) fleeing the Black Death, by escaping from Florence to the Fiesole hills in 1348. This structure was then imitated by subsequent authors, notably the French queen Marguerite de Navarre, whose *Heptaméron* (1559) included 72 original French tales and was modeled after the structure of *The Decameron*.

The Italian genre novella grew out of a rich tradition of medieval short narrative forms. It took its first major form in the anonymous late 13th century *Libro di novelle et di bel parlar gentile*, known as *Il Novellino*, and reached its culmination with *The Decameron*. Followers of Boccaccio such as Giovanni Fiorentino, Franco Sacchetti, Giovanni Sercambi and Simone de' Prodenzani continued the tradition into the early 15th century. The Italian novella influenced many later writers, including Shakespeare. Novellas were also written in Spain. Miguel de Cervantes' book *Novelas ejemplares* (1613) added innovation to the genre with more attention to the depiction of human character and social background. Not until the late 18th and early 19th centuries did writers fashion the novella into a literary genre structured by precepts and rules, generally in a realistic mode. At that time, the Germans were the most active writers of the *novelle* (German: "Novelle"; plural: "Novellen"). For the German writer, a novella is a fictional narrative of indeterminate length—a few pages to hundreds—restricted to a single, suspenseful event, situation, or conflict leading to an unexpected turning point (*Wendepunkt*), provoking a logical but surprising end. *Novellen* tend to contain a concrete symbol, which is the narrative's focal point.

The novella influenced the development of the short story and the novel throughout Europe. In the late 19th century Henry James was one of the first English language critics to use the term novella for a story that was longer and more complex than a short story, but shorter than a novel. In English speaking countries the modern *novella* is rarely defined as a distinct literary genre, but is often used as a term for a short novel.

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## 15.5 Characteristics of Novella

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A novella generally features fewer conflicts than a novel, yet more complicated ones than a short story. The conflicts also have more time to develop than in short stories. Novellas may or may not be divided into chapters (good examples of those with chapters are *Animal Farm* by George Orwell and *The War of the Worlds* by H. G. Wells), and white space is often used to divide the sections, something less common in short stories. Novellas may be intended to be read at a single sitting, like short stories, and thus produce a unitary effect on the reader. According to Warren Cariou, "The novella is generally not as formally experimental as the long story and the novel can be, and it usually lacks the subplots, the multiple points of view, and the generic adaptability that are common in the novel. It is most often concerned with personal and emotional



development rather than with the larger social sphere. The novella generally retains something of the unity of impression that is a hallmark of the short story, but it also contains more highly developed characterization and more luxuriant description.

## Versus novel

The term *novel*, borrowed from the Italian *novella*, originally meant "any of a number of tales or stories making up a larger work; a short narrative of this type, a fable", and was then many times used in the plural, reflecting the usage as in *The Decameron* and its followers. Usage of the more italianate *novella* in English seems to be a bit younger. The differentiation of the two terms seems to have occurred only in the 19th century, following the new fashion of the novella in German literature. In 1834, John Lothrop Motley could still speak of "Tieck's novels (which last are a set of exquisite little tales, novels in the original meaning of the word)". But when the term *novella* was used it was already clear that a rather short and witty form was intended: "The brief Novella has ever been a prodigious favorite with the nation...since the days of Boccaccio." In 1902, William Dean Howells wrote: "Few modern fictions of the novel's dimensions...have the beauty of form many a novella embodies." Sometimes, as with other genres, the genre name is mentioned in the title of a single work (compare the *Divine Comedy* or Goethe's *Das Märchen*). Austrian writer Stefan Zweig's *Die Schachnovelle* (1942) (literally, "The Chess Novella", but translated in 1944 as *The Royal Game*) is an example of a title naming its genre. This might be suggestive of the genre's historicization.

Commonly, longer novellas are referred to as novels; Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899)<sup>[18]</sup> are sometimes called novels, as are many science fiction works such as H. G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* (1897) and Philip Francis Nowlan's *Armageddon 2419 A.D.* (1928). Less often, longer works are referred to as novellas. The subjectivity of the parameters of the novella genre is indicative of its shifting and diverse nature as an art form. In her 2010 *Open Letters Monthly* series, "A Year With Short Novels", Ingrid Norton criticizes the tendency to make clear demarcations based purely on a book's length, saying that "any distinctions that begin with an objective and external quality like size are bound to be misleading." Stephen King, in his introduction to *Different Seasons*, a 1982 collection of four novellas, notes the difficulties of selling a novella in the commercial publishing world, since it does not fit the typical length requirements of either magazine or book publishers.

In his essay, "Briefly, the case for the novella", Canadian author George Fetherling (who wrote the novella *Tales of Two Cities*) said that to reduce the novella to nothing more than a short novel is like "insisting that a pony is a baby horse". The sometimes blurry definition between a novel and a novella can create controversy, as was the case with British writer Ian McEwan's *On Chesil Beach* (2007). The author described it as a novella, but the panel for the Man Booker Prize in 2007 qualified the book as a "short novel". Thus, this "novella" was shortlisted for an award for best original novel. A similar case is found with a much older work of fiction: *The Call of the Wild* (1903) by Jack London. This book, by modern standards, is short enough and straightforward enough to qualify as a novella. However, historically, it has been regarded as a novel.

## Versus novelette

Dictionaries define *novelette* similarly to *novella*, sometimes identically, sometimes with a disparaging sense of being trivial or sentimental. Some literary awards have a longer "novella" and a shorter "novelette" category, with a distinction based on word count. Among awards, a range between 17,500 and 40,000 words is commonly used for the novella category, whereas 7,500–17,500 is commonly used for novelettes. According to *The Writer*, a novelette is approximately between 7,000 and 20,000 words in length, anything shorter being considered a short story.

## Check Your Progress

1. How commonplace was sexual harassment of young women in England in the mid-1700s?

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## 15.6 Novella: Examples

The novella was once considered less serious than a novel but this has since changed, and the modern novella can be concerned with the same socio-political themes as the novel.

Typical examples of the novella include:

- The War of the Worlds (1898) by H. G. Wells.
- Heart of Darkness (1902) by Joseph Conrad.
- The Old Man and the Sea (1953) by Ernest Hemingway.

## The War of the Worlds

This novella is one of the first known stories to describe an alien invasion of earth and is considered a turning point in science-fiction literature. The action spans a period of a few years: it opens with the narrator observing lights on Mars; these are dismissed, yet continue for several nights. Later, a star is seen crashing down to Earth; it lands on Horsell Common near Maybury and turns out to be a cylinder. Soon after this, Martians emerge and the invasion begins. Much of the book focuses on the complacency of humans versus the superior intelligence of the Martians, who invade the earth in search of food and a warmer climate. The invasion ends when the Martians are killed off by terrestrial bacteria.

## Heart of Darkness

Conrad's novella follows the journey of its narrator, Marlow, through the African jungle in search of a man called Kurtz, a successful agent who works for an ivory collection company. Kurtz has

not been seen for some time and rumour has it that he is very ill. The story mostly takes place on an upriver journey and reveals Kurtz's character piece by piece: the reputation he has made for himself with the local population, and the horrifying way in which he has gained control with his gun and knowledge of local rituals. When Marlow finds Kurtz, Kurtz tries to explain himself and his actions by saying he has seen into the very heart of things. He dies soon after, muttering, 'The horror! The horror!' (chapter 3). The novella raised themes of colonialism and imperialism which continue to be discussed in postcolonial literary studies today.

## The Old Man and the Sea

Ernest Hemingway's novella describes the battle at sea between a fisherman called Santiago (the old man of the title) and a giant marlin. The battle lasts two days before Santiago manages to catch the fish and bring it to shore. Santiago collapses in his cabin and passes out; when he wakes up, he discovers much of the marlin has been eaten by a shark. The novella covers themes of life, death, and humanity, and it won the 1953 Pulitzer Prize for fiction.

A more recent example is Karen Jennings's *An Island* (2020), which was longlisted for the Booker prize in 2021. The story, a political allegory, describes four days in the life of Samuel, a lighthouse keeper when he rescues a refugee who is washed ashore. Over the four days, Samuel remembers his years on the mainland under colonial rule, independence and military dictatorship. His lack of trust and an old red hen are key factors in the novella's sudden violent climax. The novella, despite its shortness, covers themes of colonialism, isolation and displacement.

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## 15.7 Novels and Novella

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Today, the main differences between novels and novellas are considered to be:

- **The story structure:** novellas are extended short stories with one plot, whereas the novel may have one or more subplots in addition to its central storyline.
- **The length:** the term 'novella' is used for stories that are longer than a short story but shorter than a novel. A novel is usually around 80,000 words or more, however, the margins are flexible and will vary from publisher to publisher.

However, it was not until the 18th century that novels began to be understood as longer works of fiction. Before this, the term 'novel' was interchangeable with 'novella' or 'novellae' (meaning a collection of stories).

For example, Daniel Defoe's popular text *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) was not called a novel when it was first published and was described by Defoe himself as 'the stories of' or 'the adventures of' Crusoe. It contained all the elements of the novel as we understand it today but was not understood as such until later on.

The novel form developed over the course of the 18th century and came to be recognised as serious literature with the works of **Daniel Defoe**, **Henry Fielding**, **Laurence Sterne**, and **Samuel Richardson**.

Samuel Richardson's novels *Pamela* (1740), *Clarissa* (1748), and *Sir Charles Grandison* (1754) broke away from the popular romance or picaresque fiction of the time. Richardson was concerned with moral behaviour in all of his novels, and it was this that helped establish the novel as something separate from sensationalist or popular fiction.

*Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, follows Pamela, a maidservant, in her prudent navigation of a relationship with her late mistress' son until she marries him. The story is narrated mostly through Pamela's letters and journal entries to her parents. *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison* both contain similar storylines, with kidnappings and attempted seductions as recurring elements. With these novels came the concept of the subplot: one or more storylines that follow minor or secondary characters in the book.

The novella has a long history and, while it has never fallen out of use, it has been in and out of fashion in publishing. Currently, it is in demand, with publishers opening up their submissions specifically for novellas. Genres are wide-ranging and can include romance, sci-fi, the supernatural, comedy, and allegory.

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## 15.8 Novella in Literature

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In the world of literature, the novella holds a unique position. It allows authors to tell a complete narrative that is more expansive than a short story, yet more focused and condensed than a novel. This format is ideal for exploring a single character, idea, or event in depth, without the need for subplots or secondary narratives that are often found in longer works.

### Exploration of Themes and Narratives

Due to their length, novellas are typically centered around a singular theme or narrative. They often explore a specific incident or character in great detail, providing insight into their motivations, emotions, and experiences. This focus on a singular theme or narrative allows for a deep exploration of concepts such as identity, morality, or societal issues within a compact form.

For example, Albert Camus used the novella to explore the concept of absurdity in *The Stranger* through a fictional story. If you've ever read *The Stranger* or plan to, take a look at this video breaking down the philosophy of Camus and how he tied it into his novella.

## Unique Opportunities and Challenges

The novella format presents its own set of opportunities and challenges. On one hand, it provides authors with the chance to delve deeply into a single idea or character, something that might get lost in the expanse of a novel. Novellas also allow for more experimental storytelling techniques, such as unusual narrative structures or perspectives.

On the other hand, the brevity of a novella can also be a challenge. Authors must balance the need for depth and complexity with the constraints of a shorter format. Every word counts in a novella, and there's little room for extraneous details or digressions.

Despite these challenges, when executed well, a novella can leave a lasting impact, providing readers with a thought-provoking and satisfying literary experience within a compact narrative.

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### 15.9 Summary

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Therefore, A novella is a specific form of written fiction that sits between a short story and a full-length novel in terms of length and complexity. Typically ranging from about 20,000 to 50,000 words, a novella provides more room for character development and plot progression than a short story, yet maintains a tighter, more focused narrative than a novel. Originating from the Italian word 'novella' meaning 'new,' it often explores a single character, event, or point of view and is known for its succinct and impactful storytelling.

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### 15.10 Key Terms

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**Succinct:** Clear and short; expressing what needs to be said without unnecessary words: Keep your letter succinct and to the point.

**allegory:** As a literary device or artistic form, an **allegory** is a narrative or visual representation in which a character, place, or event can be interpreted to represent a meaning with moral or political significance. Authors have used allegory throughout history in all forms of art to illustrate or convey complex ideas and concepts in ways that are comprehensible or striking to its viewers, readers, or listeners.

**Novel:** Novel, an invented prose narrative of considerable length and a certain complexity that deals imaginatively with human experience, usually through a connected sequence of events involving a group of persons in a specific setting. Within its broad framework, the genre of the novel has encompassed an extensive range of types and styles: picaresque, epistolary, Gothic, romantic, realist, historical—to name only some of the more important ones.

Novella: Geoffrey Chaucer introduced the novella to England with The Canterbury Tales. During the Elizabethan period, William Shakespeare and other playwrights extracted dramatic plots from the Italian novella. The realistic content and form of these tales influenced the development of

the English novel in the 18th century and the short story in the 19th century.

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### 15.11 Review Questions

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1. Find out the difference between Novel and Novella.
  2. Bring out the contribution of authors in Novella in the field of literature.
  3. What is the relevance of novella in literature.
  4. Discuss the historical perspective of Novella.
  5. What do you mean by Novella? Explain the novellas written in literature.
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### 15.12 References

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## UNIT 16: RICHARDSON AND PAMELA

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### STRUCTURE

- 16.1 Objectives
- 16.2 Introduction
- 16.3 Richardson's Contribution to the Development of the Novel in English.
- 16.4 Introduction to the Novel
- 16.5 Characters
- 16.6 Chapter – wise Analysis
- 16.7 Themes
- 16.8 Stylistic Devices
- 16.9 Summary
- 16.10 Key Terms
- 16.11 Review Questions
- 16.12 References

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### 16.1 Objectives

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The learners shall know the following:

- Richardson as a writer.
- Pamela as the most important work of Richardson.
- Richardson's contribution to the development of Novel in English.
- Introduction to the novel and its different Perspectives.

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### 16.2 Introduction

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Samuel Richardson, (Aug. 19, 1689- July 4. 1761), was an English novelist who expanded the dramatic possibilities of the novel by his invention and use of the letter form ("epistolary novel"). His major novels were *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa* (1747–48).

Richardson was 50 years old when he wrote Pamela, but of his first 50 years little is known. His ancestors were of yeoman stock. His father, also Samuel, and his mother's father, Stephen Hall, became London tradesmen, and his father, after the death of his first wife, married Stephen's daughter, Elizabeth, in 1682. A temporary move of the Richardsons to Derbyshire accounts for the fact that the novelist was born in Mackworth. They returned to London when Richardson was 10. He had at best what he called "only Common School- Learning." The perceived inadequacy of his education was later to preoccupy him and some of his critics.

Richardson was bound apprentice to a London printer, John Wilde. Sometime after completing his apprenticeship he became associated with the Leakes, a printing family whose presses he eventually took over when he set up in business for himself in 1721 and married Martha Wilde, the daughter of his master. Elizabeth Leake, the sister of a

prosperous bookseller of Bath, became his second wife in 1733, two years after Martha's death. His domestic life was marked by tragedy. All six of the children from his first marriage died in infancy or childhood. By his second wife he had four daughters who survived him, but two other children died in infancy. These and other bereavements contributed to the nervous ailments of his later life.

In his professional life Richardson was hardworking and successful. With the growth in prominence of his press went his steady increase in prestige as a member, an officer, and later master, of the Stationers' Company (the guild for those in the book trade). During the 1730s his press became known as one of the three best in London, and with prosperity he moved to a more spacious London house and leased the first of three country houses in which he entertained a circle of friends that included Dr. Johnson, the painter William Hogarth, the actors Colley Cibber and David Garrick, Edward Young, and Arthur Onslow, speaker of the House of Commons, whose influence in 1733 helped to secure for Richardson lucrative contracts for government printing that later included the journals of the House.

In this same decade he began writing in a modest way. At some point, he was commissioned to write a collection of letters that might serve as models for "country readers," a volume that has become known as *Familiar Letters on Important Occasions*. Occasionally he hit upon continuing the same subject from one letter to another, and, after a letter from "a father to a daughter in service, on hearing of her master's attempting her virtue," he supplied the daughter's answer. This was the germ of his novel *Pamela*. With a method supplied by the letter writer and a plot by a story that he remembered of an actual serving maid who preserved her virtue and was rewarded by marriage, he began writing the work in November 1739 and published it as *Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded*, a year later.

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### **16.3 Richardson's Contribution to the Development of the Novel in English.**

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Some critics have considered Samuel Richardson the father of the novel. George Saintsbury declared *Pamela* the first novel in history, asking rhetorically, "Where are we to find a probable human being, worked out to the same degree, before?" Other characters in English literature had been as "probable" as Pamela Andrews, including the characters of Shakespeare. No previous character, however, had been "worked out to the same degree," that is, delineated through such a lavish presentation of her personal attributes and the conditions of her everyday life. Richardson did not invent the form of long fiction, but he did innovate the combination of psychological realism and amplitude of concrete detail that is the special province of the genre of the novel.

This aesthetic achievement grew out of the epistolary form that Richardson chose to employ, but its significance extends beyond that form. As M. Kinkead-Weekes observes, "What [Richardson] invented was the dramatic novel, not merely the idea of writing in letters." In other words, *Pamela* inaugurates a whole tradition in the English novel whereby readers know the characters directly through the circumstances of their comparatively unfiltered lives, rather than learning of them second-hand through an omniscient narrator. The method is "dramatic"



in the sense that it dispenses with the objective mediating consciousness, much as a theatrical production does. The tradition of the dramatic novel would go on to claim, among so many other titles, Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* in the eighteenth century, Brontë's *Jane Eyre* in the nineteenth century, and in the twentieth century Joyce's *Ulysses* and much of the rest of the Modernist canon.

Another of Richardson's decisive contributions to the tradition of the novel was his investing *Pamela* with such moral heft that serious people felt at liberty to take it seriously. As a result, the previously lightweight genre of the novel, which had long possessed a cultural status comparable to that of soap operas or music videos in our day, acquired new prestige. As Elizabeth Bergen Brophy observes, the novel prior to Richardson had been primarily the work of hack writers, with the highbrow literary talent preferring to concentrate their efforts on poetry, and its chief purpose was to supply "vicarious thrills, improbable plots, and thinly disguised sexual titillation." In *Pamela*, by contrast, Richardson sought to "turn young People into a Course of Reading different from the Pomp and Parade of Romance-writing" by using fiction as a vehicle for moral instruction. His efforts to "promote the Cause of Religion and Virtue" endeared the novel to the religious establishment, such that certain clergymen even read the more directly pious passages from their pulpits on Sundays. Thus bearing the approval of the moral and spiritual authorities, novels emerged as artifacts of major cultural significance, capable of providing not merely entertainment but also, potentially, moral wisdom and psychological insight.

The rise of the novel as Richardson re-created it coincided with the increasing cultural importance of private experience and personal relationships. Indeed, the influential critic Ian Watt has argued that the ascendancy of the Richardsonian novel contributed to this new emphasis on the private and personal, what Watt calls "the transition from the objective, social and public orientation of the classical world to the subjective, individualist and private orientation of the life and literature of the last two hundred years." The eighteenth century saw the rise of economic individualism, that is, the phenomenon of individual workers' selling their labor on the open market rather than attaching themselves for life to aristocratic patrons in the feudal manner. With this new economic model came greater personal mobility, as workers moved to where the jobs were, and this increased mobility led to the decline of the patriarchal family structure: extended families became less likely to remain together in the same geographical area and consequently ceased to be as important as they had previously been. The loss of the organic social networks of patriarchy created a momentous deficit for which society compensated by placing a new emphasis on voluntary personal bonds and the inner life. As Watt puts it, such personal relationships as friendship and the marital bond "offer[ed] the individual a more conscious and selective pattern of social life to replace the more diffuse, and as it were involuntary, social cohesions which individualism had undermined." Such newly important bonds, in particular the marital kind, are precisely Richardson's field of interest, and his dignifying of private relationships and private experience naturally struck a chord with his contemporaries.

Thinking of the rise of the novel as a response to the heightened importance of voluntary private

relationships makes it easy to understand why the dominant tradition of the English novel, at least until the beginning of the twentieth century, has followed Richardson's lead in taking for its subject the coming-together of a heroine and her freely chosen husband. The novel provides a forum for exploring the psychological niceties involved in securing that most critical of personal relationships, the spousal bond; it has served an important sociological function, then, by acquainting unmarried readers with the emotional facts of the courtship process. Whether the novel's record in this regard has been completely beneficial is, however, a matter of some debate. As Watt explains it, "the formula that explains the power of the popular novel" is a "combination of romance and formal realism," that is, a pairing of wish fulfillment with a semblance of probability. The novel's use of "narrative skill" to "re-create the pseudo-realism of the daydream, to give an air of authenticity to a triumph against all obstacles and contrary to expectation," amounts simply to a more insidious version of the Cinderella fantasy, an application of literary realism that teaches the infusion of marital aspirations with fairy-tale patterns of social elevation. Whether or not one chooses to accept Watt's moral judgment of this tendency of the English novel, it is a tendency that undoubtedly bears the impress of Richardson and of Pamela.

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## 16.4 Introduction to the Novel

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Samuel Richardson may have based his first novel on the story of a real-life affair between Hannah Sturges, the sixteen-year-old daughter of a coachman, and Sir Arthur Hesilrige, Baronet of Northampton, whom she married in 1725. He certainly based the form of the novel on his own aptitude for letter-writing: always prolific in private correspondence, he had recently tried his hand at writing fictionalized letters for publication, during which effort he had conceived the idea of a series of related letters all tending to the revelation of one story. He began work on *Pamela* on November 10, 1739 and completed it on January 10, 1740. Richardson's objects in writing *Pamela* were moral instruction and commercial success, perhaps in that order.

As he explained to his friend Aaron Hill in a famous letter, his goal was to divert young readers from vapid romances by creating "a new Species of Writing that might possibly turn young People into a Course of Reading different from the Pomp and Parade of Romance-writing, and dismissing the improbable and marvellous, with which Novels generally abound, might tend to promote the Cause of Religion and Virtue." The nature of this "new species of writing" may seem obscure at first. Richardson felt that the best vehicle for a moral lesson was an exemplary character; he also felt that the most effective presentation of an exemplary character was a realistic presentation that evoked the reader's sympathy and identification, as opposed to an ideal one that rendered the character as inhumanly perfect. For the project of rendering an exemplary character in a realistic manner the appropriate form, he reasoned, was the novel, providing as it did ample scope in which to flesh out psychological complexities and mix dominant virtues with smaller but significant flaws. In itself, Richardson's idea of combining instruction with entertainment was, of course, hardly original; then as now, it was a highly traditional argument for the moral utility of art. Richardson's innovation was a generic one consisting, in part, of his producing a respectable and morally elevating work in the despised

genre of the novel, hitherto the province of only the cheapest diversions.

Pamela achieved extraordinary popularity among three groups whose tastes do not often coincide: the public, the litterateurs, and the professional moralists. It went through five editions in its first year and inspired a market for Pamela-themed memorabilia, which took such forms as paintings, playing cards, and ladies' fans. Pre-publication hype doubtless encouraged sales, as the novel's backers secured and publicized endorsements by such major literary figures as Alexander Pope, and there is some indication that Richardson, with his many connections in the London literary world, may have incentivized some of this "buzz" under the table. The novel had a legitimate claim to its wide audience, however: in addition to its moral utility, there was the aesthetic achievement of Richardson's narrative method, quite avant-garde at the time. The epistolary form presented Pamela's first-person jottings directly to the reader, dispensing with the imperious traditional narrator and allowing unmediated access to her personality and perceptions. The intimacy and realism of this method, which Richardson called "writing to the moment," combined with the liveliness of Pamela's language and character, proved highly attractive.

Not all were won over, however, and part of what makes the publication of Pamela such a phenomenon in English literary history is the controversy that greeted it and the legion of detractors and parodists it inspired. A Danish observer went so far as to say that England seemed divided into "two different parties, Pamelists and Antipamelists. . . Some look on this young Virgin as an Example for Ladies to follow. . . Others, on the contrary, discover in it the Behaviour of an hypocritical, crafty Girl . . . who understands the Art of bringing a Man to her Lure." Some critics, then, accused Pamela of being less innocent than she puts on to be and of simulating sexual virtue in order to make herself more desirable. In Henry Fielding's *Shamela*, for instance, the "heroine" boasts: "I thought once of making a little fortune by my [physical] Person. I now intend to make a great one by my Vartue." Fielding's savagely funny send-up was one of many parodies of Richardson's novel (Eliza Haywood's *Anti-Pamela* is another notable contribution); it burlesques not only the moral pretensions of Richardson's heroine but also her vulgar tongue and her penchants for recording voluminous detail and writing in real time. (For instance, *Shamela* happens to have her pen by her and goes on scribbling during one of her Master's rape attempts.)

Richardson was sensitive to the criticism and ridicule, and it influenced his many revisions of the novel. In particular, in subsequent editions of the novel he elevates Pamela's style of writing and speaking, progressively eliminating rusticisms, regionalisms, and other markers of her lower-class status. These changes were in response to a widespread critique that held that a young woman of admirable character should speak in a way that commands admiration; as one of Richardson's correspondents put it, "The Language is not altogether unexceptionable, but in several Places sinks below the Idea we are constrained to form of the Heroine who writes it." Other casualties of Richardson's gradual accommodation of literary and social decorum include Pamela's "saucy" reactions to her superiors, both in dialogue and in her private thoughts. The result is that by the time Richardson was finished tinkering with his explosive first novel, it had become a smoother, more polished, and often less challenging text.

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## 16.5 Characters

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### ➤ Major Characters

#### a) Pamela

A lively, pretty, and courageous maid-servant, age 15, who is subject to the sexual advances of her new Master, Mr. B., following the death of his mother, Lady B. She is a devoted daughter to her impoverished parents, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, to whom she writes a prodigious number of letters and whom she credits with the moral formation that prompts her to defend her purity at all costs. Pamela resists Mr. B. through the long weeks of his aggression toward her, capitulating neither to his assaults nor to his later tenderness. Though it takes a while for her to admit it, Pamela is attracted to Mr. B. from the first, and gradually she comes to love him. They marry about halfway through the novel, and afterward Pamela's sweetness and equipoise aid her in securing the goodwill of her new husband's highborn friends.

#### b) Mr. B.

A country squire, 25 or 26 years of age, with properties in Bedfordshire, Lincolnshire, Kent, and London. He is Pamela's employer, pursuer, and eventual husband. Richardson has censored Mr. B.'s name in order to protect the pretense of non-fiction, but scholars have conjectured based on manuscripts that the novelist had "Brandon" in mind. Mr. B. has rakish tendencies, and he attempts to compel Pamela's reciprocation of his sexual attentions, even to the point of imprisoning her in his Lincolnshire estate. His fundamental decency prevents him from consummating any of his assaults on her, however, and under her influence he reforms in the middle of the novel.

### ➤ Minor Characters

#### a) Lady Davers

The married elder sister of Mr. B. to whom the Squire's Bedfordshire servants apply when trying to enlist some aid for Pamela. She objects strenuously to the union of her brother with their mother's waiting-maid, subjecting Pamela to a harrowing afternoon of insults and bullying, but eventually comes to accept and value her new sister-in-law. She once cleaned up after her brother's affair with Sally Godfrey. Lady Davers is subject to drastic changes in mood, given to alternate between imperious and abject humors, but she is, like her brother, basically decent.

#### b) Lady B.

Pamela's original employer, the mother of Mr. B. and Lady Davers. Lady B. was morally

upright and kind to Pamela, educating her and contributing to the formation of her virtuous character. On her deathbed, she told her son to look after all the Bedfordshire servants, especially Pamela.

### **c) Mrs. Jewkes**

The housekeeper at Mr. B.'s Lincolnshire estate and Pamela's primary warder during the period of her captivity. Pamela represents her as a brazen villain, physically hideous and sexually ambiguous, though the hyperbolic attributions of depravity may be Pamela's way of deflecting blame from Mr. B., about whom her feelings are more conflicted. Mrs. Jewkes is devoted to her Master, to a fault: she is as ready to commit a wrong in his service, not excluding assisting in an attempted rape of Pamela, as she is to wait loyally on that same Pamela once Mr. B. has decided to elevate and marry her.

### **d) Mrs. Jervis**

The elderly housekeeper of Mr. B.'s Bedfordshire estate, one of the virtuous servants who applies to Lady Davers on behalf of Pamela. She has a genteel background and is an able manager, presumably the linchpin of the well-ordered Bedfordshire household. Despite her good nature and her motherly concern for Pamela, however, she is nearly useless in defending her young friend from their Master's lecherous advances.

### **e) Mr. John Andrews**

Pamela's father and her chief correspondent. He is virtuous and literate like his daughter, formerly the master of a school, though his fortunes have since declined and he is now an agricultural laborer. He had two sons, now dead, who pauperized him before dying. Pamela credits both her parents with forming her character by educating her in virtue and giving her an example of honest, cheerful poverty.

### **f) Mrs. Elizabeth Andrews**

Pamela's mother, who has no independent presence in the novel.

### **g) Mr. Williams**

The curate (junior pastor) of Mr. B.'s parish in Lincolnshire. Pamela engages his assistance in her efforts to escape her captivity, and she finds him dutiful but ineffectual; he makes an unsuccessful bid to become Pamela's husband, and his efforts on her behalf come decisively to naught when Mr. B. sends him to debtor's prison. Overall, he is meritorious but scarcely appealing, and he suffers from his position as the suitor whom no one takes seriously. Mr. B.'s drawn-out preoccupation with his "rival" Williams only serves to keep the latter's risibility in view.

### **h) Monsieur Colbrand**

The monstrous Swiss man whom Mr. B. sends to Lincolnshire to keep watch over Pamela. Like

Mrs. Jewkes, he becomes Pamela's ally after the Squire's reformation.

**i) Jackey**

Lady Davers's nephew, who accompanies her to Mr. B.'s estate in Lincolnshire and aids her in browbeating Pamela. He exemplifies what Richardson sees as the aristocratic impulse toward sexual exploitation of social inferiors, though he is quicker than his aunt in perceiving Pamela's innate respectability.

**j) Beck Worden**

Lady Davers's waiting-maid, who attends her at Mr. B.'s estate in Lincolnshire and aids in the persecution of the newly married Pamela.

**k) John Arnold**

A footman at the Bedfordshire estate. In the early stages of the novel he delivers Pamela's letters to and from her parents, and Pamela appreciates his cheerfulness in performing this service. After her abduction, however, he sends her a note confessing that he has allowed Mr. B. to read all of the correspondence between Pamela and her parents. He has been torn between his duty to Mr. B. and the promptings of his conscience, and the result is that he comes into conflict with both Pamela and Mr. B. The Squire dismisses him, but after the marriage, Pamela has him reinstated.

**l) Mr. Longman**

The steward at the Bedfordshire estate, one of the virtuous servants who applies to Lady Davers on behalf of Pamela. He admires Pamela and supplies her with the abundant writing materials that allow her to continue her journal during her captivity in Lincolnshire.

**m) Mr. Jonathan**

The butler at the Bedfordshire estate, one of the virtuous servants who applies to Lady Davers on behalf of Pamela.

**n) Nan (or Ann)**

A servant-girl at the Lincolnshire estate. Mrs. Jewkes gets her drunk and Mr. B. impersonates her on the night of his last attempt on Pamela's virtue.

**o) Sally Godfrey**

Mr. B.'s mistress from his college days. She bore him a child, the future Miss Goodwin, and then fled to Jamaica, where she is now happily married.

**p) Miss Goodwin**

Mr. B.'s illegitimate daughter by Sally Godfrey. She lives at a boarding school in Bedfordshire and does not know who her parents are; she addresses Mr. B. as her "uncle."

**q) Sir Simon Darnford**

A noble neighbor of Mr. B. in Lincolnshire. He refuses to help Pamela when Mr. Williams applies to him but comes to admire her after her elevation by Mr. B. He is given to dirty jokes.

**r) Lady Darnford**

The wife of Sir Simon Darnford.

**s) Miss Darnford (the elder)**

The first daughter of Sir Simon and Lady Darnford. She once had hopes of marrying Mr. B., but she accepts Pamela's triumph sportingly.

**t) Miss Darnford (the younger)**

The second daughter of Sir Simon and Lady Darnford. She joins her sister in demanding a ball to commemorate the nuptials of Pamela and Mr. B.

**u) Mr. Peters**

The vicar of Mr. B.'s parish in Lincolnshire. He refuses to help Pamela when Mr. Williams applies to him but eventually gives Pamela away at her wedding.

**v) Mr. Martin**

A genteel but rakish neighbor of Mr. B. in Bedfordshire. Pamela dislikes him due to his penchant for saying cynical things about married life.

**w) Mr. Arthur**

A genteel neighbor of Mr. B. in Bedfordshire.

**x) Mrs. Arthur**

The wife of Mr. Arthur.

**y) Mr. Towers**

A genteel neighbor of Mr. B. in Bedfordshire.

## **z) A gypsy fortune-teller**

The agent who delivers to Pamela a note from Mr. Longman warning her of Mr. B.'s plans for a sham-marriage.\

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## **16.6 Chapter – wise Analysis**

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### **Prefatory Material and Letters I-X**

#### **Prefatory Material**

Richardson includes a "Preface by the Editor," one purpose of which is to establish the white lie that what follows is not a novel that Richardson has authored about fictional characters but rather a collection of real letters that he has edited. The other major purpose is to outline in detail the moral justification of his publication of these letters, namely, the goal of "inculcat[ing] Religion and Morality" in "the Minds of the Youth of both Sexes" through the vehicle of an entertaining narrative.

A letter to the Editor from "J.B.D.F." (the French translator Jean Baptiste de Freval) applauds the literary quality of Pamela's writings and takes note of some of their most distinctive features, such as their having been "written under the immediate Impression of every Circumstance which occasioned them" and their displaying "the fair Writer's most secret Thoughts." Freval echoes the Editor's moral program when he remarks that "Pleasure and Instruction here always go hand in hand: Vice and Virtue are set in constant Opposition, and Religion every-where inculcated." He also supports the illusion of the narrative's being non-fiction, as he speculates that "the Story must have happened within these Thirty Years past" and that the Editor has "been obliged to vary some of the Names of Persons, Places, &c. and to disguise a few of the Circumstances, in order to avoid giving Offense to some Persons."

Finally, a letter to the Editor from an "affectionate Friend" offers similar compliments regarding the work's ability to provide "Entertainment," "Instruction," and "Morality." The Friend then goes on to comment on the plot and commend Pamela's virtue at some length. He argues that "the Cause of Virtue, calls for the Publication of such a Piece as this," and supports his claim by drawing a contrast between the moral and intellectual value of Pamela's writings on the one hand, and the worthlessness of "pernicious Novels" on the other.

#### **Letter I: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Mrs. B., the "good Lady" whose waiting maid Pamela has been, has died of illness. All the servants grieve for the death of their Lady, who was kind to them.

On her deathbed, Mrs. B. bade her son, Mr. B., to take care of the servants, and she bade him especially to "Remember my poor Pamela!" Pamela's new Master, taking her by the hand, promised to be a friend to her and employ her in the care of his linen. He later distributes



mourning clothes and a year's wages to all the servants; to Pamela, who has never received any wages in this household, he awards four golden guineas and the spare change from his mother's pocket.

Pamela now sends the four guineas to her parents, recommending that they use some of the money to pay off their debts. She has concealed the money in a pillbox and wrapped the pillbox in paper, and she requests that her parents not extract the money in the presence of John the footman, who will have carried both Pamela's letter and, unwittingly, the four guineas.

A postscript recounts what happened while Pamela was folding up this letter and preparing to send it. Mr. B. surprises her in her Lady's dressing room, causing Pamela to conceal the letter in her bosom. Mr. B. prevails on her to give him the letter and, after reading it over, praises her dutifulness toward her parents, compliments her delicate hands and competent spelling, and offers her the use of his mother's library. Pamela is flattered and grateful; she concludes again, extolling Mr. B. as "the best of Gentlemen."

## **Letter II: John and Elizabeth Andrews to Pamela.**

Pamela's parents fear that the favor of Mr. B., setting Pamela above her station, may lead her into vice or the abandonment of chastity. Pamela was remarkably pretty when last they saw her six months ago. Mr. Andrews impresses upon her the value of "honesty" (that is, chastity), saying that no money can make good the loss of it and no mode of subsistence could be as degrading as Pamela being a kept woman. While professing to hope that the Squire has no dishonorable intentions toward Pamela, Mr. Andrews encourages her to be suspicious of the marks of favor she has received and says that if Mr. B. tries anything with her, Pamela should leave and come straight home. Mr. Andrews thanks Pamela for the gift of the four guineas, but he has hidden it in the thatched roof, and he will not spend it until he is confident that Mr. B. did not bestow it for the wrong reasons.

## **Letter III: Pamela to her Father.**

Pamela expresses anxiety over her father's suspicions, which Pamela herself now partly shares. She claims, however, to have a reasonable hope that Mr. B. will never treat her dishonorably. Above all, she is indignant that her parents should seem to doubt her commitment to chastity; she vows that she will "die a thousand Deaths" rather than commit a sexual infraction.

## **Letter IV: Pamela to her Mother.**

Pamela receives praise from Mr. B.'s sister. Lady Davers, who has been visiting for the past month, compliments Pamela's looks and character and advises her to "keep the Fellows at a Distance." While waiting at table, Mrs. Jervis opines that Pamela is "too pretty to live in a Batchelor's House," prompting Lady Davers to suggest that Pamela should come to live at the Davers household. Mr. B. agrees, and Pamela takes heart from the inference that, if her Master is willing to part with her, then he must have no lecherous motives.

### **Letter V: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Pamela confesses to her parents that she has no particular exigency for writing. John Arnold the footman always seems eager to carry letters between Pamela and her parents, and Pamela takes his willingness itself as a justification for writing. Moreover, as she admits toward the end of this letter, “I love Writing.”

Though Pamela has heard nothing further of the plan for her going to the Davers household, she is content with her current situation. Mrs. Jervis is kind and competent, and she comes from a genteel background. Notably, she has chastised a male servant who attempted to kiss the unwilling Pamela.

In concluding, Pamela professes herself free of any worries about her Master’s conduct, reasoning that an indiscretion with a servant-girl would lessen his chances of making a fine marriage.

### **Letter VI: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Mr. B. bestows on Pamela a wardrobe of his mother’s old clothes. Mrs. Jervis is present during the presentation of the clothes, so that Pamela’s virtue is not endangered. Pamela considers the clothes too fine for her and wishes she could, without being rude, sell them and send the money home to her parents.

Later, Mrs. Jervis reveals to Pamela that Mr. B. has inquired about Pamela’s conduct toward the other sex, expressing some concern that her good looks could attract predatory admirers. Mrs. Jervis’s answer was to lavish praise on Pamela’s moral character.

### **Letter VII: Pamela to her Father.**

Mr. B. furnishes Pamela with further gifts, including stockings. Mrs. Jervis is absent this time, and Pamela is embarrassed to be alone with a young man in her Lady’s closet, receiving a gift of intimate apparel. Mr. B. teases her, saying, “Don’t blush, Pamela: Dost think I don’t know pretty Maids wear Shoes and Stockens?” Pamela, anxious about the impropriety of this remark, recounts the experience to Mrs. Jervis, who calms her by suggesting that Mr. B. may be outfitting Pamela to serve as a waiting-maid for Lady Davers. The letter concludes with Pamela’s effort to convince herself that Mr. B. has nothing to gain and everything to lose in transgressing upon the purity of a servant girl and that, in the ways of providence, “All that happens is for our Good.”

### **Letter VIII: Her Father and Mother to Pamela.**

Mr. and Mrs. Andrews indicate their concern regarding Mr. B.’s “free Expression to [Pamela] about the Stockens.” They again enjoin their daughter to sacrifice anything, even her life, rather than her virtue. They recommend that she trust Mrs. Jervis and seek the housekeeper’s counsel in everything.

### **Letter IX: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Mr. B. has called off the plan for Pamela to take a position in the Davers household. His stated

reasons are that Lady Davers has a nephew who might behave improperly toward Pamela and that as Mr. B.'s mother committed Pamela to her son's care, it is right that Pamela should remain in Mr. B.'s household. Mrs. Jervis tells Pamela that Lady Davers, upon hearing of the change of plans, shook her head ominously, saying, "Ah! Brother!"

### **Letter X: Pamela to her Mother.**

In accordance with the forebodings of Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, Mr. B. has finally "degraded himself to offer Freedoms to his poor Servant." No details are forthcoming yet because, as Pamela reports, the letter in which she supplied the details has gone missing. She now suspects that Mr. B., given his immorality in one quarter, would hardly forbear from stealing letters. Pamela is now sensible of a general atmosphere of censorship and oppression: she believes that members of the household are spying on her, and she has heard Mr. B. say to Mrs. Jervis, "That Girl is always scribbling." Mr. B. now wants to keep Pamela occupied with embroidering a waistcoat for him, so that she will have less time to write.

### **Overall Analysis:**

After the death of her Mistress, Pamela finds herself in an atmosphere of secrecy and hidden meanings, and henceforth the preservation of her purity will depend on her interpreting other people's motives and intentions correctly. Readers should go immediately on the alert when the openness and solidarity in which the servants collectively mourned the departed Mrs. B. gives way to Pamela's suspicions of John the footman, from whom she conceals her four golden guineas. Even the cautious Pamela may not be vigilant enough, however. If she does not trust John with the guineas, then why does she assume he will not read the letter in which she reveals their hiding place?

Moreover, Pamela does not at first think to question Mr. B.'s motives for awarding her the golden guineas. Perhaps he simply felt that she had earned them, or perhaps he wanted to commemorate his mother with a munificent gesture. Pamela's parents, however, suspect that there are strings attached, and while their worries probably arise from their parental feeling and rustic traditionalism, a worldlier observer might find equal reason for concern.

In this era and in such a context, the transfer of money may conceal its own set of meanings. These guineas are Pamela's first earnings in her three years in the B. household. Previously, her employers have compensated her primarily with room and board -- that is, with a form of remuneration with no value outside the household and that therefore binds her to her employers, even making her part of the "family" in the old sense of that word, in which "family" denoted not only blood relatives but household servants as well. By contrast, money, which is current throughout England and therefore confers economic mobility, places value on Pamela's labor alone rather than on her loyalty. The classic example of a woman who sells her labor, but not her loyalty, for money is the prostitute; Mr. B.'s singling out Pamela for a golden bonus may not, then, be quite as flattering as Pamela in her innocence takes it to be. Certainly, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews doubt the honor of his intentions: they conceal the guineas out of shame over what they might mean, that is, over what Pamela may have to do to earn them.

The greatest hidden meaning, however, is that of Pamela's own feelings, which are a secret even

from Pamela herself. From the first, when she is so acutely aware of Mr. B.'s presence in the closet, Pamela reacts to her Master in ways that are not always consonant with her stated attitudes. In particular, her resourcefulness in convincing herself that he would never make any attempt upon her chastity seems at odds with her rather hysterical readiness to take any precaution against the loss of her purity, even to the point of "d[ying] a thousand Deaths."

On the level of imagery, the opening pages establish patterns that will hold through the rest of the novel by indicating symbolic connections between writing, clothing, and intimacy. Mr. B. has retained Pamela to care for his linen, a category that includes garments and bedclothes, and one of his first efforts at flirting with her takes as its occasion a gift of "Shoes and Stockens." Similarly, his first approach to her is to demand the letter Pamela has secreted in her bosom, where "bosom" is not anatomically explicit but indicates the part of her dress covering the chest and, as in the biblical usage, connotes secrecy and intimacy. It also, of course, alludes to the heart as the seat of the emotions, and Pamela's declaration that "I love Writing" sets up a long-term tension between Pamela's Master and her literary pursuits. Mr. B. will increasingly view her writing as a rival for her attention: "That Girl is always scribbling" when she should instead be working or, even better, receiving his advances.

## **Letters XI- XVIII**

### **Letter XI: Pamela to her Mother.**

Pamela supplies the details of Mr. B.'s assault on her purity. Mr. B. comes upon Pamela in the summerhouse and kisses her, saying that he will make her a gentlewoman if she agrees to stay in his household rather than join that of Lady Davers. Pamela nearly faints in terror, and her vulnerability allows Mr. B. to inflict two or three more kisses before she breaks away. She rebukes him for his behavior toward her, and he denies any lecherous intent, saying that his advances were only meant to test her virtue. He offers her money in exchange for her secrecy, but she refuses it and leaves the summerhouse. The letter concludes with a promise to continue the story soon and an acknowledgment that Pamela has not yet left Mr. B.'s household, despite the fact that it has become a place of "Anguish and Terror."

### **Letter XII: Pamela to her Mother.**

Pamela continues the story she left off in her previous letter. After coming in from the summerhouse, she considers leaving Mr. B.'s household but is confused about whether and how to take with her the clothes that Mr. B. has given her. She further wonders whether she should confide in Mrs. Jervis or heed Mr. B.'s command of secrecy in the hopes that he will never again attempt anything comparably depraved.

In the evening, Pamela asks Mrs. Jervis to let Pamela share a bed with her at night. Later, Pamela divulges to Mrs. Jervis what happened in the summerhouse. Mrs. Jervis thinks that Pamela's virtue will put Mr. B. to shame and discourage him from ever taking such liberties again. With this prediction in mind, Pamela decides to remain in Mr. B.'s household for the time being, despite her parents' urging her to leave as soon as she had grounds for concern.

Ominously, Mr. B. has ordered that Pamela should not spend so much time writing.

The letter concludes with Pamela's wish that she had not left her family's poverty for the dangers that attend exposure to high society.

### **Letter XIII: Her Father and Mother to Pamela.**

Mr. and Mrs. Andrews exhort Pamela to flee the household of Mr. B. at the first sign of his further pursuit of her. They meditate on the utility of temptations in the cultivation of self-knowledge and express their confidence in Pamela's ability, with the aid of her "virtuous Education," to withstand the temptations of Mr. B. Overall, however, they propose that Pamela would do best to return home.

### **Letter XIV: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Mr. B. returns from a two-week visit with Lady Davers and questions Pamela's virtue in conversation with Mrs. Jervis, expressing his opinion that "she is an artful young Baggage," full of "Vanity and Conceit, and Pride too." He accuses Pamela of having interpreted innocent marks of favor as a design on her purity, and he tells Mrs. Jervis to order Pamela to stop gossiping about his family in her letters home.

Pamela, concluding her letter, surmises that Mr. B. must have stolen and read the letter whose disappearance she has previously noted.

### **Letter XV: Pamela to her Mother.**

Pamela recounts what happened as she was concluding her previous letter. Mr. B. again surprises Pamela, causing her to conceal the letter in her bosom. He admonishes her for having publicized his earlier indiscretion. When Pamela denies it, he names Mrs. Jervis as her interlocutor, to which Pamela responds by demanding why, if Mr. B. has done nothing wrong, he would mind Pamela discussing his behavior. Mr. B. then accuses Pamela of having written about the encounter in addition to talking about it. Pamela retorts that Mr. B. could not have known the contents of her writings if he had not stolen her letter to her parents.

When Mr. B. expresses anger over Pamela's impudence, she begs him to recognize her vulnerable position and her right to defend her own purity.

She then breaks down in tears. Mr. B. charges her with overreacting and, by way of giving her some more substantial grounds for anguish, invites her to sit on his knee. Over her objections, he kisses and fondles her, causing her to make a dash through the door and toward the next room. Mr. B. manages to tear a piece from her dress before Pamela can lock herself inside the room, where she falls into a swoon. Mr. B. calls for Mrs. Jervis, assists her in breaking down the door, enjoins secrecy on the housekeeper, and leaves the two women alone.

Mr. B. returns later to defend his conduct to Mrs. Jervis, insisting it was entirely innocent. He casts doubt on the authenticity of Pamela's fainting fits and arranges a meeting for the next day between Mrs. Jervis, Pamela, and himself. After Mr. B. has left, Pamela professes to Mrs. Jervis her determination to leave the house but then qualifies that resolution by saying that she will know better what to do after the next day's meeting.

## **Letter XVI: Pamela to her Parents.**

Pamela describes the meeting between Mrs. Jervis, Pamela, and Mr. B. The Squire demands that Mrs. Jervis tell him what she has heard from Pamela regarding his conduct. Mrs. Jervis says that Pamela said that Mr. B. pulled her onto his knee and kissed her. Pamela objects that Mrs. Jervis has not related the worst of it, since she has glossed over Pamela's expectation that if her Master could take such liberties with a servant girl, he probably had more in mind. Mr. B. insists that he had no further intentions and gets Mrs. Jervis to join him in condemning Pamela for her pertness in imputing lecherous motives to her Master. He accuses Pamela of hypocrisy for writing letters in which she presents herself as a paragon of virtue and him, "her Master and Benefactor," as a "Devil incarnate." He declares his resolution of sending Pamela back to her family and their poverty.

Pamela finds this prospect encouraging and expresses her gratitude to Mr. B. The letter concludes with her hope of returning to her parents and supporting herself with needlework, though a postscript cautions that another week may pass before she can fulfill her responsibilities with respect to Mr. B.'s linen.

## **Letter XVII: Her Parents to Pamela.**

Mr. and Mrs. Andrews anticipate Pamela's return with great eagerness. Mr. Andrews wants to return the four guineas they received from Mr. B. and hopes that John the footman will be able to accompany Pamela on her homeward journey.

## **Letter XVIII: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Mrs. Jervis again predicts that Mr. B. will make no further attempts on Pamela's virtue and suggests that Pamela could stay on at the household if she were to beg it as a favor from Mr. B. When Pamela replies that she wants nothing more than to return to her home and poverty, Mrs. Jervis complains that this eagerness to leave bespeaks a lack of gratitude on Pamela's part for the love Mrs. Jervis has shown her. Pamela again defends her decision to leave, dwelling particularly on the example she would set if she were to linger in a household that presents such threats to her purity. Mrs. Jervis concedes the force of this argument and agrees to supply Pamela with glowing references.

Later, Mr. B. passes Pamela in the hall and accuses her of being always in his way. When she expresses her hope that she will not be in his way much longer, he curses her and leaves her to marvel at the crudity of his language, which she reflects is consonant with his general moral character.

## **Overall Analysis:**

"I sobb'd and cry'd most sadly. What a foolish Hussy you are, said he, have I done you any harm?" Many readers find themselves concurring in Mr. B.'s sentiment when he poses this question during the incident in the summerhouse, and Pamela's answer, "the greatest Harm in the World," will doubtless strike the same readers as hyperbolic. When we consider that Pamela is merely observing moral precepts that are specific to her historical and religious context of eighteenth-century Calvinist-tinged Anglicanism, then her scrupulousness

becomes comprehensible if not sympathetic. It is not to such precepts, however, that Pamela appeals during her rebuff of Mr. B. in the summerhouse; instead, her arguments in this scene invoke less antiquated ideas, those of social responsibility and of the integrity of the self.

“Well may I forget that I am your Servant, when you forget what belongs to a Master.” Mr. B.’s station as a member of the landed gentry involves responsibilities as well as privileges: he has a duty to protect Pamela no less than she does to obey him. In violating his responsibility to look out for her welfare, he obliges her to violate, in self-defense, her duty to obey him; in repelling his advances, then, she is not only defending her own sexual purity but also upholding the social order. Moreover, to allow Mr. B. to tyrannize over her would be to forfeit not only her virtue but also the voluntary basis on which to engage in personal relations. She is not such a prude that his sexual advances necessarily revolt her; her natural inclination may even be to favor them, but she respects both herself and her Master too much to let him prey on her.

We learn a great deal about Pamela during this incident in the summerhouse; for one thing, she is a very clever debater. When Mr. B. tries to put her in her place by reminding her of her low social status (“Do you know whom you speak to?”), she wittily turns the point to her advantage by reminding him of the obligations that attend high birth (“what belongs to a Master”), thus converting her main weakness to a defense. As long as Mr. B.’s aggression toward her persists, Pamela will continue to keep track of what rights she possesses under a system that in so many ways disadvantage her.

Another of Pamela’s notable qualities is the innate pride that allows her to talk back to her social superiors when they deserve it. This audacity is in many contexts rather magnificent; readers of Jane Austen (herself a reader of Richardson) may wish to compare Pamela to the feisty Elizabeth Bennet, who is one of Pamela’s many descendants in the tradition of the English novel. Pamela’s pride may also contain the seeds of weakness, however, if it comes to manifest itself as spiritual pride or moral rigidity; in this context one thinks of Shakespeare’s Cordelia, whose refusal to verbalize her affections on command puts in motion the tragedy of King Lear.

Finally, these early stages of the novel tend to raise in modern minds the question of why Pamela does not simply leave. When in Letter XII she allows the quandary of what clothes to wear to prevent her from doing what her parents and her conscience urge her to do, she may forfeit the sympathy of readers who expect their heroines to demonstrate a bit of initiative. Richardson’s original readers, however, would not have had this problem in sympathizing with Pamela, knowing as they did how difficult it was for a domestic servant to leave a position without incurring a stigma. In order to get another position in the domestic service, Pamela would have to present a “character” (i.e. references) from her previous housekeeper and employer. Mrs. Jervis has already declared herself willing to oblige, but if Pamela were to leave Mr. B.’s household without his consent, and leave him feeling jilted no less, then she could certainly not count on his support. In that case, not only would her career prospects be dim, but her reputation as a young woman of virtue would likewise take a hit, as acquaintances would begin to wonder what she can have done that would make a gentleman refuse to vouch for her character.

## **Letters XIX- XXIV**

### **Letter XIX: Pamela to her Father and Mother**

Pamela continues where her previous letter left off. Mr. B. has conferred with Mrs. Jervis and, approving the work Pamela has done so far on his waistcoat, has determined that Pamela should stay until it is finished. Pamela is aware of “some private Talk” between Mr. B. and Mrs. Jervis, which the housekeeper will not summarize for Pamela. However, Pamela professes to trust Mrs. Jervis, who after all must remain in Mr. B.’s service after Pamela has left it. Mrs. Jervis again advises Pamela to humble herself before Mr. B. and ask to continue in his employment, causing Pamela to set out her case again in response. Mrs. Jervis gives a novel assessment of Mr. B.’s conduct, suggesting that he is irritated with himself for being unable to overcome his love for Pamela, a social inferior, and that his frustration with himself accounts for his cursing of Pamela and his demand that she leave his household. Pamela reiterates her principles and discourses on the sexual double standard. She speculates that, were she to become Mr. B.’s mistress, he would abandon her as soon as she began to show the ill effects of their connection.

The two women continue discussing the probability or improbability of Mr. B. improving his behavior. Mrs. Jervis attenuates her confidence in Mr. B.’s delicacy, professing, “I dare swear for him, he never will offer you any Force.” When Pamela has disposed of all of Mrs. Jervis’s arguments, she declares again that she has no option but to leave, though she laments having to part from all the servants, who have been kind to her. A postscript, however, notes that Pamela has indeed consented to remain to finish her embroidery work on Mr. B.’s waistcoat, which she considers the prettiest needlework she has ever done, and that she is working overtime to finish it, the sooner to return home.

### **Letter XX: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Pamela describes the humble wardrobe she has gotten up in preparation for her return to poverty. Concerned that she would make a tawdry spectacle if she were to return home in the fine clothes she received from Mr. B., Pamela acquires some sturdy fabric and sews for herself a number of undergarments. From a peddler she purchases a number of small articles, primarily outerwear. The letter concludes with Pamela’s deciding against the return of the four guineas: she reasons that they are all the wages she has ever received from Lady B. or Mr. B. and that she can reasonably consider herself to have earned them in the fourteen months since her Lady’s death.

### **Letter XXI: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Mrs. Jervis tells Pamela that she has been speaking about her with Mr. B. and that he has expressed anger at the servant-girl, saying that she has acted her own enemy in refusing his innocent favor. He has further said that if he knew a lady of noble birth, identical to Pamela “in Person and Mind,” he would marry her immediately. Pamela counters that if she were a lady of noble birth she might not accept Mr. B.’s proposal, given his previous behavior to her. Mrs. Jervis finds Pamela’s rigidity exasperating. The conversation languishes as the two women bridle at each other and then terminates with their reconciliation. The letter concludes with Pamela’s hope that she will have finished Mr. B.’s waistcoat, which she now calls “ugly,” within two days.



## **Letter XXII: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Mr. B. meets Pamela in the hall and demands to know when she plans to leave the household. When she replies that she will stay until his waistcoat is finished, he observes that she has spent an inordinate amount of time on it already and accuses her of working harder at her writing than at her sewing. He exclaims, "I don't want such idle Sluts to stay in my House," just before he notices that the butler, Mr. Jonathan, is standing nearby. Since this incident, the servants have been asking Mrs. Jervis about the timing and reason for Pamela's departure, the general sense being that they will miss her when she is gone.

Later, Mr. B. approaches Mrs. Jervis and Pamela, demanding of the housekeeper when Pamela will be finished with the notorious waistcoat. Pamela, answering for herself, says that she needs a few more hours, but she would be happy to leave the house immediately and send the waistcoat back when it is finished. Mr. B., still addressing Mrs. Jervis, complains that Pamela seems to cast a spell on everyone who meets her, convincing them that she is "an Angel of Light." Pamela leaves Mr. B. and Mrs. Jervis to discuss her out of her hearing, though she will learn later from Mrs. Jervis that Mr. B. expressed regret during this conversation for having spoken roughly to Pamela in front of Mr. Jonathan.

Pamela encounters Mr. Jonathan, who speaks kindly to her and expresses confidence in her virtue. Pamela thanks him, crying, and hurries away. The steward, Mr. Longman, holds Pamela in similarly high regard. When Pamela loses her pen and runs out of paper, she asks for supplies from Mr. Longman, who generously supplies all the writing implements she needs and more. He expresses his regret that Pamela is soon to leave, and he puzzles aloud over the recent change in Mr. B.'s character. The letter concludes with Pamela's reflecting on her contentment with the high respect in which her fellow servants hold her.

## **Letter XXIII: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Mr. B. entertains the neighbors at dinner. The Ladies express interest in seeing Pamela, who has gained a reputation as "the greatest Beauty in the Country." Mr. B. downplays Pamela's attractions and gives his opinion that Pamela's real distinction lies in her humility and her ability to inspire loyalty among her fellow servants. The ladies are not discouraged, however, and resolve to visit Pamela.

Soon the ladies approach the mildly nettled Pamela, who endures their examination and keeps her sarcastic replies to herself. The ladies finally depart, singing Pamela's praises and surmising that she must have a genteel background.

Pamela, writing, registers her hope that she will be able to set out on Thursday. She reflects on the paradoxical affinity of love with hate and closes by indicating her mischievous plan to surprise Mrs. Jervis by appearing in her new outfit of country clothes.

## **Letter XXIV: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Pamela reflects with some regret on the Master that she will soon leave. She reasons that he

seems to have striven in vain to overcome his attraction to her and that his failure has deformed his “Temper.” She regrets having been the cause for Mr. B. demeaning himself in the eyes of his servants, whose respect he should endeavor to retain.

Pamela tries on her new country outfit, which she describes in extensive detail, and is pleased with the reflection she catches in the mirror. She then models the clothes in the housekeeper’s parlor before Mrs. Jervis, who is suitably surprised.

Meanwhile, Mr. B. steps into the room behind Pamela’s back, catches a glimpse of her, takes her to be a stranger, and withdraws. From another room he summons Mrs. Jervis and asks her to send the pretty maiden to him, so Mrs. Jervis directs Pamela to go in and fool him. Mr. B., while recognizing Pamela, takes advantage of the pretense of anonymity to make advances, prompting Pamela to exclaim, “Indeed I am Pamela, her own self!” An argument ensues in which Mr. B. accuses Pamela of disguise and hypocrisy and Pamela defends her costume choice as appropriate to her station and thereby a manifestation of her honesty and integrity. Mr. B. then offers to allow Pamela to stay another two weeks while he convinces Lady Davers to take her on. Pamela protests, however, that she merely wants to return to her parents. Mr. B. calls her several names, Pamela breaks down weeping, and they contest again the issue of Mr. B.’s efforts to distinguish Pamela, whether they are essentially liberal or lecherous. Pamela flees when Mr. B. loses his temper, and soon she receives a note in which Mr. Jonathan reports that another servant has overheard Mr. B. vowing, “I will have her!” Pamela goes anxiously to bed.

### **Overall Analysis:**

Throughout the novel, both Pamela and Mr. B. exhibit a notable interest in their own and each other’s clothing. Pamela’s commitment here to embellishing her Master’s waistcoat is notorious among critics as being the flimsiest of excuses for her remaining in his employment. To condemn the waistcoat as a flagrant plot device may, however, be simplistic: Pamela’s ambivalence about the garment, her thinking it first pretty and then ugly and the arbitrariness with which she seizes upon the necessity of its completion, may exemplify her divided feelings about its owner and hence reveal attitudes that are obscure to Pamela herself. Individual readers will decide whether the waistcoat is a clumsy expedient on Richardson’s part or a compelling instance of psychological realism.

Letter XX demonstrates Pamela’s use of clothing as a mark of identity. Earlier, when Mr. B. gave Pamela the set of new garments he had selected for her, he asked her whether she thought that he did not “know [that] pretty Maids wear Shoes and Stockers,” thereby subsuming Pamela under the category “pretty Maids” and, implicitly, under the category of maids with whose hosiery the Squire has been familiar. His question, then, proposed clothing as a mark of group identity, and not a dignified group by Pamela’s lights. Pamela, who stands on her dignity, would naturally prefer to present herself as an individual and distinct from this group. In order to declare her distinction, she assembles for herself a practical and economical wardrobe suitable for life in the country. Some of the articles she sews for herself, and some of the articles she purchases with her own money; crucially, none of the articles is the remnant of another woman’s wardrobe or something that a man wanted her to wear. Pamela is engaged in constructing the identity that she presents visually to the world, and that identity is modest,

sturdy, and unpretentious, declaring not what she wants to be but simply what she is. Thus, when Mr. B. pretends to mistake her for “Pamela’s Sister,” she cries out, “Indeed I am Pamela, her own self!”

Closely related to the utility of clothing as a sign of personal identity is its utility as a sign of class status. Pamela, whom many critics have accused of being a social climber, has, in this instance at least, no interest in dressing above her station; in fact, she worries about how trashy she would look if she were to return to her parents’ humble home wearing her Lady’s cast-off wardrobe. This anxiety underscores the ambiguous class position Pamela has come to occupy as an “upper” servant, a lady’s companion, and a young woman of incongruously genteel attainments. Her return to her parents must, if she is to maintain any kind of social respectability, involve a deliberate casting-off of the waiting-maid persona, a persona that begins to look sordidly pretentious when seen outside of the peculiar context from which it derives its legitimacy. Interestingly, Pamela here seems scarcely to resent the prospect of descending in the social scale; her main concern is to acknowledge clearly to the world, through her sartorial choices, the role she has embraced.

The charge of hypocrisy hangs in the air, however. Mr. B. makes it explicit after he strikes out with “Pamela’s Sister”: “[A]nd so you must disguise yourself, to attract me, and yet pretend, like a Hypocrite as you are---.” Pamela interrupts him at this point, but he presumably would have said that Pamela is a hypocrite for dressing herself so attractively and then pretending that she does not desire to attract anyone. Is it unreasonable of Mr. B. to doubt Pamela when she disclaims the goal of being attractive? In Letter XXV Mrs. Jervis will suggest to Pamela, “I believe truly, you owe some of your Danger to the lovely Appearance you made,” prompting Pamela to respond, “Then . . . I wish the Cloaths in the Fire. I expected no Effect from them; but if any, a quite contrary one.” Early in Letter XXIV, however, she seemed delighted to make a “lovely Appearance”: “I trick’d myself up as well as I could in my new Garb, . . . and look’d about me in the Glass, as proud as any thing.---To say Truth, I never lik’d myself so well in my Life.” Her attitude does not change until Mr. B. turns out to like her just as well as she likes herself. The question, it would seem, is whether Pamela is a proper hypocrite, conscious of her inconsistency, or whether she is manifesting an unconscious ambivalence regarding her own physical charms. Very possibly she may take a natural pleasure in her ability to attract admirers, only censoring this pleasure because of the danger she perceives in Mr. B.’s attentions; her hypocrisy, such as it is, would then consist of a refusal to acknowledge consciously a desire that she sees perceives as threatening.

Mr. B.’s doubts about Pamela’s sincerity and integrity extend to her relations with the other servants, whom she has “enchanted” to believe that she is “an Angel of Light.” He has evidently noticed the degree to which his recent conduct has caused his reputation to decline among such members of the household as Mr. Longman, who wonders what “ails our Master of late”; the upper servants, at least, have even gleaned that the Squire’s predatory fixation on Pamela has contributed to the change in his behavior. Mr. B. alludes to the party spirit among the staff when he explains to his dinner guests that Pamela “makes all her Fellow-servants love her” by being

“humble, and courteous, and faithful.” His insinuation, of course, is that these admirable qualities are all part of Pamela’s strategy for forging alliances: she “makes” others feel a certain way by enchanting or deceiving them, and she perpetrates this deception by simulating the qualities of humility, courtesy, and faithfulness rather than possessing them in earnest.

While there is certainly no evidence to support the Squire’s suspicion that Pamela is deliberately fomenting rebellion among the servants, events will show that the notion of a Pamelist faction among the servants is logical. Moreover, Mr. B.’s mention of humility as a cause of Pamela’s popularity among her peers raises a vexed issue, to wit, that Pamela’s delight in reporting others’ praise of her virtue may strike many readers as rather off-putting. In making the transition from the scene of Mr. Jonathan’s admiration of her goodness to the scene of Mr. Longman’s admiration of the same, she writes to her parents, “And now I will give you an Instance how much I am in Mr. Longman’s Esteem also.” Some would contend that the virtue of humility is simply incompatible with the degree to which Pamela piques herself on the perquisite accruing to that virtue, namely her flattering reputation. Is virtue its own reward, or does Pamela, as the novel’s subtitle perhaps suggests, seek some extraneous return for it?

### **Letters XXV through XXXI and Editorial Material**

Pamela and Mrs. Jervis go to the latter’s chamber and sit down on opposite sides of the bed to undress for the night. They argue over Mrs. Jervis’s poor judgment in suggesting that Pamela fool Mr. B. in her new clothes. Mrs. Jervis defends herself against the unspoken charge that she intended to expose Pamela to Mr. B.’s sexual advances.

Pamela hears a noise in the closet and, on her way to investigate in her under- petticoat, is surprised when Mr. B. rushes out at her, dressed for conquest in “a rich silk and silver Morning Gown.” She takes refuge in the bed, where Mr. B. follows her. When Mrs. Jervis defends Pamela, Mr. B. threatens to throw the housekeeper out of the window and out of his employment. He fondles Pamela, whereupon Pamela has a series of fainting fits that last through the next three hours. Mr. B. leaves Mrs. Jervis and another servant, Rachel, to attend on her.

### **Letter XXVI: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Mr. B. returns to Mrs. Jervis’s room late in the morning to speak to Pamela and the housekeeper. He is quite angry, and Mrs. Jervis volunteers to accompany Pamela in leaving Mr. B.’s employment. Mr. B. accuses Pamela of fomenting rebellion among the servants and of simulating her fainting fits. He says that he will not detain Pamela any longer since he is likely to marry soon. Pamela is glad to hear this news, both for Mr. B.’s sake and for her own.

### **Letter XXVII: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Pamela finds that she must stay in Mr. B.’s household for another week because Mrs. Jervis plans to accompany her and cannot be ready until the next Thursday.

Mr. B. models for Pamela a suit of new clothes, which she reviews enthusiastically. They argue about whether Pamela should be wearing her cast-off fine clothes or the country clothes she prefers. He teases her about her about her fastidious virtue and her penchant for

recounting his attempts to Mrs. Jervis and Mr. and Mrs. Andrews. Pamela submits her opinion that Mr. B. is “no Gentleman.”

### **Letter XXVIII: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

At a meeting with Pamela, Mrs. Jervis, and Mr. Longman the steward, Mr. B. informs the housekeeper that she may stay on in the household. Pamela is glad not to have been the occasion for Mrs. Jervis’s dismissal. Mr. B. then clarifies that he cannot allow Pamela to stay, due to her seditious “Freedom of Speech” and “her Letter-writing of all the Secrets of my Family.” He also considers her intolerably “pert.” An argument ensues among Mr. B., Pamela, and Mr. Longman on the subject of Pamela’s pertness, whether it exists or not and whether it is culpable or justifiable. Pamela finally makes an extravagant show of self- abasement that moves both Mr. Longman and Mr. B., and the latter dismisses Pamela with the epithet, “thou strange Medley of Inconsistence.”

### **Letter XXIX: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Writing on a Monday and expecting to return to her parents on Thursday, Pamela laments the refinements she has acquired in Mr. B.’s household, as they have made her unfit for menial labor. She hopes to be able to support herself with needlework, a comparatively delicate occupation.

Pamela divides her clothing into three parcels, declaring that she is “resolv’d to take with me only what I can properly call my own.” She displays their contents to Mrs. Jervis in the green room where, with the cooperation of the housekeeper, Mr. B. has hidden himself in another closet. The first parcel contains the items Mrs. B. bestowed on Pamela, the second contains presents from Mr. B., and the third contains the articles Pamela has made or bought for herself. To the first bundle, she feels she has no claim, the second bundle she rejects as “the Price of my Shame,” but the third she embraces as “the Companion of my Poverty, and the Witness of my Honesty.” Pamela then seeks Mrs. Jervis’s advice on the point of the four guineas, asking whether she should return the money on the same principle that compels her to leave the second bundle. Mrs. Jervis advises Pamela to keep the guineas and the first and second bundles, too. Pamela will not take the bundles, but she is now at ease about the guineas.

Mrs. Jervis sends Pamela out of the room in order to confer with Mr. B. and give him a chance to sneak out, but Pamela returns so quickly that she catches a glimpse of him. She declares she has lost all faith in Mrs. Jervis, though the housekeeper insists that Mr. B.’s eavesdropping has had a good effect on him, moving him partway to repentance. The letter concludes with Pamela’s desire to be away from Mr. B.’s household, where it appears even her friends are against her.

### **Letter XXX: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

On Wednesday morning, Mr. B. approaches Pamela in a kindly manner to question her about her home and parents. He offers to better the condition of Mr. Andrews and professes to be impressed with the evidences of Pamela’s moral character. The upshot is that he “love[s her] to Extravagance” and desires her to stay another week or two while he arranges to assist her family. Thinking that he has secured her consent, he leaves the room.

Pamela debates with herself whether to stay, for though she deeply wants Mr. B. to make her parents' lives comfortable, she fears that her Master's new kindness will prove a greater threat to her virtue than his aggression ever did. Finally, Pamela resolves not to trust Mr. B. but to return to her parents.

### **Letter XXXI: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Later on Wednesday, after Pamela has finished the letter to her parents, Mr. B. comes to secure her acquiescence. When Pamela indicates that she is still resolved to leave, he offers fifty guineas, which she refuses, and then offers to find her a genteel husband, the clergyman Mr. Williams of Lincolnshire, who will raise her socially and protect her from predatory men. Pamela sees this suggestion as a ruse to keep her for another two weeks while Mr. B. can claim to be arranging the match, but she feigns interest and then goes off to pen a note rejecting the plan. Mr. B. seems to accept this answer, and Pamela prepares to depart. Mrs. Jervis gives Pamela five guineas from Mr. B. Pamela surmises that Mr. B. may send the first and second bundles after her, in which case Pamela plans to sell the clothes and keep the money. The letter concludes with fourteen four-line stanzas that Pamela has penned on the subject of her departure.

### **Editorial Material**

The Editor warns that Pamela's trials are not over. Mr. B. has sent for Robin, the coachman from his Lincolnshire estate, to transport the unwitting Pamela to Lincolnshire. The Editor also reveals that John the footman has allowed Mr. B. to read all of the correspondence between Pamela and her parents.

The Editor provides a letter from Mr. B. to Mr. Andrews in which the Squire pretends to explain why Pamela is not coming home. He charges Pamela with fabricating romantic stories about Mr. B.'s designs upon her and claims that she has been conducting a long-distance affair with a young clergyman, so that Mr. B. has seen fit to send Pamela into the country for a time in order to prevent the imprudent match.

Mr. Andrews sees through this subterfuge and sets out for Mr. B.'s estate. He stations himself at the gate and bewails the disappearance of his child. Mr. B. assures him that Pamela is safe, claiming that she has gone to London in the service of a reputable family. Mr. Andrews does not believe this story and vows to remain in Mr. B.'s house until he has some word from Pamela. He returns home, however, several days later, before the arrival of a letter from Pamela to Mrs. Jervis, which the Editor provides.

Pamela reports to Mrs. Jervis that Robin the coachman has abducted her on his Master's orders but that she has met with tolerable treatment. She asks Mrs. Jervis to tell Mr. and Mrs. Andrews that she is well. Mrs. Jervis sends the letter to Pamela's parents, who derive small comfort from it but have no recourse other than prayer.

### **Overall Analysis:**

Some of the events in these letters have led critics to question the purity of Richardson's moralistic intentions, the integrity of his moralistic heroine, or both. Skeptical readers often

have difficulty taking seriously passages such as this one from Letter XXV: “I found his Hand in my Bosom, and . . . I was ready to die; and I sighed, and scream’d, and fainted away.” From one angle, Pamela’s physical reactions to Mr. B.’s assault seem to imitate erotic responsiveness, as Richardson specifies fierce activity terminating in a swoon and even works in the old pun on “death” as a slang term for sexual climax. On such a reading, the author stands accused of smuggling pornography into what purports to be an edifying work, as Pamela claims outrage but the worldly reader discerns titillation.

Alternatively, a less hostile analysis might focus on Richardson’s psychological realism: the physical manifestations of Pamela’s distress may be an ingenious way of indicating her divided consciousness, as her body sends the signals that her mind and morals have censored. This reading, of course, implicates Pamela in a version of the hypocrisy charge, since it suggests that she does in fact experience the sexual attraction she denies. For many readers, these scenes of assault indicate that someone, at any rate, is less pure than he or she claims to be.

However one assesses the sincerity of Richardson and his heroine, what seems undeniable is that Pamela’s reporting of these scenes presents a problem of characterization: if the heroine is so delicate about sexual relations, how can she be so comfortable with passing on all the salacious details, and to her parents no less? The fault, however, probably lies not in Pamela’s hypocrisy but in Richardson’s imperfect mastery of the form that he has chosen. In making Pamela’s letters the main substance of the narrative, he has restricted himself almost entirely to one focalizing consciousness, that of his victim- heroine. If either Mr. B. or Mrs. Jervis has committed the details of this incident to paper, Richardson the “Editor” seems unaware of the fact, with the result that all of the necessary details must come from Pamela’s pen, despite her insistence that the details revolt her. By the time he wrote *Clarissa* five years later, Richardson had discovered the obvious solution to this problem was to include more of the epistolary output of other participants in the drama besides the impeccably pure heroine. In the meantime, however, Richardson’s readers must contend with the impact on characterization of this quirk of Richardson’s form, and try to distinguish the details Pamela includes because she is the sort of girl who would include them from the details Pamela includes because she must serve as Richardson’s narrator.

Related to the issues of assault and reportage is the theme of voyeurism, which obtrudes itself strongly in these letters. As early as Letter X, Pamela has worried that she is under surveillance, and her watchers will become more numerous and more shameless as the story moves along. In the “bundling scene,” where she separates her wardrobe into three bundles, Pamela believes herself to be engaging a trustworthy housekeeper in a cozy chat about domestic trivia. One of the pleasures she takes in this activity is clearly her sense that, in organizing her belongings according to their moral connotations, she is taking control of her life. In rejecting the clothes Mr. B. has chosen for her, she also rejects the role he has chosen for her, and in embracing her own clothes as “the Companion of my Poverty, and the Witness of my Honesty,” she affirms her social and economic decline as a positive act of self-determination and an index of her personal integrity. The fact that Mr. B. is slaving in the closet all the while, however, subverts the tone of the entire scene. Pamela is not really in charge of her own destiny or even of her own “Honesty” (i.e. chastity), because Mr. B. has her almost entirely in his power. As will become clear, he maintains that power by monitoring her every move and, indeed, her every (written) thought.

To what degree Richardson himself resembles Mr. B. in casting a prurient gaze on Pamela is an interesting question; many readers have felt that the novelist's delight in revealing the heroine in so many physical trials and humiliations qualifies as a form of voyeurism. This charge may have some biographical justification, as Richardson from an early age evinced a tendency to scrutinize young women and speculate about their inner lives. Having achieved with Pamela a reputation for profound understanding of women, he gathered around himself a "harem" of young female disciples who consulted him on sensitive matters and whom, as his letters reveal, he observed closely. While this propensity doubtless aided Richardson in the "mastery in the [literary] delineation of the female heart" for which his contemporary admirers celebrated him, it may also bespeak an interest in his observational subjects that was neither aesthetic nor properly moral.

That Richardson possessed insight into the female psyche is not in doubt, however, and the "bundling scene" presents an excellent example of his knack for both portraying female characters and attracting female readers. The itemization of domestic objects, in this scene and elsewhere in the novel, resonated with women readers whose lives were taken up almost entirely with domestic affairs. Women readers represented a particularly important demographic for the novel in the eighteenth century because they generally lacked the education to read and appreciate the classical texts in which privileged men received their education. Women, then, tended to appreciate Richardson's "realistic" handling of detail, whereas university-educated men tended to disapprove of such details too mundane, as insufficiently "literary" and thereby a violation of literary decorum. Literary decorum was a classical value, espoused most famously by Horace in his *Ars Poetica*, and part of Richardson's contribution to the rise of the novel was to vindicate the aesthetic use of such indecorous elements as colloquial speech and non-symbolic detail. In Richardson's writings, things very often stand first for themselves, second for whatever connotations they may have picked up through their participation in a realistic context, and third or not at all for a concept in the manner of a traditional poetic symbol.

### **Letter XXXII: Pamela to her Father and Mother.**

Pamela addresses this lengthy (400-page) letter nominally to her mother and father, though at present she has small hope of its ever reaching them from her "prison" in Mr. B.'s Lincolnshire estate. She determines to "write my sad State" every day from now on, so that her letters will become, in essence, a journal. She will label the separate entries with days of the week, though not with dates; starting on the Monday following her abduction, she will number the days from the start of her imprisonment, albeit neither consistently nor always accurately. Later she will number the days from the start of her married life, with a similar degree of consistency and accuracy. The journal commences with a narration of the Thursday and Friday of Pamela's abduction.

The servants at Mr. B.'s Bedfordshire estate lament Pamela's leaving, and Mr. Longman provides her with abundant writing implements, including paper, pens, and ink. Mr. B. oversees Pamela's departure from his window.

Pamela becomes anxious when the journey seems to take longer than she expected. Robin claims to have lost the way, and when darkness falls, they stop at a farmhouse for the night. When the farmer turns out to be a tenant of "Esquire B. of Bedfordshire," Pamela develops grave suspicions.



Robin gives Pamela a letter from Mr. B. in which the Squire explains that the house to which he is sending her will be at her command, such that Mr. B. himself will not approach it without Pamela's permission. He promises to write to Mr. and Mrs. Andrews to assure them that nothing untoward will happen to their daughter.

Pamela, while not trusting Mr. B., apprehends that at least she is in no immediate danger. She learns that the farmer, too, has had a letter from Mr. B. in which the Squire claims to be abducting Pamela for her own good, in order to thwart "a Love Affair, which will be her Ruin." Pamela sees that because of this letter and Mr. B.'s power over his tenants, she will be unable to recruit the farmer's family to her cause.

Pamela and Robin set out again on Friday morning. Pamela's escape plans come to nothing when the proprietress of the inn at which they stop for dinner turns out to be the sister-in-law of Mrs. Jewkes, the housekeeper of Mr. B.'s Lincolnshire estate. Mrs. Jewkes herself is present at the inn and accompanies Pamela for the rest of the journey, making several lewd suggestions to her during the interval. Pamela concludes that she has "fallen into the hands of a wicked Procuress."

They arrive at Mr. B.'s estate around eight o'clock on Friday evening. Mrs. Jewkes informs Pamela that all the servants will show her respect and address her as "Madam," due to the great power Pamela wields over their Master. Pamela quizzes Mrs. Jewkes as to the extent of her obedience to Mr. B., whether Mrs. Jewkes could justify clear wrongdoing as the duty of a servant to follow orders. Mrs. Jewkes denies the immorality of facilitating the sexual alliance of a gentleman and any woman. Pamela concludes that she has "nothing to expect from [Mrs. Jewkes's] Virtue or Conscience." To her dismay, she discovers that she is to share a bed with Mrs. Jewkes, at least until Mr. B. arrives.

## **Saturday**

Pamela resolves to find some means of escape and has great hopes for Mr. Williams, whose clerical position should obligate him to help her in her distress. Mrs. Jewkes has instructions to read everything that Pamela writes and to ration her paper, ink, and pens.

Pamela retaliates by dispersing and concealing the writing supplies she received from Mr. Longman so that she can continue to write in secret.

## **Sunday**

Mrs. Jewkes forbids Pamela to go to church, where she hoped to speak to Mr. Williams, and further berates the clergyman for pleading Pamela's case. Pamela is hesitant to ask for Mr. Williams's help, given that he is dependent on Mr. B.'s patronage and Pamela does not wish to be the cause of his ruin.

Mrs. Jewkes removes Pamela's shoes in order to prevent her escaping, and Pamela retaliates by penning a devastating caricature of the housekeeper's physical person.

John the footman arrives with letters from Mr. B. to both Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes. Mr. B. requests that Pamela write a letter to Mrs. Jervis in order to reassure Mr. and Mrs. Andrews that she is well. He reiterates his commitment not to approach the Lincolnshire estate without

Pamela's permission. Pamela writes to Mrs. Jervis according to the form Mr. B. has suggested. She also writes to Mr. B. expressing her dissatisfaction with the present arrangement and begging that he release her. She shows both letters to Mrs. Jewkes, hoping by this action to win the housekeeper's goodwill.

### **“Monday, the 5th Day of [her] Bondage and Misery.”**

“Honest John” the footman gives Pamela a note in which he confesses to having shown all of Pamela's letters to Mr. B. He expresses great remorse, and Pamela laments “the Deceitfulness of the Heart of Man.” He has also brought the contents of the two bundles Pamela left at the Bedfordshire estate, but Pamela has no interest in them.

### **Tuesday and Wednesday**

On a walk in the garden with Mr. Williams, Pamela conspires with the clergyman to set up a secret correspondence: they will leave letters between two tiles in the garden beside a sunflower.

Later, Pamela asks Mrs. Jewkes for two sheets of paper and, with the housekeeper hanging over her shoulder, writes out her complaints against Mrs. Jewkes's treatment of her. Pamela's object is to convince Mrs. Jewkes that her writings are generally of this frivolous nature and not part of a plot to rebel or escape. Once Mrs. Jewkes has left, Pamela finishes a letter to Mr. Williams, in which she pleads with him to find some means for her to escape and a friendly household to give her temporary shelter. She then walks in the garden with the servant Nan and, when Nan's back is turned, hides the letter between the tiles.

### **Overall Analysis:**

By having Robin, the coachman abduct Pamela from Bedfordshire to Lincolnshire, Richardson shifts the setting in a way that is crucial for the development not only of the plot but also of the themes of the novel. Lincolnshire is farther north than Bedfordshire, and in the imaginative geography of England, the north connotes sublimity and exposure. Whereas the south appears in literature as the locus of pastoral gentility, a journey to the north is a journey into the wilderness; appropriately, Pamela observes upon her arrival in Lincolnshire the “brown nodding Horrors of Lofty Elms and Pines,” a spooky, gothic image that invests the landscape with the villainous agency she finds in its inhabitants. Away from such friendly if ineffectual human stays as Mrs. Jervis and Mr. Longman, Pamela will have to rely increasingly on herself and her God. Between the beginning of Pamela's stay in Lincolnshire and the approach of Mr. B. there will elapse forty days, a symbolic duration for a trial in the wilderness.

This portion of the journal introduces Mrs. Jervis's Lincolnshire counterpart, Mrs. Jewkes, who despite the similarity in their surnames has little in common with the Bedfordshire housekeeper. Instead of being a surrogate mother for Pamela, she acts the part of “wicked Procureess.” Whatever personal interest Mrs., Jewkes may have in her ward is not maternal but amatory: she offers to kiss Pamela before they have known each other a day, prompting Pamela to object that such conduct is “not like two Persons of one Sex.” (Note that Mrs. Jewkes, despite her title, is unmarried; housekeepers took the honorific “Mrs.” regardless of their marital status.)

In portraying Mrs. Jewkes's physical person, Richardson (or Pamela) draws on the literary tradition whereby grotesque physical traits manifest spiritual defects. Mrs. Jewkes is a villainous character, and she looks the part: "She is a broad, squat, palsy, fat Thing, quite ugly. . . . She has a huge Hand, and an Arm as thick as my Waist, I believe. . . . She has a hoarse man-like Voice, and is as thick as she's long; and yet looks so deadly strong, that I am afraid she would dash me at her Foot in an Instant, if I was to vex her ---- So that with a Heart more ugly than her Face, she frightens me sadly." The correlation between moral and physical ugliness, which Pamela makes explicit here, is conventional enough, but one wonders how much of this description Richardson intends the reader to accept as objective truth. Assuming that Pamela's waist is a wasp-like 15 inches in circumference, the housekeeper would have to be either morbidly obese or inhumanly muscular in order to match it with her biceps. (Indeed Pamela soon acknowledges, though she immediately downplays, the retaliatory nature of this portrait of her warder: "This is but poor helpless Spight in me!--But the Picture is too near the Truth notwithstanding.") This description may serve as a warning that Pamela is not always a reliable narrator; in particular, her comments on Mrs. Jewkes will continue to be less than objective.

One element of Mrs. Jewkes's monstrosity, her sexual ambiguity, is so congruous with Richardson's moral logic that it cannot arise entirely from Pamela's spite. Pamela perceives Mrs. Jewkes as "man-like," almost hermaphroditic, and the essentialism necessary for the imputation of such boundary crossing owes much to the rigorous construction of gender roles that arose in the eighteenth century with the ascendancy of individualistic values (which Richardson shared). As the patriarchal extended family declined in England due to the advent of economic mobility, the bond between husband and wife became the new essence of the family unit, and from this development arose the vital social importance of the gender roles appropriate to the respective participants in that bond. Richardson's fiction routinely valorizes the heterosexual conjugal unit and punishes deviations from it, whether they are of the extramarital heterosexual sort or the non-marital homosexual sort. Mrs. Jewkes's sexual attitudes, which encompass a comfort with both premarital sex and, apparently, lesbianism, associate her with the less rigorously codified sexual paradigm that Richardson's ideology was in the process of superseding.

Mrs. Jewkes's androgyny also aligns her in fascinating ways with Mr. B. The housekeeper resembles her Master in her tendency not to control her sexual impulses; she differs from him in that she is middle-aged ("about forty Years old"), so that whereas Mr. B. has the excuse of youth and may well bring his passions into good order in time, Mrs. Jewkes seems confirmed in her irregularity. She also functions as an amplified version of Mr. B. in his capacity as a watcher of Pamela: she is even more assiduous in her observation of Pamela than Mr. B. was in Bedfordshire, and she lacks even the faux-delicacy that caused the Squire to conceal himself in closets and cupboards. Her role in the novel, then, seems to be to exemplify and facilitate Mr. B.'s masculine fantasies of power and surveillance.

### **Summary and Analysis of Pamela's Journal: The 7th Day of her Imprisonment to the 18<sup>th</sup> day**

#### **Summary of Pamela's Journal: The 7th Day of her Imprisonment to the 18<sup>th</sup> day Thursday.**

Pamela is unable to get away from Mrs. Jewkes in order to check the tiles for a note from Mr. Williams. She walks in the garden with Mrs. Jewkes, and they argue about Pamela's position with respect to Mr. B. When Mrs. Jewkes accuses Pamela of attempting to "rob [Mr. B.] of yourself," Pamela objects to the implication that she is her Master's property. Mrs. Jewkes then implies that if she were in Mr. B.'s place, she would not wait for Pamela's consent but would simply force herself on her. Pamela calls her "Jezebel," prompting Mrs. Jewkes to strike her. They then return to the house and make peace, each forgiving the other, whereupon Mrs. Jewkes allows Pamela to walk in the garden again with Nan.

Pamela manages to distract Nan long enough to extract a note from between the tiles. From it, she learns that Mr. Williams plans to contact Lady Davers and to canvass the neighborhood for genteel households that will shelter Pamela. Pamela then writes a grateful letter in return, adding the suggestion that Mr. Williams, who has a chamber in the house, make a copy of his key and leave it under the sunflower.

After dinner, Pamela goes into the garden with Mrs. Jewkes to do some fishing in the pond. Pamela catches a carp, which she then returns to the water, explaining to Mrs. Jewkes that she can sympathize with the carp's betrayal by "false Bait" and has a moral objection to toying with a helpless creature. She wishes that someone would grant her liberty in a similar way. While Mrs. Jewkes continues fishing, Pamela goes to plant some horse beans near the sunflower and takes advantage of the opportunity to place her letter between the tiles.

### **Friday, Saturday.**

Mrs. Jewkes, claiming to owe money to a tradesman, tricks Pamela out of nearly all her money, which amounts to five or six pounds. Pamela reproaches herself for falling for such a transparent ruse.

A letter arrives for Pamela from Mr. B. in which he declares that he now regrets having promised to keep his distance from Pamela. He asks her to invite him to Lincolnshire and tempts her with the prospect of discharging Mrs. Jewkes upon his arrival. Pamela thinks little of this proposal.

Pamela retrieves another letter from Mr. Williams during a turn in the garden. It tells her that the clergyman has met with no success in his effort to cultivate support for Pamela among the genteel neighbors. Even Mr. Peters, the senior clergyman of the parish, suspects the motives of both Pamela and Mr. Williams and refuses to help them. Mr. Williams promises, however, to supply Pamela with a copy of the key, and he plans to have a horse in readiness for her flight. Pamela writes back to Mr. Williams, thanking him for his efforts and suggesting that it may not be advisable after all to write to Lady Davers, as a confrontation between her and her brother might backfire and confirm him in his depravity. Pamela has greater hopes for the key and horse, though she fears that Mr. B. may be planning to come down quite soon.

On another walk in the garden with Mrs. Jewkes, Pamela again finds a pretext to get away from her warder and place her letter between the tiles. She then returns inside to write a response to Mr. B. in which she indicates that she still does not desire his presence in Lincolnshire.

## **Sunday.**

Pamela, because she cannot go to church, spends Sunday morning in private devotions. Mrs. Jewkes approaches and asks Pamela to sing her a psalm, so Pamela adapts Psalm 137 (which laments Israel's Captivity in Babylon) so that it describes her own situation.

## **Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday.**

Mr. Williams has taken a parcel of Pamela's writings and plans to send them to her parents, which cheers Pamela. She has also received the key from Mr. Williams, though a possible obstacle has arisen in the form of a bull in the pasture that has injured one of the maids.

Mr. Williams pays a visit and manages to get another letter into Pamela's hands. After he has left, Mrs. Jewkes begins to tease Pamela that Mr. Williams is in love with her and offers to suggest to Mr. B. that Pamela ought to marry the clergyman. Pamela refuses this kindness.

Reading Mr. Williams's letter, Pamela finds the clergyman proposing to marry her as the most effectual way of extricating her from her present situation. He makes clear, however, that he will not require marriage as a condition of his helping her, and so Pamela writes back to him refusing his proposal.

## **“Thursday, Friday, Saturday, the 14th, 15th and 16th of [her] Bondage.”**

Pamela has had another letter from Mr. Williams in which he accepts her refusal and says he will continue to assist her.

## **Sunday.**

Mrs. Jewkes and Mr. Williams approach Pamela with the news that Mr. B. has bestowed a clerical living on Mr. Williams and has suggested that Pamela and the clergyman should marry. Pamela cautions the ecstatic parson that she will not consider herself fit to accept his proposal until she is free to return to her parents, whom she feels bound to consult on this matter. She partly suspects that Mr. Williams himself may be part of the plot against her, but she convinces herself to continue trusting him. When Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes go to bed in the evening, the housekeeper urges her to give encouragement to Mr. Williams. Pamela insists that she does not intend to marry anyone.

## **Monday Morning.**

Pamela receives news that Mr. Williams has been attacked by thieves who took his letters, though fortunately he has protected the papers Pamela asked him to carry to her parents. The incident is strange because robbery has been rare in the neighborhood for some years. Mrs. Jewkes laughs upon reading the clergyman's account of the incident, but Pamela worries that the thieves may have had orders to find her own papers.

Pamela goes into the garden and contemplates making a run for it. She loses her nerve and returns to her closet but then descends again to the back door that leads to the pasture. There she confronts the sinister bull that injured the maidservant and that Pamela considers may actually be demonic. She loses her nerve, returns to her closet, resolves to try again, allows the

gardener to frighten her off, returns to her closet, and descends to try once more. This time she mistakes two cows for vicious bulls and, by the time she realizes her mistake, has convinced herself that she is not in the right mental state for an escape.

She laments her own “weak Mind” and recognizes that her own fears, of robbers and imaginary bulls, are as effective as any other force in keeping her imprisoned.

### **Monday Afternoon.**

Mrs. Jewkes returns from a visit to Mr. Williams and reports that, while his injuries are superficial, his love for Pamela is profound. Pamela realizes that the real object of Mrs. Jewkes’s visit has been not to comfort Mr. Williams but to pump him for information about the assistance he has given to Pamela. Pamela gathers that the clergyman has revealed nothing of the key, but she worries that he may have divulged other details. When Mrs. Jewkes shuts herself up to write a long letter to Mr. B., Pamela’s anxieties increase.

### **Overall Analysis:**

This portion of the journal includes two notable examples of Richardson’s versatility in the handling of physical detail: in both instances, the treatment may be primarily realistic or “novelistic,” but it plays on the reader’s knowledge of more traditionally “poetic” or figurative treatments as well.

The first instance is that of the sunflower beside which Pamela and Mr. Williams conceal their correspondence. As Margaret Anne Doody points out, the sunflower carries a number of meaningful connotations: its sturdiness and its suggestion of optimism allude to qualities in Pamela herself, and its humbleness, quite unlike the hothouse blossoms that tend to sprout up around the heroines of traditional romance, is consistent with Pamela’s low birth. The sunflower’s traditional emblematic significance, however, is more specific: because it always turns its face to the sun, it represents the quality of constancy in various forms, such as the constancy of servant to master, spouse to spouse, lover to beloved, son to father, and so on. Richardson seems almost deliberately to subvert this traditional meaning, as Pamela has recourse to the “sunflower correspondence” precisely because she cannot afford to be constant to the Squire her Master: he has violated the duties of a Master toward his servant so grossly that self-preservation requires her to reciprocate his breaking of faith.

The second instance is that of Pamela’s angling (i.e. fishing) with Mrs. Jewkes in the pond. The image of angling has several traditional meanings, which Richardson invokes rather artfully and Doody again explicates. Angling is a conventional pastoral activity in which many heroines of romance indulge, among them Pamela’s namesake in Sidney’s *Arcadia*. It is said to soothe the troubled mind, a fact that underscores Pamela’s distress here, which the gratuitous injury to the carp only exacerbates. In religious literature, the Devil is an angler who tempts souls with false baits; for Pamela, Mr. B. acts the part of the Devil, as her soul will end up as collateral damage if he should ever succeed in destroying her reputation. Finally, the love poetry of the previous century had turned angling into an erotic symbol, with the fish attracted to the beauty of the female angler and glad to find him on her hook. Richardson inverts this meaning by aligning the woman with the fish and Mr. B. with the angler who toys with her for sport. As an added note, Pamela’s moral objection to angling derives an ironic echo from its context in the

plot, in that she is the one who has lured Mrs. Jewkes to the pond on false pretenses, her real motive being to retrieve one of Mr. Williams's letters from between the tiles by the sunflower.

Mr. Williams's participation in this part of the journal not only moves the plot along but is revelatory of contemporary attitudes regarding the privileges of upper-class men and, implicitly, of Richardson's responses to those attitudes. To begin with, the clergyman's difficulties in recruiting allies for Pamela among the Lincolnshire gentry illustrate how ordinary Mr. B.'s treatment of his maidservant would have seemed to his socioeconomic peers, and how aberrant Pamela's defense of her virtue would have seemed. As Sir Simon Darnford puts it, "Why, what is all this, . . . but that the 'Squire our Neighbor has a mind to his Mother's Waiting-maid?" This sort of gender and class entitlement, in which the desires of upper-class men are peremptory and the resistance of lower-class women is inconsequential, Richardson plainly finds reprehensible.

Nevertheless, Mr. B.'s rakish personality appeals to Richardson, however much the moralist in him may condemn the Squire's behavior and the prejudices that enable it. The rake, the licentious and dissolute upper-class man, was a common figure in eighteenth-century literature, in part because he personified the moral flaws that threatened the emerging social order. Equally, however, he personified masculine style and energy, and Richardson seems to have felt that these positive qualities, if brought under discipline, were highly admirable. The meek Mr. Williams serves as an instructive foil to Mr. B. in this respect. For all that the clergyman is impeccably virtuous and well meaning, he is so lacking in vigor as to be almost contemptible; certainly no one considers him an acceptable suitor for the vibrant Pamela, and his ecstasy upon receiving Mr. B.'s mischievous recommendation is slightly nauseating. Indeed, the function of the milquetoast curate may be primarily to accentuate by contrast the attractive qualities of the dynamic, if profligate, Squire.

That Pamela shares to some degree her creator's preoccupation with vigorous masculinity seems clear enough, in a Freudian way, from the episode of the phantom bulls. Pamela's fixation on the bull that punctures innocent maidens causes her to hallucinate the offending animal and an accomplice as well during one of her escape attempts. If the aggressive bulls represent, as some critics believe, the repressed sexual content of Pamela's psyche that she has projected outward, then this episode would appear to support the argument that Pamela has more interest in Mr. B. than she allows herself to admit. One way or another, however, it certainly suggests that Pamela is to some extent her own prisoner in Lincolnshire, bound to her prison by her own fears, her own desires, or both.

### **Summary and Analysis of Pamela's Journal: The 19th Day of her Imprisonment to the h the 35<sup>th</sup> day**

#### **Summary of Pamela's Journal: The 19th Day of her Imprisonment to the h the 35<sup>th</sup> day Tuesday, Wednesday.**

Mr. Williams pays another visit but, as Mrs. Jewkes forbids Pamela to walk with him in the garden, Pamela retires to her closet to write another letter to put between the tiles. In it, she chastises the clergyman for being so open with Mrs. Jewkes and demands to know what he

has told her. She deposits the letter between the tiles and waits for an answer.

### **Thursday**

Pamela receives a letter from Mr. Williams in which he apologizes for his lack of guile and passes on what he has learned from John the footman, the fact that Mr. B. will go to London before long and visit Lincolnshire soon thereafter. He confirms that he has told Mrs. Jewkes nothing of the key but reports one worrisome fact, that John the footman has sent him a letter that appears to have gone missing. Pamela writes back to Mr. Williams expressing her concern about the missing letter and wondering whether John the footman may be lying about the destination of Mr. B.'s upcoming trip. She implores Mr. Williams to hurry up and supply her with a horse.

### **Friday**

Pamela receives a letter from Mr. Williams in which he takes exception to her implication that he has not been doing his utmost to assist her. He defends John the footman and expresses confidence in his information. Through Mr. Williams, she also receives a letter from her father in which Mr. Andrews encourages her to marry the clergyman, though ultimately he defers to his daughter's inclinations.

### **Saturday, Sunday**

Mr. Williams visits on both Saturday and Sunday, but Pamela learns from Mrs. Jewkes that the housekeeper and the clergyman have quarreled. Pamela suspects that "there is Mischief brewing," especially as Mrs. Jewkes seems impatient for a response to her most recent letter to Mr. B.

### **"Monday, Tuesday, the 25th and 26th Days of [her] heavy Restraint"**

Two letters have arrived from Mr. B., one for Pamela and one for Mrs. Jewkes, but with their addresses switched so that each woman reads the other's letter. In Mrs. Jewkes's letter, Mr. B. accuses Mr. Williams of "perfidious Intrigue" with Pamela and reveals that he has arranged to send the clergyman to prison for debt. Of Pamela he declares, "I now hate her perfectly," and he plans to be in Lincolnshire in three weeks, at which time he will take his "Revenge" for her alleged intrigue with Mr. Williams.

Mrs. Jewkes appears, takes her letter from Pamela, and gives Pamela her own letter from Mr. B. After taking a few minutes to recover from what she has already read, Pamela reads what Mr. B. intended for her eyes. He accuses her of hypocrisy in standing on her purity while intending to run away with a clergyman she barely knows. He concludes that, while once he considered her innocence worth preserving, now "my Honor owes you nothing" and he will soon make clear the low regard in which he holds her.

Pamela laments that she now receives accusations of duplicity, simply because she strives to preserve her integrity. She asks Mrs. Jewkes to warn Mr. Williams of the impending action against him for debt, but the housekeeper insists that any such action would violate her duty toward Mr. B. Mrs. Jewkes then takes Pamela downstairs and introduces her to Monsieur Colbrand, a monstrous Swiss man whom Mr. B. has sent to keep watch over Pamela. His



appearance appalls Pamela, who dreams that night of Mr. B. and Colbrand approaching her bedside with nefarious designs.

### **“Wednesday, the 27th Day of [her] Distress”**

Mr. Williams has been arrested for debt, and Pamela regrets it for both his sake and her own. Judging that the time for desperate measures has arrived, Pamela hatches a plan to escape through the window while Mrs. Jewkes is sleeping. Once outside, she will fake her own suicide by throwing her petticoat into the pond, thereby creating a diversion that will occupy the household while she gets away. She will bury her writings in the garden, because she expects to be searched thoroughly if she fails to escape.

Pamela overhears Mrs. Jewkes telling Colbrand that the waylaying of Mr. Williams was a contrivance of the housekeeper to acquire Pamela’s letters.

### **“Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, the 28th, 29th, 30th, and 31st Days of [her] Distress”**

On Wednesday night, once Mrs. Jewkes has fallen asleep, Pamela squeezes through the window bars and drops to the roof beneath her and thence to the ground. She buries her papers under a rose bush, tosses her petticoat and some other items into the pond, and runs to the door that leads from the garden into the pasture. She finds, however, that Mrs. Jewkes has changed the locks, so that Pamela’s key will not work. She tries climbing the wall but falls when the mortar crumbles, injuring her head, shins, and ankle. She seeks a ladder, but in vain.

Pamela’s next thought is to drown herself in earnest. She creeps toward the pond, sits on the bank, and reflects on her situation. She envisions the remorse of her persecutors upon the discovery of her corpse and rises to throw herself in. Her bruises slow her, however, and give her a chance to consider what purposes providence may have for subjecting her to such afflictions. She reasons that God would not try her beyond her strength and that even Mr. B. may undergo a change of heart. She chastises herself for presuming to shorten the life and trials God has given her and recognizes the folly of keeping herself free of sin for so many months, only to commit the unforgivable sin in the end.

Too maimed to reach the house, Pamela takes refuge in an outhouse, where she lies until Nan finds her in the morning. The servants, having been fooled by Pamela’s suicide diversion, are glad to find her alive. They carry Pamela to her bed, where Mrs. Jewkes and Nan tend to her injuries. Pamela remains in bed until Saturday morning, when Mrs. Jewkes reveals that Mr. B., who is a Justice of the Peace, has provided the housekeeper with a warrant for the apprehension of Pamela in the case of her escape, so that Pamela would almost certainly not have gotten far even had she made it over the wall.

### **Sunday Afternoon**

Pamela learns that Mr. B. nearly drowned a few days ago while hunting, and she marvels at her sympathetic reaction to this news: she rejoices for his safety in spite of all he has done to her. She also learns, through Mrs. Jewkes, that a number of the servants at the Bedfordshire estate have incurred Mr. B.’s displeasure. Mr. Longman, Mr. Jonathan, and Mrs. Jervis have spoken

to him and to his sister in Pamela's behalf, and Mr. B. has even dismissed John the footman for having corresponded with Mr. Williams.

### **“Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, the 32nd, 33rd, and 34th Days of [her] Imprisonment”**

Pamela has little to report besides continued “Squabbings” with Mrs. Jewkes.

### **Thursday**

Pamela perceives that the servants are busy tidying the house, and she infers that Mr. B. is on his way.

occupy the household while she gets away. She will bury her writings in the garden, because she expects to be searched thoroughly if she fails to escape.

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### **“Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, the 32nd, 33rd, and 34th Days of [her] Imprisonment”**

Pamela has little to report besides continued “Squabbings” with Mrs. Jewkes.

### **Thursday**

Pamela perceives that the servants are busy tidying the house, and she infers that Mr. B. is on his way.

One of the effects of this “Ray of Grace” is to impart to Pamela greater spiritual equipoise, which will manifest itself in her attitude and conduct henceforward. Though her captivity continues and her assailant approaches, and despite the fact that she has run entirely out of plans to escape his designs upon her purity, Pamela will not give up on her defense of her virtue, nor will she fail in charity toward her Master. On Sunday afternoon, she genuinely rejoices to learn that he has avoided the same fate, drowning, that he nearly drove her to embrace in desperation. Pamela has reached and passed the crisis of her moral and spiritual life; what remains is for her struggle against her earthly tormentor to reach its long-deferred culmination.

### **Summary and Analysis of Pamela's Journal: The 36th Day of her Imprisonment to the 41<sup>st</sup> day**

#### **Summary of Pamela's Journal: The 36th Day of her Imprisonment to the 41<sup>st</sup> day “Friday, the 36th Day of [her] Imprisonment”**

Pamela walks down the row of elms on Thursday afternoon, having no thought of escape, and attracts a crowd of servants who rush from the house to prevent her running off. Mrs. Jewkes orders two maids to escort Pamela back to the house, where Mrs. Jewkes locks her up without shoes.

On Friday, Mrs. Jewkes approaches Pamela with shoes and some of the fine clothes from Pamela's first and second bundles. She asks Pamela to get dressed in preparation for a visit from the daughters of a neighbor lady. Pamela refuses. At five o'clock, there is no sign of the young ladies, but Pamela sees Mr. B. arrive in his chariot. Pamela is frightened, but by seven o'clock, he still has not approached her.

### **Saturday Morning**

Around seven-thirty on Friday evening, Mr. B. appears in Pamela's chamber and accuses her of hypocrisy while Pamela weeps and prostrates herself before him. Mr. B. then leaves her with Mrs. Jewkes, and at nine o'clock, the housekeeper compels Pamela to wait on their Master at dinner. During dinner, Mr. B. taunts Pamela about Mr. Williams and Pamela complains to Mr.

B. about Mrs. Jewkes. The Squire brushes aside her complaints and, after dinner, admires her physical person vocally and minutely. She rebuffs his attempt to fondle her, and he sends her to bed.

At midday on Saturday, Pamela receives from Mr. B. a set of written proposals, the gist of which she distills as “to make me a vile kept Mistress.” In seven “Articles,” Mr. B. demands that Pamela swear her indifference to Mr. Williams and then offers her gifts of money, jewels, and property if she will consent to be his wife in everything but name. He even promises to consider formal marriage after a yearlong test-run. Pamela responds to these articles point-by-point, disavowing any interest in Mr. Williams but rejecting all the gifts and heaping scorn on his proposal to consider marrying her after he has made her his “Harlot.” Pamela presents her written response to Mr. B., who swears that he cannot and will not live without her. Pamela flees and later overhears him ranting to Mrs. Jewkes, who advises him to force himself on Pamela and have done with it.

### **Saturday Night**

Mr. B. summons Pamela to his chamber, but Pamela refuses to meet him there and retreats instead to her closet. She then refuses to go to bed, fearing that Mrs. Jewkes will let their Master in, but the housekeeper hauls her to bed forcibly.

### **Sunday Morning**

Pamela writes two petitions for Mr. B. to present to the congregation at church: one desires prayers for a gentleman who is tempted to ruin a poor maiden, and the other desires prayers for a “distressed Creature” who is endeavoring to preserve her virtue. Mrs. Jewkes presents the petitions to Mr. B., who does not take them with him to church. Pamela looks out the window as he leaves and admires her Master’s figure and clothing, and she wonders, “Why can’t I hate him?”

### **Sunday Evening**

Mr. B. has been absent from the house, and Mrs. Jewkes receives a letter from him that she leaves on a table unattended. Pamela reads the letter and learns that Mr. B. has gone to Stamford to question Mr. Williams in prison. He vows that, upon his return, nothing will save Pamela “from the fate that awaits her.” Pamela anticipates that she will have “one more good honest Night” before Mr. B. returns to ruin her.

### **Tuesday Night**

Mr. B.’s journey to Stamford turns out to have been a pretense designed to lower Pamela’s defenses. On Sunday night, Mrs. Jewkes gets the maid Nan drunk on cherry brandy and puts her to bed early to sleep it off. Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes go up to bed around eleven o’clock, and Pamela notices a figure, whom she takes to be Nan, slouched in a chair in the corner. She gives Mrs. Jewkes a brief history of her life as they are undressing, and she contrasts her parents’ virtue and her pious education with the tawdry baits Mr. B. has offered her.

Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes then go to bed, and after a time the figure Pamela has taken to be Nan approaches the bed and reveals herself to be Mr. B. in disguise. Mrs. Jewkes aids him in pinning

Pamela's arms, and Mr. B. offers Pamela an ultimatum: either comply with his articles or prepare to be taken by force. Before she can return an answer, he fondles her, causing her to faint away. When Pamela regains consciousness Mr. B. treats her more kindly and promises to desist from his attempts on her virtue. Mrs. Jewkes taunts him for his timidity, causing Pamela to faint again. When she regains consciousness this time, Mr. B. is present but has sent Mrs. Jewkes away. He asks for Pamela's forgiveness and leaves.

Pamela remains in bed on Monday, and Mr. B. shows great tenderness toward her, though Pamela suspects that the appearance of kindness may be a further ruse. On Tuesday, Mr. B. summons Pamela, declares his love for her, and vows never to force himself on her again, though he continues to refuse to let her return to her parents. He asks Pamela to express forgiveness of Mrs. Jewkes and to stay for two more weeks without attempting to escape. Pamela agrees to both of these proposals.

### **Wednesday Morning**

Mr. B. takes Pamela on a walk in the garden, draws her into an alcove, and begins kissing her despite her objections. She begs to be left alone, and finally he leads her out of the alcove, "still bragging of his Honour, and his Love." An argument ensues, during which Pamela calls Mr. B. "Lucifer himself in the Shape of my Master." When Mr. B. takes umbrage, Pamela insists on her right to speak strongly to him, given that she has no defense but words.

### **Wednesday Night**

Mr. B. joins Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes at dinner, directing Pamela to eat heartily. Mr. B. then walks out into the garden, asking Pamela to attend him. They sit down together beside the pond, where Mr. B. expresses his admiration of her, remarking that her defense of her virtue has only increased his respect. In defense of himself, he observes that if he were wholly depraved, he would not have allowed Pamela to frustrate him for so long. He explains that he is averse to marriage, even with a lady of his own social status, and he solicits Pamela's advice as to what he should do in light of all these facts.

Pamela, startled, reverts to her customary request and asks again that he allow her to return to her parents. Mr. B. asks her to confirm that she has no affection for any other man. Pamela avows that her hesitation owes not to a preference for any other man but rather to her fear that Mr. B.'s new gentleness is simply a more devilish ruse. Mr. B. belabors the point of Pamela's connection with Mr. Williams, so that Pamela must defend herself at some length. Mr. B. then demands to know whether Pamela is capable of loving him above all other men. She becomes inarticulate, and Mr. B. interprets a "yes." He reiterates, however, his aversion to marriage, and Pamela assures him that she never aspired to the honor.

They return to the house, and Pamela hopes that she can trust in Mr. B.'s goodness from now on, though she still is not wholly confident that he is not playing an elaborate trick on her. Volume I concludes with Pamela's hoping desperately that Mr. B. is finally in earnest and wondering what she should do if he is not: "What shall I do, what Steps take, if all this be designing! ---O the Perplexities of these cruel Doubtings!"

### **Overall Analysis**

Mr. B.'s assumption of a ridiculous disguise for his final attack on Pamela has its roots in the

traditional imagery of the Devil, which emphasizes his protean qualities. The Squire, like Satan before him, becomes a shape-shifter. The fact that this transformation is so grotesque, involving transvestitism and a descent to the level of his meanest servant, suggests that Mr. B. has reached his moral nadir. The fact that the trick does not succeed suggests something further, that evil is not Mr. B.'s natural element, that his corruption has been an aberration and not his essence.

One notable thing about Mr. B.'s attempts on Pamela is how unexciting they are.

They contain very little suspense, as their farcical beginnings (Mr. B. hiding in the closet, Mr. B. disguised as a drunken maidservant) proclaim them doomed from the start. Moreover, for all that some contemporaries condemned these scenes for immorality, they contain little that would cause a schoolboy to mark the pages. Nor is this judgment a result of changing standards of erotic suggestiveness: soon after the publication of *Pamela* (and, some critics suspect, in response to the publication of *Pamela*), John Cleland published that classic of pornographic literature in English, *Fanny Hill*, which would remain a dubious standard for the next seventy-five years at least. Rather, M. Kinkead-Weekes argues, *Pamela*'s scenes of attempted rape "remain unsatisfactory, not because Richardson gives too much treatment to sex, but too little; because he treats it too narrowly in its brutally egotistic and violating aspects, and sees too little of its full human potential and significance." These scenes, then, are not really about sex at all; rather, they are about pride and the attempts of the male to subjugate, and fittingly, they end in humiliation.

Mr. B. simply does not have the psychological profile of a rapist; for one thing, he is too much of a snob. As Robert Alan Donovan observes, the Squire will not condescend to take by force what should be his by *droit de seigneur*, the (probably apocryphal) right of a feudal lord to deflower any virgin on his estate. Moreover, the aggressive persona that he assumes and that Mrs. Jewkes endorses with her taunts requires for its maintenance more ruthless confidence than Mr. B. actually possesses. If he were truly a sadist or a man of rapacious lust, Pamela's physical weakness would be his opportunity; on the contrary, however, her fainting fits, which seem to manifest her genuine disgust, ruin his appetite entirely. Perhaps, as one critic has suggested, there is even a childish game-mentality to Mr. B.'s approaches to Pamela, such that he considers it out-of-bounds to proceed when her agency is suspended.

The victim and her assailant are not irreconcilable foils in this novel, as Mr. B. is capable of redemption. He is a "low" character, a country squire with simple pleasures, not a sadist or a connoisseur of evil. (Fielding was not a completely insensitive reader when he completed Mr. B.'s surname as "Booby.") The detail of his pausing in his attack on Pamela to urge her acceptance of his "Articles" is telling with respect to both his ineptitude as a predator and his basic decency. As the patriarchal head of household, in which position traditional ideology would have likened him to an absolute monarch, Mr. B. has claimed the right to have his way with Pamela, whom the law does not even recognize as a person. In offering her a contract in the form of his "articles," however, he has implicitly conceded her personal autonomy and the necessity of her consent in his erotic plans for her. This instinct is of course the right one, and his reversion to it in the middle of a sexual assault bespeaks an imperfect commitment to what has been his ostensible goal, the crushing of her ability to refuse him.

By contrast, Mrs. Jewkes's enthusiastic participation in this fiasco bespeaks some cruelty, on

Richardson's part as well as the housekeeper's. We are to take it that because Mrs. Jewkes will never attract a man and cannot act the man's part herself, aiding in a sexual assault is the closest she will ever come to erotic fulfillment. The presentation of Mrs. Jewkes's character will presently become less drastically villainous, but whether such flagrant depravity can transform convincingly into ordinary decency is a question for the reader to decide.

## **Summary and Analysis of Pamela's Journal: The 42nd Day of her Imprisonment to the 4th day of her Freedom**

### **Summary of Pamela's Journal: The 42nd Day of her Imprisonment to the 4th day of her Freedom**

#### **Thursday Morning**

Mr. B. announces that he will be leaving for Stamford and will not return until Saturday. He warns Mrs. Jewkes to keep close watch on Pamela because he has received a tip that one of his Bedfordshire servants has recently sent a letter for Pamela. Mr. B. also indicates that he has dismissed Mrs. Jervis, Mr. Longman, and Mr. Jonathan due to their appeal to Lady Davers, which has caused a breach between Mr. B. and his sister. Pamela regrets having been the occasion for the misfortunes of the servants, and she considers that if Mr. B. truly loved her, he would not resent his servants' support of her.

#### **Friday Night**

Pamela has retrieved her papers from under the rose bush. On Thursday evening, she and Mrs. Jewkes encounter a "Gypsy-like Body" who offers to tell their fortunes, and Pamela suspects that the gypsy may have a commission to deliver a letter to her. An hour after the gypsy has left, Pamela and Mrs. Jewkes inspect the area where she was standing, and Pamela finds a scrap of paper beneath a tuft of grass. The note warns her to expect an impostor clergyman who will put Pamela and Mr. B. through a sham wedding. Pamela reacts intensely against Mr. B., whom she had begun to love and forgive but who now appears to have betrayed her.

#### **Saturday Afternoon**

Mr. B. returns from Stamford. Later in the day, Mrs. Jewkes comes upon Pamela and takes from her the parcel of writings from under the rose bush, which contains everything from Sunday, the 17th Day of her Imprisonment to Wednesday, the 27th Day. (Pamela has sewn the more recent writings into the linings of her underclothes.) Pamela begs Mrs. Jewkes not to show the papers to Mr. B., but to no avail.

#### **Saturday Evening**

Mr. B. approaches Pamela in a pleasant manner, telling her that he has not yet read her papers. Pamela requests that he not read them at all. He then remonstrates with her for her unfriendly behavior toward him and returns to his conviction that she must be in love with someone else. Pamela begs that he will judge her fairly while reading the papers, and she insists on her absolute honesty. Mr. B. vows to judge her according to her deserts.

At nine o'clock Mr. B. summons Pamela to what he calls her "Trial." He has read her papers, and he describes her correspondence with Mr. Williams as "love letters," refusing to believe that her efforts to discourage the clergyman were genuine. He asks to see Pamela's earlier letters, which are now in the hands of her father, as well as her later efforts, which are hidden in her garments. When he threatens to strip-search her for the later writings, she begs to be allowed to fetch them from upstairs, where she claims to have hidden them.

From her closet, she sends Mr. B. a note asking for time until tomorrow morning to look over the papers. He grants this extension, and Pamela uses the time to make notes of the contents of the papers she is giving up.

### **Sunday Morning**

Pamela meets Mr. B. in the garden and hands over her papers. He sits down with her beside the pond and flips to the account of Pamela's escape attempt and her near-suicide.

As he reads, he walks around the garden to the various spots Pamela mentions in her narrative, which he declares "is a very moving Tale." After reading the relation of Pamela's genuine near-suicide, Mr. B. reflects, "I see you have been us'd too roughly." He regrets aloud his strategy of terrifying her into submission, and he vows to make amends. Pamela still fears the sham-marriage, however, and asks again to return to her parents. Her eagerness to leave angers Mr. B., and Pamela reflects on the effects of his spoiled childhood on his character.

In the afternoon, Mrs. Jewkes tells Pamela to prepare to return to her parents forthwith. Pamela readies her belongings but is far from believing that she will find herself at home any time soon.

### **Monday**

On Sunday evening, Pamela departs Mr. B.'s Lincolnshire estate and is surprised to discover how reluctant she is to leave and how upset she is that the Squire has turned her out of doors. With Robin the coachman and Monsieur Colbrand, she reaches an alehouse in a strange village after nightfall. Robin gives her a letter from Mr. B. in which the Squire reveals that he was on the point of proposing marriage to her when he sent her away. Pamela reels from the emotional impact of this letter and admits to herself that she has fallen in love with Mr. B.

### **Monday Morning**

Pamela and her companions arrive at the inn belonging to Mrs. Jewkes's family. Pamela rereads her letter from Mr. B. Soon the Squire's groom arrives with letters for Pamela and Colbrand. To Pamela Mr. B. writes that he has read further in her journal and finds the evidence of her character so impressive that he now desires Pamela to return to Lincolnshire and, implicitly, wishes to marry her. Pamela, while thrilled at this prospect, nevertheless continues to suspect a plot to entrap her in a sham-marriage. She finally resolves to return to Lincolnshire. Before departing, however, she sends a note to her parents informing them that all is well and directing them to send her papers to Mr. B. in Lincolnshire. They arrive in Lincolnshire late at night to find that Mr. B. is ill with a fever.



## **Tuesday Morning**

Pamela visits Mr. B., who is ill in bed. The Squire orders Mrs. Jewkes to leave Pamela entirely at liberty and informs Pamela that he has released Mr. Williams from prison and may forgive his debt. When Pamela expresses her regret over the breach between Mr. B. and Lady Davers, he allows her to read a letter he has received in which his sister berates him for his dalliance with Pamela. Lady Davers reasons that her brother must be planning to keep Pamela either as a mistress or as a wife, and either connection would be disgraceful. She vows to renounce Mr. B. forever if he brings their mother's waiting-maid into the family. Pamela reflects on the unmerited pride of the noble and wealthy.

## **Wednesday Morning**

Mr. B. invites Pamela to go driving with him in the chariot, and Pamela considers whether she should dress up for the event or wear her favorite country clothes, which she fears will shame her Master. Mr. B. approves the more modest outfit.

During the chariot ride, Mr. B. explains the causes of his sister's anger. Lady Davers favors the daughter of a lord as Mr. B.'s future wife and resents her brother's choice of another. She also, of course, fears the censure of the fashionable world if Mr. B. marries a member of the servant class, and Mr. B. himself admits that no noble ladies will ever visit a Mrs. Pamela B. He probes Pamela's attitudes on this point, and Pamela professes herself indifferent to the opinion of high society.

Once they have resolved to be perfectly happy together, Pamela shows Mr. B. the note she received from the gypsy, and he identifies the writing as that of Mr. Longman. He admits that did indeed have a plan of deceiving Pamela with a sham-marriage and might have let the farce continue for years before telling her the truth. He thought better, however, upon reflecting that, among other things, he would be incapable of legitimating their offspring and passing his property to them.

As the chariot turns back toward the house, Mr. B. informs Pamela that some of the neighboring gentry will be coming to dinner in a few days in order to meet Pamela. He requests that she wear her country outfit, since the neighbors have heard the story behind it, and Mr. B. wants to demonstrate that Pamela's attractions are not dependent on her wardrobe.

Pamela and Mr. B. meet Mrs. Jewkes upon reentering the house, and Pamela forgives the housekeeper's harsh treatment of her. The Squire invites Pamela to dine with him, but she declines, fearing that so many distinctions will cause her to grow proud.

## **Thursday**

In the morning, Pamela and Mr. B. discuss their wedding arrangements. Mr. B. wants to get married within two weeks and favors a private ceremony in his own house. Pamela prefers a church wedding, so Mr. B. compromises by ordering the cleanup of the family chapel. Pamela also resists Mr. B.'s impatience and chooses the second week of the fortnight.

Thomas the servant returns from Pamela's parents, reporting that Mr. and Mrs. Andrews will not

hand over the papers and that they believe Pamela either to have written her reassuring note on compulsion or to have yielded to Mr. B.'s dishonorable intentions. Pamela writes her parents a longer letter explaining how things now stand.

Mr. B. goes out for another drive and, upon returning, recounts to Pamela his meeting with Mr. Williams in a field. The Squire and Pamela argue again about whether she encouraged the clergyman's hopes of marrying her.

### **Overall Analysis**

Volume II begins with the opening, after some false starts, of a new chapter in Pamela's life. Though her habitual suspicions and hesitations hinder her for a time, Pamela in this portion of the journal comes to recognize Mr. B.'s moral reformation, and it is her writings, so long a bone of contention between them, that facilitate this meeting of their minds.

The scene of Pamela's "Trial" contains the culmination of Mr. B.'s long-standing obsession with her writings. This interest of Mr. B.'s is, on one view, quite sinister. While in the beginning his ostensible objection to her "scribbling" had to do with her gossiping about him and his family, gradually his motive developed into a more erotic and tyrannical ambition to possess absolute knowledge of Pamela, to prevent her withholding from him either her mind or her body. It is fitting, in view of Mr. B.'s desire for both mental and physical knowledge, that the convergence of clothes imagery with the themes of writing and intimacy, which began with his surprising her during her composition of Letter I, should reach its culmination during this scene.

Pamela has sewn her secret papers into her undergarments, and the evocations of pregnancy with which she has described this stratagem ("my Writings may be discovered; for they grow large") make her seem to have assimilated the writings directly to her body. The distinction seems to have gone blurry for Mr. B. as well: when he declares, "I will now begin to strip my pretty Pamela," he seeks not only (or even primarily) her physical person but, rather, her literary output. The mortification that Pamela expects will attend this revelation ("now he will see all my private Thoughts of him, and all my Secrets") indicates that she considers this assault to be as great a violation as would be a physical rape, even if less morally compromising for the victim. She recognizes that Mr. B. has decided that even the record of her secret thoughts must participate in his self-presentation as a dominating male.

The trial scene has a positive side, too, however. As Jocelyn Harris observes, trial scenes in general are favorite resolution devices in Richardson's fiction, being safe arenas in which the powerless can speak out and truth can carry the day. Pamela's handing over of the "evidence" after the Trial leads to the scene in which Mr. B. finally ceases to be a predator and becomes her perfectly sympathetic reader. This incident is the fourth important scene to take place by the pond in the garden: the first was the angling scene, the second was the incident of Pamela's near-suicide, and the third was her tentative reconciliation with Mr. B. on Wednesday night (in the final entry of Volume I). This scene revises all three of its predecessors, effecting a more enduring reconciliation than that of Wednesday night. As Mr. B. reads the account of her struggle with despair and her subsequent reaffirmation of her faith in God, his resulting tenderness gives her cause to recover her faith in man, and finally he becomes the merciful angler to her hooked carp, granting her freedom when she continues to demand it. The total

import of the scene is that of the redemption of Mr. B.'s desire for knowledge about Pamela, as he now employs that knowledge in fostering sympathy and love.

Unfortunately, whereas Mr. B. has finally passed the test of generosity toward his servant and beloved, Pamela fails the first test of her faith in man. She has yet to overcome her habit of "suspect[ing] all the World almost" and, still fearing the sham-marriage, she asks again to return to her parents. The request angers Mr. B., who nevertheless grants it, and Pamela finds to her surprise that she is hardly more satisfied with the result: "I was loth to leave the House. Can you believe it?---What could be the Matter with me, I wonder!" Poetic justice is served as the mistrustful Pamela finally gets what she has so long demanded, only to find that she no longer wants it.

Pamela's struggle with her heart, which comes explicitly to the fore in the aftermath of her dismissal, is a conflict that is itself at the heart of the novel. Though she has previously wondered at her own high tolerance for Mr. B.'s "bad usage" of her ("Why can't I hate him?"), she has resisted admitting the cause that has long been apparent to the reader. During the Trial scene, she insists on the absolute veracity of her writings, saying, "I wrote my Heart; and that is not deceitful"; the reader will notice, however, that the degree to which Pamela's heart has been obscure to Pamela herself argues strongly against this claim. Now, thinking that she has lost Mr. B. forever, she expostulates with the organ she previously thought so transparent: "O my treacherous, treacherous Heart! to serve me thus!

And give no Notice to me of the Mischiefs thou wast about to bring upon me!" The treachery of Pamela's heart raises important questions for her authority and reliability as a narrator, with consequences for the job of the reader. As her own pronouncements on the state of her emotions have by no means been the last word, the reader's role must therefore be an active and critical one. When Pamela writes her heart, what she produces is not a definitive interpretation of her psyche but rather a set of data that the reader must analyze in order to form an independent conclusion.

## **Summary and Analysis of Pamela's Journal: The 5th Day of her Freedom to the 10<sup>th</sup> day**

### **Summary of Pamela's Journal: The 5th Day of her Freedom to the 10<sup>th</sup> day Friday**

The neighboring gentry come to dinner: Sir Simon Darnford, his wife, and their daughters; Lady Jones and her sister-in-law; Mr. Peters the parson, his wife, and their niece. Mr. B. introduces Pamela as "my pretty Rustick," and the guests lavish praise on her appearance. Pamela assists Mrs. Jewkes in serving refreshments, and Sir Simon remarks Pamela's habit of addressing the Squire as "Master." Lady Darnford requests that Pamela dine with them, but Pamela excuses herself. Her humility impresses the ladies. She then takes a turn in the garden with the younger ladies, one of whom had hopes of marrying Mr. B. herself. Pamela then obliges the company by playing the spinet and singing a song that Mrs. B. learned in Bath.

Around four o'clock Mr. B. fetches Pamela and warns her to prepare herself to meet a very surprising guest downstairs. Pamela braces herself for a mortifying encounter with Mr. Williams but finds her father instead. Father and daughter have an ecstatic reunion, which Mr. B. stages in front of all the company. Alone with Pamela, Mr. Andrews volunteers to move with his wife into a far country so that they will not disgrace their daughter with their poverty. Pamela insists, however, that their honest poverty is her glory.

Returning to Mr. B. and the guests, Pamela mildly resents the Squire's forcing her to meet her father in front of the assembled gentry. When Pamela wishes to take supper alone with her father, the company will not hear of it. After supper, there is discussion of the wedding date. Mr. B. expresses his opinion that "the sooner it is done, the better." Mr. Andrews has no opinion, and Pamela, when the Squire presses her to agree to a date within the week, secures his permission to give her answer the next day.

## **Saturday**

Pamela walks with her father in the garden in the morning. Mr. B. soon joins them, having spent the night reading the papers Mr. Andrews brought with him. He once again contests the issue of Pamela's willingness to marry Mr. Williams, and he expresses concern over Mrs. Jewkes's treatment of Pamela. Over breakfast, they discuss the wedding date again, and Pamela again prefers the second week of the fortnight. Pamela then goes upstairs to dress herself, in accordance with Mr. B.'s request, in some of the contents of the two bundles she previously rejected. She descends again, surprising Mr. B. and her father with her appearance. Mr. B. then discusses with her the refurbishment of the chapel and his plans to keep it in use from now on.

Pamela and Mr. B. drive to a meadow for a walk and happen upon Mr. Williams. The Squire and the clergyman discuss the latter's participation in Pamela's plans for escape, and Mr. Williams confirms that he received no encouragement from Pamela in his desire to marry her. Mr. B. is pleased and tells Pamela that she may number Mr. Williams among her friends. Mr. B. and Pamela then introduce Mr. Williams to Pamela's father. After a general exchange of elevated sentiments, Mr. Williams remarks on how fortunate Mr. B. is to have received the grace of moral reformation before the commission of grave sin.

After dinner, they visit the chapel, which Pamela approves. Mr. B. invites Mr. Williams to officiate at Divine Service the next day and then cancels the clergyman's debt, apologizing for his persecution of him.

## **Sunday**

Several of the neighboring gentry attend Divine Service in Mr. B.'s chapel, as do all of the household servants. At dinner, Mr. B. asks Pamela to sing her own version of Psalm 137. When she refuses, he takes a copy of it from his pocket and threatens to read it aloud himself. Finally, Mr. B. performs a scriptural duet with Mr. Williams, whereby the clergyman reads a stanza or two from the Authorized Version and Mr. B. supplies the corresponding stanzas of Pamela's version. Pamela receives praises from all the ladies.

While everyone walks in the garden in the afternoon, Lady Jones instigates another discussion of the wedding date and the Miss Darnfords have the idea for a ball, which Pamela nixes. After

tea, the gentry leave and Mr. Andrews begs to leave the next morning. Before he goes to bed, Pamela asks him not to work so hard from now on, since she expects that Mr. B. plans to do something for him.

### **Monday**

Colbrand arrives with a marriage license, prompting yet another discussion of the wedding date. Pamela continues to prefer the Thursday at the end of the original fortnight and even professes a superstitious attachment to Thursdays in general. Mr. B. disputes it with her to no avail, and they finally settle on Thursday of the present week. At supper, Mr. B. mentions a letter he has received from Lady Davers's husband, and they discuss Mr. B.'s rejection of his sister and the prospects of reconciliation. They then discuss arrangements for the wedding and the measures Mr. B. has taken to ensure that it will be a private affair.

### **Tuesday**

Pamela and Mr. B. go for an airing in the chariot, during which she makes a pious reference to the afterlife and he asks her to stop being so gloomily tendentious, though he quickly softens the criticism. Pamela finds that there is a general weight upon her mind and a subtle dread of the coming Thursday. She fears that she will prove unworthy of the love of Mr. B.

### **Wednesday**

Pamela continues to feel very serious about her approaching nuptials.

### **Wednesday Evening**

Pamela is too nervous to eat supper. Mr. B. attempts to comfort her by lauding her modesty and thoughtfulness. He offers to delay the wedding, but Pamela anticipates that she would endure the same anxiety on the later date. After a time, Pamela expresses concern about the breach between Mr. B. and Lady Davers and asks him to be patient with his sister. Mr. B. condemns Lady Davers as a terminal snob and shows no sign of being disposed to reconciliation. Pamela then worries about her own failure to bring a dowry to the marriage, but Mr. B. assures her that he is happy to improve her economic fortunes by way of making amends for his past treatment of her.

Mr. B. then summons Mrs. Jewkes and informs her that tomorrow is to be the wedding day and that they wish to keep it a secret for the time being. Mrs. Jewkes informs him that she has heard from a servant of Lady Davers that her ladyship intends to arrive in Lincolnshire in time to thwart the wedding. Before Mrs. Jewkes leaves, she and Pamela again reconcile, and the housekeeper learns that she is to attend Pamela at the ceremony.

### **Overall Analysis**

This portion of the journal focuses mostly on the presentation of Pamela to the neighboring gentility. From now on, in fact, the chief business of the novel will be to show the process of Pamela's acceptance by those reaches of society that everyone, including Mr. B. and Pamela

herself, previously considered off-limits to her. Although Richardson seems to have shifted genres halfway through his story, switching from a rather gothic romance narrative to a novel of society and manners, the story of Pamela's resistance to seduction has always been, in part, the story of her successful negotiation with a social context that was disposed to be hostile to her. With her installation as the future Mrs. B., that effort of negotiation simply changes its goal a bit and widens its scope.

As Robert Alan Donovan points out, Pamela during the period of her betrothal still occupies a highly ambiguous social role: she remains technically a servant, but everyone expects her to handle herself like a lady, and ladylike conduct involves a total prohibition on the performance of any of the menial tasks to which, as a servant, Pamela has been accustomed. She must evince the proper blend of dignity and humility, making a number of touchy distinctions; for example, though she agrees to drink a toast with the august company, she declines to sit down to dinner with them. Moreover, the neighbors who visit on Friday are friendly but definitely patronizing. Pamela's country clothes, which have been so important to her as an index of her identity and integrity, they seem to regard as a charming species of indigenous costume, and in having to play the part of "pretty Rustick," Pamela must essentially romanticize her own biography for their amusement.

Several details in this portion of the journal raise questions about just how equitable and happy Pamela's marriage is going to be. Some readers, for instance, may find cause for concern in Mr. B.'s tendency to objectify Pamela by putting her on display. Pamela feels quite understandably self-conscious when Mr. B. announces the approach of his "pretty Rustick" and the neighbors "all, I saw, which dash'd me, stood at the Windows and in the Door-way, looking full at me." Mr. B.'s stage-managing of Pamela's reunion with her father, a deeply personal scene that anyone might prefer to enact in private, gives a similar sense that he is more interested in how Pamela's generous feelings reflect on him than in how Pamela actually feels.

The reunion with Mr. Andrews has a strong upside, too, however. Richardson has characterized Pamela's father with touches from the ballad tradition and Christian allegory. His traversing the countryside in search of his beloved daughter recalls the plight of innumerable lamenting fathers in hoary English songs, and his elevation from the stable in Bedfordshire to the table in Lincolnshire invites us to read his story as a parable in which the last shall be first. Contrasting Mr. B.'s treatment of his future father-in-law in this scene with his irreverence toward him in Bedfordshire certainly reveals a positive moral trajectory.

Further religious echoes augur not just the personal reformation of Mr. B. but also the general restoration of harmony and propriety in the household. The family chapel, which had fallen into disuse, is now "being got in tolerable Order" at Pamela's request and will "always be kept in Order for the future." Meanwhile, a shift in the characters' uses of language signals the adoption of Pamela and her values by a formerly decadent establishment. Mr. B.'s scriptural duet with Mr. Williams is an image of reconciliation, and not simply because the Squire, under Pamela's influence, has managed to overlook his differences with the clergyman. Mr. B.'s appreciative reading of Pamela's re-written Psalm 137 suggests that he has accepted the legitimacy of her protest against her captivity and now espouses the values on which she based it. Further, the

splicing of Pamela's version with the Authorized Version symbolizes the alignment of Pamela with the established church; that church's preeminent local representative, the vicar Mr. Peters, who once doubted her chastity and refused to aid in her escape, is now among her admiring audience and will participate in her wedding.

## **Summary and Analysis of Pamela's Journal: The 1st Day of her Happiness to the 5<sup>th</sup> day**

### **Summary of Pamela's Journal: The 1st Day of her Happiness to the 5<sup>th</sup> day Thursday Morning**

After a sleepless night, Pamela frets about what the fashionable world will say about her impending nuptials. Mr. B. drops in for an exchange of elevated sentiments. Pamela dresses for the ceremony and strives to overcome her unseasonable misgivings.

#### **Thursday Afternoon**

Pamela and Mr. B. have breakfast with Mr. Peters and Mr. Williams, but Pamela is again too nervous to eat. After breakfast, they all proceed to the chapel, with Mrs. Jewkes accompanying and Nan standing guard at the door. Mr. Williams officiates at the ceremony, and Mr. Peters gives away the bride.

After the wedding Pamela and Mr. B. go for a ride in the chariot. When they return, they find that three gentleman-rakes of Mr. B.'s acquaintance have invited themselves to dinner. Mr. B. tells Pamela that these gentlemen are notorious moochers and likely to stay on all through the evening and night. Pamela retires to her closet, and after a time Mr. B. comes up to inform her that the rakes have heard from Lady Davers about the Squire's alliance with his mother's waiting-maid. Mr. B. intends to get rid of them as soon as possible.

Pamela dines with Mrs. Jewkes, who at first resists sitting down with her. After dinner, the two women take a turn in the garden while Mr. B. sees off the rakes. Pamela marvels at what a different aspect the house and grounds (not to mention the housekeeper) now wear. Mr. B. then returns, without the rakes, and he and Pamela sit down to supper, during which he speaks words of comfort, in spite of which she grows increasingly anxious.

Pamela then retires again to her closet, where she says a prayer of thanksgiving and prepares herself for the "happy, yet awful Moment" that approaches.

#### **Friday Evening**

Pamela reflects contentedly on Mr. B.'s "delicate and unexceptionable" behavior of the previous night. Over breakfast Mr. B. asks (but makes clear that he does not demand) to see those of Pamela's writings that he has not yet read, and Pamela cheerfully agrees to supply them. Mr. B. then inquires into the financial situation of Pamela's parents and gives her fifty guineas with which to pay their debts. He gives her a further one hundred guineas, seventy-five of which she distributes to the servants as presents in commemoration of her wedding. He promises her yet more money to spend on fine clothes, which he expects her to wear as befitting

her new station.

The couple takes another turn in the chariot. After some small talk, they discuss Lady Davers again, with Mr. B. warning Pamela against effecting reconciliation through dishonorable self-abasement. They return to the house for dinner, after which Mr. B. declares his intention of leaving for Bedfordshire on Tuesday. Pamela asks him to reinstate the Bedfordshire servants who lost his favor through loyalty to her. Mr. B. consents, though he still begrudges the servants' inviting Lady Davers to meddle in his affairs.

### **“Saturday Morning, the Third of [her] Happy Nuptials”**

Pamela and Mr. B. write to the Bedfordshire servants, announcing their marriage and the servants' reinstatement. Mr. Williams visits, asking permission to see his new living, and Pamela is delighted to see him a contented recipient of Mr. B.'s benevolence. She reflects on the great power, and the great responsibility, of the wealthy to do good for the less fortunate.

### **Saturday Evening**

Mr. B. announces his intention of establishing Mr. Andrews, rent-free, on a farm in his estate in Kent, and he proposes that he and Pamela should visit her parents annually and entertain as many visits as Mr. and Mrs. Andrews please to make. He also announces Pamela's yearly allowance of two hundred pounds.

### **“Sunday, the Fourth Day of [her] Happiness”**

Over breakfast, Mr. B. expresses his opinion that marriages are best served by total openness, so that the spouses each indicate what they like and dislike about each other. He then proceeds to prescribe several rules for Pamela. She should always dress for dinner, lest company arrive and interpret her slovenly attire as a mark of disrespect for her husband.

She should arise every morning by six-thirty, with breakfast beginning at nine. Dinner begins at two in the afternoon, with supper at eight. Further, Pamela should always strive to appear pleasant and untroubled, even when she is upset. She must “let no little Accidents ruffle [her] Temper,” especially in front of guests.

After breakfast, Pamela goes upstairs and dresses herself grandly in anticipation of dinner, in accordance with her Master's injunction. She finds him in the garden alcove, and he invites her to find some fault with him and deliver her injunctions. Pamela claims that she is unable to find fault with him. Mr. B. expresses his hope of progeny and then leaves to bring in their dinner guests.

The guests approach Pamela in the garden, where the ladies compliment her and Sir Simon makes naughty jokes. Mrs. Jewkes arrives and addresses Pamela as “your Ladyship,” letting the cat out of the bag. Mr. B. receives congratulations and Pamela is embarrassed. At dinner, Pamela takes her place at the upper end of the table, and she and Mr. B. commit to a ball on Tuesday night at Lady Darnford's residence.

### **“Monday, the Fifth Day”**

Mr. B. rides out after breakfast to see Mr. Carlton, a sick man who owes him money, having



warned Pamela that he may not be home that night. In the evening Pamela sups with Mrs. Jewkes, who seems somewhat to regret her earlier mistreatment of her. Pamela marvels at the power of the example heads of families set to their servants. When by ten at night Mr. B. has not returned, Pamela fears that the sick man must be worse.

## **Overall Analysis**

Pamela's conquest of her new social element continues apace. On the morning of the wedding, she awakes to anxieties about what people of fashion will say when her marriage becomes public knowledge: "The great 'Squire B. has done finely! he has marry'd his poor Servant Wench!" She goes through with it, however, appearing at the altar in garments belonging to the late Lady B., whose social and moral role she hopes to fill. That she will do so creditably seems probable when we recall her musical performance from the previous Friday, when she sang for the neighbors a favorite song of her Lady's, which her Lady had picked up in the seaside resort town of Bath. The style and content of that song, with its "soft dreams" and "Phoebus' Rays" and preoccupation with romantic love, made it the harmonious social counterpart to Pamela's success with Psalm 137. Not only has Pamela deserved her new position by being a moral and spiritual exemplar, but she can also speak and sing the language of leisure and refinement and hence will not be out of place in fine drawing rooms.

Pamela's social successes may seem to pose a difficulty for the moral premises of the novel. Richardson, of course, did a revolutionary thing when he based a novel on his assertion that the sexual virtue of a lower-class girl has an absolute value and is worth defending; prior to him, literature had portrayed only upper-class virginities as worth fussing over. Ironically, however, one of the notable features of Richardson's legacy is the frequency with which his critics have condemned him as a snob, partly on the basis of his biography, which demonstrates a lifelong desire to cultivate friendships with the high-born, and partly on the basis of his rewarding Pamela's virtue with such a drastic elevation of her social status. Pamela's great claim that "my Soul is of equal Importance with the Soul of a Princess; though my Quality is inferior to that of the meanest Slave" is not necessarily radical. Richardson appears to suggest that the proper destiny of the meritorious servant-girl is to cease to be "inferior to . . . the meanest Slave" and become instead something closer to "a Princess."

Another of Richardson's claims, however, is that virtue must receive social recognition in order to exert its due influence. This pragmatic contention may justify his concern with social status; it certainly sheds light on his procedure in the second half of this novel, in which Pamela not only charms the neighbors but also finds opportunities to extend her virtues over wider field. No longer having to invest her moral energy in the negative project of defending her purity, she can demonstrate her positive qualities of humility, obedience, piety, love, forgiveness, gratitude, charity, and so on. The numerous choric scenes, in which the gentry and servants hymn Pamela's virtue, commend Mr. B. for rewarding it, congratulate Mr. Andrews for having cultivated it, expatiate on the merits of virtue per se, or simply praise God and His providence, may seem tedious and redundant.

Nevertheless, they make Richardson's point about the influence that Pamela can exert on the people around her. In their wordy tributes, the characters demonstrate how compellingly Pamela has spoken to their good nature. Nevertheless, there remain certain disturbing elements

in the outlook for Pamela's new life. For one, the very suddenness of Pamela's good fortune may make it seem too much like a fairy-tale transformation. Not only does Richardson allow his heroine to have her cake (by refusing her seducer) and eat it too (by accepting her seducer under different circumstances), but the reformation of Pamela's erstwhile antagonists may appear too arbitrary to be genuine and lasting. One character whom critics have singled out in this respect is Mrs. Jewkes, once the "wicked Procureess" and monstrous tormentor, now Pamela's attendant at the altar. When Pamela remarks, "Mrs. Jewkes was quite another Person to me," the observation seems true enough; when, however, she assures Mrs.

Jewkes that "I must be highly unworthy, if I did not forego all my little Resentments [toward you]," it is a judgment in which few readers will concur. Pamela's diplomacy in this matter is probably prudent, but in letting the vicious housekeeper off the hook, she seems to have waived one of the strongest arguments she employed during the time of her captivity. Soon after her arrival in Lincolnshire, she probed Mrs. Jewkes as to what exactly her concept of duty comprehended: "[Y]ou will not, I hope, do an unlawful or wicked Thing, for any Master in the World!" Mrs. Jewkes answered her in the most damning way: "[H]e is my Master, and if he bids me do a Thing that I can do, I think I ought to do it." Pamela knows that the Christian servant's first duty is to God's laws, his second to himself, and his third to social authorities such as his Master; by contrast, Mrs. Jewkes and the other servants who cooperated in Pamela's imprisonment consider duty to Master absolute. On this principle, she hounds Pamela, and on this principle, she undergoes a moral reformation at exactly the same time that her Master does. The fact that the principle now works in Pamela's favor may not offset the reader's discomfort with its essentially sinister nature. Like the officers on trial at Nuremberg, Mrs. Jewkes is just following orders.

This criticism of Mrs. Jewkes's reformation may or may not be Richardson's; indeed, Richardson has such a penchant for wish-fulfillment narratives that one may reasonably suspect that he approves of the reformed housekeeper wholeheartedly. Nor is her switch to the roster of "good" characters the only problematic such move in the novel. Mr. B.'s moral transformation is more psychologically convincing than that of Mrs. Jewkes: we have seen the process that led to it, and as he himself notes in his own defense, he has not been "a very abandoned Profligate" and, by virtue of fumbling all his chances, has committed "no very enormous or vile Actions." It is far more important in his case than in the housekeeper's, however, that the reformed villain should truly deserve the moral credit that the novel awards him for becoming an ally of the heroine.

If Mr. B. does not deserve Pamela's love but simply receives it as a favor from the author, then his acceptance by Pamela constitutes a serious moral flaw in the novel. Thus, Morris Golden argues, Richardson's most "sadistic" move is to make his heroine love her would-be rapist: "the full desire of the sadist is not satisfied until the girl both loves and fears, until she is hurt but continues loving nonetheless, or perhaps even as a consequence. . . . As much as Pamela, Mr. B. has his cake and eats it---not only the pleasure of torturing her, but also the satisfaction of gaining her love." This is a rather extreme way of putting the case, but it captures the magnitude of the challenge Richardson has set himself in making Mr. B. plausible as a decent

husband for Pamela. Individual readers will decide for themselves the degree to which he succeeds.

## **Summary and Analysis of Pamela's Journal: The 6th Day of her Happiness (Twice)**

### **Summary of Pamela's Journal: The 6th Day of her Happiness (Twice) Tuesday Morning**

Mr. B. still has not returned, but Pamela receives a note from him directing her to go to Sir Simon's, where Mr. B. will join her later in the day. Before Pamela can get away, however, Lady Davers arrives and asks Mrs. Jewkes whether Pamela has been "whor'd yet." Lady Davers demands to see Pamela, who tries to come up with some pretext for avoiding her. Unfortunately, Lady Davers's waiting-maid, Beck, discovers Pamela upstairs, so Pamela reluctantly descends to the parlor. Lady Davers, believing Pamela to be unmarried, treats her like a tart, and her hormonal nephew, Jackey, follows suit. Pamela attempts to extricate herself from the encounter, but Lady Davers blocks her way out of the room. In the course of condemning Pamela, Lady Davers refers to "the Number of Fools [Mr. B.] has ruin'd," piquing Pamela's curiosity. To test Pamela's claims of sexual innocence, Lady Davers offers first to take Pamela into her own household, then to return her to her parents, both of which proposals Pamela declines.

Mrs. Jewkes brings dinner and lays three place settings, provoking Lady Davers. The lady then pulls off Pamela's gloves and, seeing her wedding ring, ridicules her fantasy of having married Mr. B. Lady Davers and Jackey sit down to dinner, goading Pamela with wretched puns. Lady Davers demands that Pamela wait on them, but Pamela refuses, indicating obliquely that to do so would be beneath her new station. After some further ridicule and backtalk, Lady Davers tells Pamela that she is "not the first in the List of his credulous Harlots."

Lady Davers demands a straight answer to the question whether Pamela considers herself married to Mr. B., and when Pamela declines to give it, Lady Davers attempts to box her on the ear. Mrs. Jewkes intervenes and starts to escort Pamela out of the room, but Jackey blocks the door. Pamela, frightened of Jackey's sword, flies to the arms of Lady Davers, who takes pity on her and begins to speak to her more reasonably. Soon, however, when Pamela declares herself "as much marry'd as your Ladyship," Lady Davers becomes aggressive again. Pamela speaks through the window to Mrs. Jewkes, dispatching her to send the chariot to Mr. B. to apprise him of the situation. When Lady Davers demands that Pamela confess to being a fallen woman, Pamela notices that she could easily jump out the window and make a run for it, and when Lady Davers's back is turned, she does so. Colbrand is on hand to defend Pamela from Lady Davers's servants, and they run to the chariot, in which Robin drives them to Sir Simon's residence.

Upon her arrival, Pamela finds that Mr. B. is angry with her for her lateness, but he immediately relents when she reveals who prevented her coming. Pamela relates the whole experience to the assembled company, who listen attentively. Then they sit down to whist, and the playing cards inspire Mr. B. to discourse on political philosophy and the responsibilities of the landed gentry. Over supper, Pamela resumes the tale of her encounter with Lady Davers, at the conclusion of

which Mr. B. offers an analysis of his sister's character, acknowledging the combative temperament he shares with her but crediting her with good qualities as well. After supper, there is a dance, and Sir Simon tells more dirty jokes when Pamela is his partner. Pamela and Mr. B. return home, where Mrs. Jewkes recounts her negotiations with Lady Davers over the sleeping arrangements. Pamela thanks the housekeeper for her help during the ordeal.

### **“Tuesday Morning, the Sixth of [her] Happiness”**

(Note: Either Pamela or Richardson has lost track of the days, as Tuesday, the sixth day of her married life, has already come and gone. Modern editions generally do not correct the error, as the correction produces further inconsistencies.)

Lady Davers demands entry into the newlyweds' bedroom before they have risen. Mr. B. lets them in, in order to show that he is not ashamed of his wife. Pamela hides under the blankets and Mr. B., once having proved his point, forcibly removes Lady Davers to her own room. Pamela, thoroughly rattled, is reluctant to join Mr. B. and his sister for breakfast. The Squire exempts her, and they go on to discuss how Pamela ought to conduct herself around Lady Davers. Pamela is inclined to prostrate herself before the lady and beg her indulgence, but Mr. B. rejects this plan as unworthy groveling.

Later, Mr. B. visits Pamela in her closet and asks her to come down to dinner. She is again reluctant, and while they are discussing Lady Davers's behavior, the lady herself appears and makes a scene, complaining that she is being “shunn'd and avoided” by her own brother. Mr. B. makes a stand for his right to choose his wife without reference to his family's social aspirations. Lady Davers makes a dark reference to Mr. B.'s “Italian Duel,” prompting Mr. B. to order her out of the house, crying, “I renounce you, and all Relation to you.” Pamela intercedes with Mr. B. on Lady Davers's behalf and then begs forgiveness of Lady Davers. The lady resents Pamela's presumption and compels Mr. B. to explain all the circumstances of the wedding, which explanation causes her to fear that the connection is legitimate. The argument descends into insults and professions of dudgeon over insults, until Pamela intervenes and asks Mr. B. not to antagonize his sister. Lady Davers walks off, declaring her intention to leave the house and never see its owner again.

Mr. B. and Pamela go down to dinner, and Mr. B. invites Lady Davers to dine before she leaves. She relents at first but balks when she discovers Pamela at the table. Jackey interposes with an appeal to common civility, and Lady Davers gradually cooperates, though she continues to register complaints. As the meal proceeds, fellow-feeling inevitably increases. Lady Davers recovers her appetite by degrees, and at the end of the meal, Mr. B. invites her to accompany them to Bedfordshire. They argue about seating arrangements for traveling there, and Pamela excuses herself from the room. As she is withdrawing, however, Lady Davers says to her, “Thou'lt hold him, as long as any body can, I see that!—Poor Sally Godfrey never had half the Interest in him, I'll assure you!” Mr. B. becomes suddenly angry and detains Pamela. He acknowledges that Lady Davers has now leveled two charges at him, and he addresses each in turn. Regarding the accusation that he is a dueler, he explains that he once fought an Italian nobleman who arranged for the assassination of Mr. B.'s friend and that the nobleman died a month later of a fever, which was perhaps connected to the superficial wounds he had sustained

in the confrontation with Mr. B. Regarding his association with Sally Godfrey, he recalls a young woman he met during his college years, whose social-climbing mother put her irresponsibly in Mr. B.'s way, to what effect he does not specify. Mr. B. then dismisses Pamela, saying that he would have made these confessions in due time without Lady Davers's forcing him into it.

Lady Davers, seized with remorse, detains Pamela because she intends to perform an act of contrition. Mr. B., however, will not stay for it and stalks off into the garden in a rage. Lady Davers embraces Pamela, weeping, and grants that Pamela is "very good in the main," though she continues to wish that Pamela had not married Mr. B. Together the women go into the garden to seek him. There, Mr. B. repulses both his sister and his wife. He declares that he never wants to see Lady Davers again, and he rebukes Pamela savagely for having approached him during his fit of temper. The two women strive to calm him, with Lady Davers apologizing for her remark about Sally Godfrey. Finally, Mr. B. forgives both of them and declares them "the two dearest Creatures I have in the World."

Later, Mr. B. and Lady Davers sup with the neighbors, leaving Pamela alone for the evening. She spends her time writing and chatting with Mrs. Jewkes and Lady Davers's waiting-maid. Mr. B. and Lady Davers return, and the lady reveals that the neighbors' praises of Pamela have done much to soften her opinion toward her brother's wife. She wishes Pamela joy of her marriage, and Jackey apologizes for his previous behavior. They all discuss the afternoon blow-up, with Mr. B. acknowledging the quickness of his temper. For future reference, he explains that it will always be counterproductive for Pamela to oppose him while he is angry.

Mr. B. then discourses on the faults of temper to which the upper classes are prone. They are spoiled in childhood and thereby become insolent and perverse. When two members of this class marry each other, neither has learned how to yield to the other, and misery is usually the result. Pamela, not having been born into the upper class, will naturally be able to perform the crucial yielding function in this marriage. He goes on to describe further qualities of the desirable wife, including but not limited to the ability to "draw a kind Veil over [his] Faults" and to make him "morally sure, that she preferr'd [him] to all Men." When Pamela returns to her closet, she draws up a list of the rules she has derived from "this awful lecture." To several of the rules she supplies commentary, the tone of which is apparent in the following example: "19. Few marry'd Persons behave as he likes!—Let me ponder this with Awe and Improvement." From resentment, however, Pamela passes again to inquisitiveness, as she acknowledges that the case of Sally Godfrey "has given me a Curiosity that is not quite so pretty in me."

## **Overall Analysis**

In this portion of the journal, Pamela confronts two formidable challenges: social snobbery, which Lady Davers exemplifies, and the gradually emerging truth about Mr. B.'s dissolute past. Pamela will not have achieved complete fulfillment until she has consolidated her new social role and come to terms with the good and the bad about the man she has married.

During the episode of her browbeating at the hands of Lady Davers, Pamela finds herself in a familiar situation: captivity. Nor is her involuntary detention the only feature this encounter shares with Pamela's long Lincolnshire nightmare. As Donovan observes, "The scene [with Lady

Davers] is, in fact, a sort of epitome of the novel, at least insofar as it contains all the essential ingredients: the same arbitrary limitation of Pamela's freedom of choice, the same (ludicrous) threats of violence, the same fundamental opposition of wills, and the same kinds of skills displayed in Pamela's successful defense." Those skills are social in nature; the relentlessly oppositional tone of the encounter can tend to obscure the degree to which Pamela, who does get her shots in and could with justification burn all bridges with her adversary, in fact acts the part of successful diplomatist.

Pamela's strategy is to behave more like a lady than does Lady Davers, who is to the manner born. Due to Lady Davers's belief that Pamela is a tart and a mistress, however, Pamela's assumption of refinement carries with it the risk of appearing trashy. Thus, she adorns herself with the trimmings of genteel femininity -- gloves and a fan -- only to have Lady Davers tauntingly pull off one of the gloves and reveal what she seizes on as the most egregious mark of pretension, Pamela's wedding ring (or her pretend wedding ring, as Lady Davers would have it). Pamela meant to keep the ring under wraps, of course, because she and Mr. B. have not yet formally announced their marriage. Lady Davers, noticing Pamela's reluctance to declare herself married to Mr. B., forces the issue by asking Pamela to pour a glass of wine for her; this seemingly normal request involves a menial task, the performance of which would be degrading to the position Pamela now holds. Her refusal invites Lady Davers to ask point-blank whether Pamela considers herself married, and at this point Pamela can no longer justify ducking the question. Lady Davers outmaneuvers Pamela in this round, as far as the strategic manipulation of social niceties is concerned; overall, however, Pamela bests her opponent simply by acting more civilized (admittedly, not a high bar to clear), and her reward will be Lady Davers's readiness to accept her as an ally the next day. Such reconciliation has been Pamela's ultimate goal all along. Mrs. Jewkes has encouraged her to "put on an Air as Mistress of the House" and steamroll the new sister-in-law; Pamela, however, knows that she must strive to win over Lady Davers, lest she gain a reputation as a usurper and an arriviste.

One may question, however, whether Pamela surrenders too much of her dignity and verve in order to ingratiate herself with her new family. In the second entry for Tuesday, her recurrent impulse to abase herself before Lady Davers looks bad, and her deference to Mr. B.'s opinion that such a course of action would degrade her may, paradoxically, look worse. Later, the Squire's lecture on the conduct he desires in a wife brings to the fore the issue of how much deference the spouses owe each other: as the list of rules that she derives from this disquisition makes clear, Pamela must now adopt her husband's guidelines in dinner dress, time of rising, entertainment of guests, and so on. Rule 23, "That a Woman gives her Husband Reason to think she prefers him before all Men," seems particularly nervy, given what Pamela has just learned about Mr. B.'s own wandering preferences. His serving her with a set of terms inevitably recalls the "naughty Articles" by which he sought to make her his consenting mistress, and Pamela's marginal notes recall her written refusal of the earlier contract. The difference is that her defiance now is strictly private; she has no legal existence apart from her husband, and she must keep her back talk to herself.

The new articles are not all bad, however. Rule 21, "That Love before Marriage is absolutely

necessary,” at least indicates Mr. B.’s intention of being a benevolent autocrat. Rule 48, “That a Husband who expects all this, is to be incapable of returning Insult for Obligation, or Evil for Good; and ought not to abridge her of any Privilege of her Sex,” suggests a certain principle of reciprocity, even if the requirement of unconditional complaisance still binds the wife and not the husband. The sexism of Mr. B.’s guidelines, while significant, should not be exaggerated: he married Pamela in full knowledge of her ability to mix obedience with pluck, and while her current station will require her to demonstrate more of the former than the latter, what he desires is restraint, not repression. As Christianity preaches both meekness and revolution, Mr. B.’s ideal marriage would be a state of dynamic balance.

## **Summary and Analysis of Pamela’s Journal: The 7th Day of her Happiness to the 14<sup>th</sup> day**

### **Summary of Pamela’s Journal: The 7th Day of her Happiness to the 14<sup>th</sup> day “Wednesday, the Seventh”**

Pamela visits Lady Davers in the morning, and they discuss the trials Pamela experienced before marriage. They then discuss Mr. B.’s character, with Lady Davers enumerating his virtues and faults: she says that “he is noble in his Spirit; hates little dirty Actions; he delights in doing Good: But does not pass over a wilful Fault easily. He is wise, prudent, sober, and magnanimous; and will not tell a Lye, nor disguise his Faults.” Pamela says she anticipates that “it will not be an easy Task to behave unexceptionably to him: For he is very nice and delicate in his Notions.”

Lady Davers asks to see Pamela’s journal, saying that she will love Pamela more if the journal convinces her that the marriage is no more than a suitable reward for Pamela’s virtue. She then inquires into the character of Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, and Pamela tells the story of her brothers’ plunging their parents into debt and Mr. Andrews’s failing as a schoolmaster. Pamela praises her parents’ honest, cheerful poverty and their success in educating their daughter in virtue. Lady Davers professes herself quite won over. Pamela refrains from asking her about Sally Godfrey, though she remains intensely curious.

Lady Davers intends to leave for home the next morning, and Mr. B. intends to leave with Pamela for Bedfordshire.

### **Wednesday Night**

The neighbors come for supper. Pamela distributes the money Mr. B. gave her for the servants, and Mrs. Jewkes begs Pamela’s forgiveness for her treatment of her.

### **Saturday**

They arrive at the Bedfordshire estate at noon on Friday. The servants gather to witness the homecoming, and Mr. B. forgives all the servants who applied to Lady Davers. Pamela tours the house and in every room, she thanks God for the way things have turned out. She thanks Mr. Longman for having supplied her with the writing materials that have been so instrumental in securing her happiness. When Mr. B. puts the fate of John Arnold in her hands, she forgives the

footman and reinstates him.

Mr. B. arranges with Mr. Longman to have Mr. Andrews manage the estate in Kent. He then bestows on Pamela two hundred guineas for distribution among the servants as favors on the wedding. Mr. Longman expresses his wish that the Squire and his wife will produce an heir within the year. Pamela and Mr. B. meet with the maidservants, doling out guineas, and then with the manservants, though John Arnold is too ashamed to come until they call for him. Mr. B. takes Pamela upstairs and gives her possession of his mother's dressing room, jewelry, books, and other desirables.

## **Sunday Night**

Pamela spends Sunday in prayer and meditation. In the evening, she walks with Mr. B. in the garden, which Pamela judges smaller but better cultivated than the garden in Lincolnshire.

## **Monday**

Pamela, with help from her husband, selects materials for her new clothes. Mr. B. singles out "a white flower'd with Gold most richly," which has a bridal feel, and determines that Pamela should make her first public appearance in it on Sunday.

Pamela directs her parents, to whom she has addressed all her journal, to get an account of all their debts so that Mr. B. can discharge them. She also desires a list of the deserving poor in her parents' neighborhood so that she can bestow alms on them.

## **Wednesday Evening**

On Tuesday morning, Mr. B. goes riding and returns for dinner with Mr. Martin, Mr. Arthur, Mr. Brooks, and Mr. Chambers. He recounts his visit to Mr. Arthur's house, during which Mrs. Arthur expressed her eagerness to visit Pamela with all the neighboring ladies. Pamela descends to dinner, and Mr. B. presents her to the company. Mr. Martin makes several cynical jokes about the marital state, and Mr. Brooks congratulates Mr. B. for having found a wife who is "most accomplished . . . as well in her Behaviour and Wit, as in her Person," to which Mr. B. responds that "her Person made me her Lover; but her Mind made her my Wife." After dinner, the gentlemen leave, promising to bring their wives to visit Pamela.

Pamela acknowledges a letter from her father in which he agrees to Mr. B.'s plan of establishing him as the manager of the estate in Kent. The debts have turned out to be less steep than Pamela anticipated. Pamela tells her father that should cease all "Slavish Business," that is, menial labor.

## **Overall Analysis**

Pamela's triumphant homecoming in Bedfordshire represents the culmination of her fairy-tale transformation; as Doody observes, the jubilant welcome Pamela receives from the servants who once bade her farewell in sorrow is a reversal right out of the folk-tale tradition. On a more mundane level, this portion of the journal sees Pamela consolidate her new ascendancy over her former colleagues by dispensing monetary favors and interceding for the servants who defected



to her during the time of her persecution.

Another significant reversal in Bedfordshire is that of Pamela's attitude toward fine clothes. Whereas previously she insisted on humble attire and resisted all attempts by Mr. B. to influence her sartorial choices, now she accepts the remnants of his mother's wardrobe and allows him to select for her numerous rich garments, including a dress made of "white [fabric] flower'd with Gold most richly." Now that her position with respect to Mr. B. is one of her own choosing and one that she can occupy with dignity, the clothes that once seemed dishonorable can function, no less than her beloved country clothes, as marks of her identity and integrity. She will attend church on Sunday in the white-and-gold dress, finally making the great public appearance as Mrs. B. that she could not make at her wedding due to the Squire's preference for a private ceremony.

Mr. B.'s handing down of his late mother's clothing signifies not only a transformation but also an important continuity. The installation of Pamela, who credits Lady B. with having completed her moral formation, in the family seat of Bedfordshire amounts to a renewal of the good Lady's principles, which her son previously betrayed through his exploitation of his dependents. Mr. B. affirms his re-commitment to those principles when he reinstates the upper servants whom his mother once entrusted to him and whose service after her death seemed to portend continuity in values between her good rule and her son's household.

The downside of all this pious celebration and restoration of order, from the reader's point of view, is its effect on Pamela's writing. Beginning with Pamela's voluntary return to Lincolnshire, and especially once the crisis of Lady Davers's opposition has passed, Richardson puts his epistolary medium to a new use. The decline of real stressors in the latter half of the novel means a corresponding decline in Pamela's psychological turmoil, with the consequence that she writes less in the heat of the moment and makes fewer unwitting self-revelations. The time has passed for such telling perplexities as "I was loth to leave the House. Can you believe it?" and "Why can't I hate him?" She no longer has any reason to conceal her feelings from herself, so that instead of a window into her semi-articulate inner life, the letter/journal has become primarily an instrument of moral and theological rumination. Her comments on approaching the Bedfordshire house are representative: "When the Chariot enter'd the Courtyard, I was so strongly impress'd with the Favour and Mercies of God Almighty, on remembering how I was sent away the last time I saw this House; the Leave I took; the Dangers I had encounter'd; a poor cast-off Servant Girl; and now returning a joyful Wife, and the Mistress, thro' his Favour, of the noble House I was turn'd out of; that I was hardly able to support the Joy I felt in my Mind on the Occasion." The rhetoric suggesting an insupportable crisis of joy fails to impart any real psychological interest; the sentiments, while by no means out of character for Pamela, suffer from their utter propriety unto conventionality, so that Pamela herself, despite the intensity of the emotion she professes, appears relatively bloodless. Lacking the pressure of events, the heroine becomes less distinctly herself.

Perhaps Pamela at this point in the novel is not so much an authentic young woman as a crypto-Richardson, a mouthpiece and exemplar of the author's moral teachings. The people with whom she interacts from now on will have strangely uniform reactions to her, ringing the changes on Mrs. Jervis's tribute: "O my excellent Lady! . . . You are still the same good, pious, humble

Soul I knew you; and your Marriage has added to your Graces, as I hope it will to your Blessings.” Pamela is indeed “still the same” virtuous young woman; her personality has virtually stagnated, and the repeated assessments of it would be simply tiresome if the point were to analyze her psychology in a realistic way. Richardson seems, however, to have shifted his mode of characterization, and he is now concerned primarily with representing Pamela as a symbol of admirable womanhood. Stylistically, he reflects this shift by employing a high eulogistic strain that makes a strong contrast with the colloquial and naturalistic style that dominated the first half of the novel. In putting the epistolary medium to two such different uses, the spontaneous and personalized on one hand, and the formal and conventional on the other, Richardson shows considerable versatility. Few readers unfortunately, have been inclined to thank him for it.

## **Summary and Analysis of Pamela’s Journal: The 15th Day of her Happiness to the Editorial Conclusion**

### **Summary of Pamela’s Journal: The 15th Day of her Happiness to the Editorial Conclusion Thursday**

Pamela and Mr. B. set out on Thursday morning to have breakfast at a farmhouse with a renowned dairy. During breakfast, Mr. B. tells Pamela that the girls from a nearby boarding school often visit the farmhouse, and while they are discussing the matter, a carriage arrives with four little girls from the school. Among them is a Miss Goodwin toward whom Mr. B. shows particular interest. Miss Goodwin characterizes Mr. B. as her “own dear Uncle,” and Pamela infers that the girl is in fact Mr. B.’s daughter by Sally Godfrey. Pamela is delighted with the child and embraces her, saying, “[W]ill you love me?---Will you let me be your Aunt?” She tells Mr. B., however, that she continues to worry about the fate of Miss Goodwin’s mother, realizing how near her own fate came to resembling it. Pamela then expresses her wish of having Miss Goodwin come to live with them, though Mr. B. defers the question to another time.

Mr. B. describes Lady Davers’s role in providing for Miss Goodwin and keeping the secret from their parents, and then tells the story of his connection with Sally Godfrey. He met her while he was in college, before he was of age, and had easy access to her due to the manipulations of Sally’s mother, who planned to force him into marriage by exposing the pair in a compromising situation. Suspecting Sally of colluding in the plot, Mr. B. broke off the relationship before it had been consummated. This rejection, however, prompted Sally to demonstrate her devotion by throwing herself at Mr. B., thereby “mak[ing] herself quite guilty of a worse Fault, in order to clear herself of a lighter.” A clandestine amour ensued, the eventual result of which was a pregnancy. Mr. B. refused to marry Sally. Lady Davers took responsibility for the infant Miss Goodwin, eventually placing her in the boarding school, and Mr. B. settled on her enough money to give her an attractive dowry. Miss Goodwin knows nothing of her parents except that they are “a Gentleman and his Lady” related to Lady Davers.

When Pamela exhibits curiosity about the present condition of Sally, Mr. B. explains that she is in Jamaica, where she relocated after her difficulties in childbed had resolved her against a reversion to her former fault. Mr. B. had intended to persist in the dalliance, but Sally escaped

him and married someone in Jamaica. The Squire then goes into detail about his pursuit of his former mistress, how he tracked her through England, even to the point of boarding her ship, the embarkation of which he tried in vain to delay. Sally's adamant refusals caused him finally to give her up. He adds that Sally's husband in Jamaica, who believes her to be a young widow with a child by her first marriage, recently sent Miss Goodwin "a little Negro Boy" to wait on her, though the boy died of smallpox a month after arriving in England.

## **Monday Morning**

On Sunday morning, Pamela and Mr. B. attend church. With Pamela decked out in a gown "of White flower'd with Gold, and a rich Head-dress, and the Diamond Necklace, Ear-rings, &c.," they process down the aisle, attracting great interest and attention. After the service, a crowd forms on the church porch. Pamela collects the good wishes of Mrs. Arthur and Mrs. Brooks, and then summons John the footman to distribute alms among the begging poor. Mr. Martin approaches and lavishes compliments on Pamela, suggesting that she may succeed in reforming him as she reformed Mr. B.

In the afternoon Pamela and Mr. B. return to church and Mr. Martin ogles her throughout the service. Afterwards Mr. Arthur, Mr. Brooks, and Mr. Chambers bring their wives to meet Pamela, and Lady Towers joins them. All of the ladies compliment Pamela and approve Mr. B.'s choice in marriage. In the evening, Pamela and Mr. B. entertain Mr. Martin and his friend Mr. Dormer, and both the gentlemen bestow on Pamela yet more compliments. On Monday morning, twenty-five poor people arrive to accept Pamela's charity.

## **Tuesday**

After breakfast, Pamela walks with Mr. B. in the garden, and they shelter in the summerhouse during a rain shower. There he explains to her the measures he has recently taken to ensure that Pamela would be provided for if he were to die without producing an heir. Mr. B. is currently the last male of his line, and in case of his dying without a son, most of his estate would revert to another line (implicitly, that of Lady Davers), and Pamela would be at the mercy of the inheritors. He has accordingly arranged for Pamela's prosperity and independence in the event of his death. He makes one request of Pamela, that as a widow she would never marry Mr. Williams.

Once the rain has stopped they walk again in the garden, and Mr. B. admires the beauty of nature. He then sings to Pamela some pastoral verses of his own invention. Pamela enjoys the song but is upset over the intimations of mortality that Mr. B. has inspired with his talk of inheritance and death.

## **Friday**

On Thursday Pamela and Mr. B. entertain "almost all the neighbouring Gentry, and their good Ladies." Everyone admires Pamela's appearance, and Pamela resists her prideful impulses by reminding herself that all goodness comes from God. Pamela and Mr. B. receive the written compliments of Lady Davers, who plans to visit with her husband within two weeks. Pamela sends to her the writings that Lady Davers has requested. Pamela now wishes only for the

presence and blessings of her parents, who will set out for a visit on Tuesday morning. She looks forward to another visit to the farmhouse where she met Miss Goodwin, and she hopes to be able to form the girl's mind and character.

### **Editor's Conclusion**

Pamela discontinues her journal after the Friday entry. She receives her parents joyfully, and Mr. and Mrs. Andrews live long and comfortably on Mr. B.'s Kentish estate. They visit their daughter twice a year for two weeks at a time.

Pamela bears Mr. B. several children. Her marriage continues to be a happy one, especially as Mr. B. develops into a moral paragon under Pamela's influence. The ladies of the neighborhood continue to visit her, and her example improves them as well. Lady Davers also remains on good terms with her brother and his wife, and Miss Goodwin follows Pamela down the path of virtue, eventually marrying a decent and wealthy man.

The Editor goes on to derive several lessons from the characters and their experiences: Mr. B. provides the edifying spectacle of the reformed rake, Lady Davers that of "the Deformity of unreasonable Passion," Mr. Williams that of clerical duty impeded by a patron but rewarded by providence, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews that of honest poverty similarly rewarded, and so on. The Editor then discusses Pamela at some length, enumerating her virtues and recommending emulation of her character.

### **Overall Analysis**

The Sally Godfrey story, as Pamela acknowledges, shows what could have been Pamela's fate if she had been less committed to the preservation of her virtue. Perhaps surprisingly, Sally turns out not to have fulfilled the classic trajectory of the fallen woman: she has not, as Pamela feared, died in childbirth or in a brothel somewhere; she has moved on with her life and made at least as good a marriage in Jamaica as she was likely to have made before her entanglement with Mr. B. As if to compensate for the improbability of this no-harm-no-foul resolution, Richardson supplies the strange detail of the slave child who died of smallpox after being sent to England; with this device he deflects onto a minor character the fallout of Sally and Mr. B.'s bad behavior.

Their conduct has had positive consequences as well, however: Richardson presents Miss Goodwin as an unambiguously charming little girl who genuinely reciprocates Pamela's affections. The impulses that produced her may have been unrestrained, but they were in themselves productive. The novel as a whole is strongly pro-procreation, as for example are Mr. B. and Mr. Longman when they express their hopes of seeing children in the near future. Nor does reproduction figure simply as a biological fact or a means of generating "little Charmer[s]" like Miss Goodwin. In this case, it has a specific economic and social exigency, as Mr. B. reveals that he is the last male of his line and that therefore he and Pamela must produce an heir if the line is not to die out.

What with the happy expectation of progeny, the appearance of Miss Goodwin, and the reconciliation of Mr. B. with Lady Davers, the second half of the novel emphasizes ever more strongly the importance of blood ties and the family feeling that sustains them. Mr. B. turns out,

perhaps surprisingly, to be very much a family man. He has readily elucidated his admiration of his sister, even in the face of her serious annoyance of him, and the terms in which he has done so are striking: “She was a dutiful Daughter, is a good Wife; . . . and, I believe, never any Sister better loved a Brother, than she me.” He has admitted that their tendency to quarrel with each other arises from personality flaws that they both derived from their common upbringing, and to complete the sense of their affinity, he reveals that his single ally in his efforts to minimize the damage from the Sally Godfrey affair was Lady Davers. Even this superlatively difficult sibling, then, is dear to Mr. B. because of what appears to be his instinctive attachment to everything that he considers to belong to him.

Pamela, of course, has at least as strong a sense of family piety as Mr. B. has; she demonstrates it in her reverence for her parents, in her readiness to extend amnesty to Lady Davers, and in her eagerness (which Mr. B. in fact withstands) to take Miss Goodwin into the Bedfordshire household. For Richardson, as Jocelyn Harris observes, “the sign of the generous heart is the perfecting and widening of family ties.” This is not a novel in which the hero and heroine retire to the winners’ circle with a few supportive family members, leaving the objecting relatives in the outer darkness (and here one thinks again of Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*); rather, redemption touches the entire family. This sense of familial solidarity, Harris continues, “balances the spirit of rebellion against an unjust hierarchy which is present” in the novel but which is hardly the last word.

### **Check Your Progress**

#### **1. What is the significance of the emergence of Miss Goodwin near the end of the novel?**

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## **16.7 Themes**

### **The Nature of Virtue**

Richardson’s novel has often given the impression of defining “virtue” too narrowly and negatively, as the physical condition of virginity before marriage. The novel’s conception of virtue is actually more capacious than its detractors have allowed, however. To begin with, Pamela makes a sensible distinction between losing her virginity involuntarily and acquiescing in a seduction. Only the latter would be a transgression against sexual virtue. Moreover, almost the entire second half of the novel is taken up with the explication and praise of Pamela’s positive qualities of generosity and benevolence. Mr. B. values these qualities, and they have brought him to propose marriage: reading her journal, he has discovered her genuine goodwill toward him, particularly in her rejoicing over his escape from death by drowning. As a result, Pamela’s active goodness merits the “reward” of a happy marriage as much as her defense of her virginity.

## **The Integrity of the individual**

Richardson's fiction commonly portrays individuals struggling to balance incompatible demands on their integrity: Pamela, for instance, must either compromise her own sense of right or offend her Master, who deserves her obedience except insofar as he makes illicit demands on her. This highly conscientious servant and Christian must work scrupulously to defy her Master's will only to the degree that it is necessary to preserve her virtue; to do any less would be irreligious, while to do any more would be contumacious, and the successful balance of these conflicting claims represents the greatest expression of Pamela's personal integrity. Meanwhile, those modern readers who dismiss Pamela's defense of her virtue as fatally old-fashioned might consider the issue from the standpoint of the individual's right to self-determination. Pamela has a right to stand on her own principles, whatever they are, so that as so often in English literature, physical virginity stands in for individual morality and belief: no one, Squire or King, has the right to expect another person to violate the standards of her own conscience.

## **Class Politics**

One of the great social facts of Richardson's day was the intermingling of the aspirant middle class with the gentry and aristocracy. The eighteenth century was a golden age of social climbing and thereby of satire (primarily in poetry), but Richardson was the first novelist to turn his serious regard on class difference and class tension. Pamela's class status is ambiguous at the start of the novel. She is on good terms with the other Bedfordshire servants, and the pleasure she takes in their respect for her shows that she does not consider herself above them; her position as a lady's maid, however, has led to her acquiring refinements of education and manner that unfit her for the work of common servants: when she attempts to scour a plate, her soft hand develops a blister. Moreover, Richardson does some fudging with respect to her origins when he specifies that her father is an educated man who was not always a peasant but once ran a school.

If this hedging suggests latent class snobbery on Richardson's part, however, the novelist does not fail to insist that those who receive privileges under the system bear responsibilities also, and correspondingly those on the lower rungs of the ladder are entitled to claim rights of their superiors. Thus, in the early part of the novel, Pamela emphasizes that Mr. B., in harassing her, violates his duty to protect the social inferiors under his care; after his reformation in the middle of the novel, she repeatedly lauds the "Godlike Power" of doing good that is the special pleasure and burden of the wealthy. Whether Richardson's stress on the reciprocal obligations that characterize the harmonious social order expresses genuine concern for the working class, or whether it is simply an insidious justification of an inequitable power structure, is a matter for individual readers to decide.

## **Sexual Politics**

Sexual inequality was a common theme of eighteenth-century social commentators and political philosophers: certain religious groups were agitating for universal suffrage, John Locke argued for universal education, and the feminist Mary Astell decried the inequities of the marital state.

Though Richardson's decision to have Pamela fall in love with her would-be rapist has rankled many advocates of women's rights in recent years, he remains in some senses a feminist writer due to his sympathetic interest in the hopes and concerns of women. He allows Pamela to comment acerbically on the hoary theme of the sexual double standard: "those Things don't disgrace Men, that ruin poor Women, as the World goes." In addition, Sally Godfrey demonstrates the truth of this remark by going to great lengths (and a long distance) to avoid ruination after her connection with Mr. B., who comes through the episode comparatively unscathed.

Not only as regards extramarital activities but also as regards marriage itself, eighteenth-century society stacked the deck against women: a wife had no legal existence apart from her husband, and as Jocelyn Harris notes, Pamela in marrying Mr. B. commits herself irrevocably to a man whom she hardly knows and who has not been notable for either his placid temper or his steadfast monogamy; Pamela's private sarcasms after her marriage, then, register subtly Richardson's appropriate misgivings about matrimony as a reward for virtue. Perhaps above all, however, Richardson's sympathy for the feminine view of things emerges in his presentation of certain contrasts between the feminine and masculine psyches. Pamela's psychological subtlety counters Mr. B.'s simplicity, her emotional refinement counters his crudity, and her perceptiveness defeats his callousness, with the result that Mr. B. must give up his masculine, aggressive persona and embrace instead the civilizing feminine values of his new wife.

## **Psychology and the Self**

In composing *Pamela*, Richardson wanted to explore human psychology in ways that no other writer had. His innovative narrative method, in which Pamela records her thoughts as they occur to her and soon after the events that have inspired them, he called "writing to the moment"; his goal was to convey "those lively and delicate Impressions, which Things Present are known to make upon the Minds of those affected by them," on the theory that "in the Study of human Nature the Knowledge of those Apprehensions leads us farther into the Recesses of the human Mind, than the colder and more general Reflections suited to a continued . . . Narrative." The most profound psychological portrait, then, arises from the depiction, in the heat of the moment, of spontaneous and unfiltered thoughts.

Nevertheless, Richardson's eagerness to illuminate the "Recesses of the human Mind" is balanced by a sense of these mental recesses as private spaces that outsiders should not enter without permission.

Although the overt plot of the novel addresses Mr. B.'s efforts to invade the recesses of Pamela's physical person, the secondary plot in which she must defend the secrecy of her writings shows the Squire equally keen to intrude upon her inmost psyche. Beginning with the incident in Letter I when she reacts to Mr. B.'s sudden appearance by concealing her letter in her bosom, Pamela instinctively resists her Master's attempts to expose her private thoughts; as she says, "what one writes to one's Father and Mother, is not for every body." It is not until Mr. B. learns to respect both Pamela's body and her writings, relinquishing access to them except when she voluntarily offers it, that he becomes worthy of either physical or psychological intimacy with her.

## **Hypocrisy and Self - Knowledge**

Since the initial publication of *Pamela* in 1740, critics of Richardson's moralistic novel have accused its heroine of hypocrisy, charging that her ostensible virtue is simply a reverse-psychological ploy for attracting Mr. B. This criticism has a certain merit, in that Pamela does indeed turn out to be more positively disposed toward her Master than she has let on; in her defense, however, her misrepresentation of her feelings has not been deliberate, as she is quite the last person to figure out what her "treacherous, treacherous Heart" has felt. Pamela's difficulty in coming to know her own heart raises larger questions of the possibility of accurate disclosure: if Pamela cannot even tell herself the truth, then what chance is there that interpersonal communication will be any more transparent?

The issue crystallizes when, during her captivity in Lincolnshire, Pamela becomes of necessity almost compulsively suspicious of appearances. This understandable defense mechanism develops into a character flaw when it combines with her natural tendency toward pride and aloofness to prevent her reposing trust in Mr. B. when, finally, he deserves it. The lovers thus remain at cross-purposes when they should be coming together, and only Mr. B.'s persistence secures the union that Pamela's suspicions have jeopardized. While the novel, then, evinces skepticism toward the possibility of coming to know oneself or another fully, it balances that skepticism with an emphasis on the necessity of trusting to what cannot be fully known, lest all opportunities of fulfilling human relationships be lost.

## **Realism and Country Life**

Eighteenth-century literature tended to idealize the life of rustic simplicity that Pamela typifies. Dramatists were fond of rendering the tale of the licentious squire and the chaste maiden in a high romantic strain, and Margaret Anne Doody points out that Mr. B., when he displays Pamela to the neighbors as "my pretty Rustick," implicitly calls on the traditional identification of country lasses with natural beauty and pastoral innocence.

Richardson, however, disappoints these idyllic expectations by having Pamela tell her story in the "low" style that is realistically appropriate to her class, as well as through his generous incorporation of naturalistic details. Far from idealizing the countryside, Richardson recurs to the dirt in which Pamela conceals her writings and plants her horse beans. In selecting his imagery, Richardson favors not the wood nymphs and sentimental willows of pastoral romance but such homely items as Pamela's flannel, Mr. B.'s boiled chicken, the carp in the pond, the grass in the garden, the mould, a cake, and the shoes that Mrs. Jewkes periodically confiscates from Pamela. By refusing to compromise on the lowliness of his heroine and her surroundings, Richardson makes a statement that is both socially progressive and aesthetically radical. To discover dramatic significance, Richardson does not look to the great cities and the exemplars of public greatness who reside there; he maintains, rather, that much of equal or greater significance inheres in the private actions and passions of common people.

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## **16.8 Stylistic Devices**

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## **Setting**

The action takes place in England in the first half of the 18th Century in the counties of Bedfordshire and Lincolnshire. Bedford, the capital of Bedfordshire, is about forty-five miles north of London. Lincoln, the capital of Lincolnshire, is about thirty miles north of Bedford. Squire B. recounts incidents occurring during his travels in Italy, Germany, and Austria; but all present action in the novel takes place in England.

## **Narration and Structure**

Fifteen-year-old Pamela Andrews, the protagonist, tells the story in first-person point of view in (1) letters she writes to her parents and other characters and (2) in a journal in which she reports daily happenings as well as the contents of letters written to her. An omniscient narrator intrudes briefly to inform the reader of events outside the scope of Pamela's purview. The author presents the chapters in the form of letters or journal entries. The rising action and development of the conflict take place at Squire B.'s Bedfordshire estate. The conflict intensifies after Pamela is taken against her will to the squire's Lincolnshire estate. The conflict reaches its climax when Pamela is at an inn between Lincolnshire and Bedfordshire and receives a letter in which the squire declares his love for her. The long denouement of the story takes place mainly at the Lincolnshire estate after Pamela returns to the squire. The story concludes when the newlyweds return to the Bedfordshire estate. After the conclusion, the author presents observations intended to instruct the reader.

## **Advantages and Disadvantages of Epistolary Writing**

In *Pamela*, the central character reveals in her journal and letters the intimate details of her everyday life in language that is simple, straightforward, and conversational. This approach makes the novel easy to read and understand. Moreover, it creates a closeness with the reader, as if he or she were the recipient of the letters or the reader of the journal. There are obvious drawbacks to epistolary narration, however. As in other first-person accounts, the narrator cannot enter the minds of other characters (as in third-person omniscient narration). In addition, the narrator must be present for all the action or report it in accounts she receives secondhand. Finally, since the narrator writes her letters or journal entries after an event, the storytelling loses at least some of its air of immediacy. Nevertheless, Richardson's approach was popular with readers, and the novel sold out quickly.

## **Climax**

The climax occurs when the squire declares his love for Pamela in the letter he sends her after she leaves his Lincolnshire estate. A minor, or secondary, climax occurs when the squire's sister, Lady Davers, overcomes her upper-class pride and prejudice and accepts Pamela as her sister-in-law.

## **Check Your Progress**

## 1. What is the significance of setting? Consider the abduction of Pamela from Bedfordshire to Lincolnshire and her eventual return to Bedfordshire?

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### 16.9 Summary

*Pamela* is often credited with being the first English novel. Although the validity of this claim depends on the definition of the term novel, Richardson was clearly innovative in his concentration on a single action. Richardson was 50 years old when he wrote *Pamela*, but of his first 50 years little is known. His ancestors were of yeoman stock. His father, also Samuel, and his mother's father, Stephen Hall, became London tradesmen, and his father, after the death of his first wife, married Stephen's daughter, Elizabeth, in 1682. A temporary move of the Richardsons to Derbyshire accounts for the fact that the novelist was born in Mackworth. They returned to London when Richardson was 10. He had at best what he called "only Common School-Learning." The perceived inadequacy of his education was later to preoccupy him and some of his critics.

### 16.10 Key Terms

**Four Guineas:** The four guineas that **Pamela** receives from **Mr. B** after the death of **Lady B** symbolize the value of virtue and how no amount of material wealth is worth the spiritual price of virtue.

**Chapel:** **Mr. B's** disused family chapel symbolizes how he and his family have neglected religion.

**Dramatic Irony:** Dramatic irony is a plot device often used in theater, literature, film, and television to highlight the difference between a character's understanding of a given situation, and that of the audience.

### 16.11 Review Questions

1. Richardson said that he wanted to innovate an alternative to unrealistic romance novels, with their dependence on "the improbable and marvellous" and on the cheap satisfactions of wish fulfillment. Does *Pamela* constitute a real alternative in this respect? Why or why not?
2. What does Richardson suggest has been the effect of class on **Mr. B's** psychological makeup? What moral strengths or weaknesses has his upbringing imparted?

3. Discuss Richardson's handling of physical detail. What sorts of details does he include, and how do they contribute to our understanding of the characters and themes?
  4. How does Pamela's "low" style of speaking and writing affect our perceptions of her character and her story?
  5. Compare and contrast the characters of Mr. B.'s two housekeepers, Mrs. Jervis and Mrs. Jewkes.
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## 16.12 References

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