GOOD CONDUCT, FAMILY LIFE AND NERVOUS FIBRES:
THREE ASPECTS OF INTERIOR LIFE IN CLARISSA

STATEMENT

This thesis is all my own work and all sources have been acknowledged.

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by

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis is mainly oriented towards an analysis of Clarissa's interior experiences, which I see occurring on three main levels: the moral, the psychological and the physiological. There are therefore three main chapters analysing these levels, all with a view to discover the nature of Clarissa's experiences and actions. In this I do not to a large extent engage in the more usual critical activities of evaluating the effectiveness of literary devices, placing the novel in a context of literary history, or detecting themes, myths and images. What impressed me on first reading Clarissa was the utterly foreign, sometimes repellent, nature of the behaviour of the characters in it. The significance of the drama of personal conflict in the novel was thus lost on me. Some kind of a context for the actions of the characters had to be found before I could find them convincing and artistically effective.

I hope I have found some such context. This I sought for not necessarily in contemporary sources, but wherever it could be found. A basic evaluation of behaviour occurs in popular prejudice, in the conventional way people talk about their behaviour. This evaluation was to be found in conduct books, which could be strict or humane in their approach. These books only influence the behaviour of the
VI. 

characters in a superficial way. They mainly act according to their desires. Sometimes they do refer to established morality but only insofar as it justifies their behaviour. It is used in such a way that it inhibits them as little as possible.

The way to analyse in the most meaningful way how they did act seemed to me to derive from the writings of R. D. Laing. It was not necessary to tie Clarissa down to the theories of Laing. They were sufficiently flexible to allow of a general relevance without being exactly applicable in every particular. I hope that I have not drawn Laing out of a hat, so to speak, but that his theories seem naturally to illuminate how the characters interact.

Finally I have attempted to analyse Clarissa's feelings in terms of eighteenth-century physiology. This does not just involve the physiology of nerves and feelings which is often associated with sensibility and sentimentalism. It also involves how this system works when one's constitution breaks down through emotional stress and enters a pathological condition. It would hardly be useful to speculate what Clarissa's physical state would be in modern terms. It is only in contemporary terms that Richardson conceived her debilities. It is different in this case from the way it is in relation to family interactions, where the modern concepts are
sufficiently general to be useful. Moreover, the evidence in the novel for the latter is more explicit than that for her physiology.

To give a fuller appreciation of the novel I found it necessary to give some more attention to Lovelace than I gave in the first three chapters. After all, it is his evil doing which precipitates Clarissa's tragic fall.
The liberty of refusing, pretty miss, is denied you, because we are all sensible that the liberty of choosing, to every one's dislike, must follow. The vile wretch you have set your heart upon speaks this plainly to everybody, though you won't. He says you are his, and shall be his, and he will be the death of any man who robs him of his PROPERTY. So, Miss, we have a mind to try this point with him. My father, supposing he has the right of a father in his child, is absolutely determined not to be bullied out of that right. And what must that child be, who prefers the rake to a father?

James Harlowe, writing to his sister Clarissa, who resides in the same house.

In this chapter I intend to look into conduct books treating of subjects which are important in the novel Clarissa. The issues of ethics arising in the conflict between Clarissa and her family include the duty of filial obedience, the status of parental authority, and the principles of courtship and marriage. Through a kind of moral sleight-of-hand, the family may unscrupulously appeal to Clarissa's sense of duty to fulfil plans generated by their greed. The sincerity of Clarissa's morality can be appreciated by analysing the ethics espoused in conduct books. The connection between Richardson and conduct books has been well established. Catherine Hornbeak claims in a notable article that Richardson 'grew up in a milieu saturated with [the] standards, principles and shibboleths' of conduct books. The Puritanism which finds its expression in these books, as well as in Richardson's, is analysed by Cynthia Griffin Wolff in Samuel Richardson and the Eighteenth-Century Puritan Character. In The Early Masters of English Fiction, Alan Dugald McKillop mentions that three issues of Defoe's New Family Instructor and part of the first edition of Religious Courtship have been traced to Richardson's press. In Letter XXXVI of the second part of Pamela, Pamela notes proudly

that each household of the local poor has 'a Bible, a Common Prayer-Book and a Whole Duty of Man'.

My strategy in this chapter is to treat Clarissa as a conduct book, comparing the way it treats moral issues with the way they are treated in certain representative conduct books, namely The Whole Duty of Man, and Defoe's Family Instructor, Religious Courtship, and Conjugal Lewdness. I concede that Clarissa is a novel in the most meaningful sense of the term, as is demonstrated in Ian Watt's classic critical work, The Rise of the Novel. However, since Richardson states in his 'Author's Preface' that he intends to present, in Clarissa, a story with a moral, there are real reasons to discuss Clarissa at this elementary level. One can see, from a reading of the conduct books, how a girl like Clarissa may be socialized into having certain values which determine her actions. Since these values are often inadequate to the situations Clarissa meets with, she is precipitated into successive courses of compromise, casuistry, rebellion, isolation and, eventually, death. To search for the guiding and misleading principles behind Clarissa's actions is to make oneself aware of, not only rules of a high moral tone, but motives of a more selfish nature, buried underneath heaps of somewhat canting verbiage. The profusion of details in the million words of Clarissa

comprehends an authenticity to human experience complex enough to lend itself to this kind of examination. Clarissa's length, that is, is more than a vehicle for presenting the realistic surfaces of life.

An 'ingenious Gentleman' excerpted from Clarissa enough rules in the form of maxims to fill 130 pages of A Collection of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions and Reflexions, Contained in the Histories of Pamela, Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison (1755). In this form, they were divested of the life they possessed as an organic part of the whole novel. In this form, the presentation of a moral lesson retrogressed to the use of abstraction, as had been used as in The Whole Duty of Man, which at least presents its abstractions as part of a connected argument. To make a general point, one could say that conduct books basically employ two modes of presentation: one is the use of abstract reflection in an organized argument; the other is the use of a story, whether as an anecdote, dialogue, letter, or straight narrative. The anonymously written Whole Duty of Man and Jeremy Taylor's Holy Living employ the former mode. An example of a median between the two modes is Defoe's Conjugal Lewdness, which mixes prose argument with short anecdotes ostensibly from his own immediate knowledge. Defoe's Religious

5. The same collection had already appeared in the 4th ed. (1751) of Clarissa, where Richardson had called the unnamed moral enthusiast an 'ingenious Gentleman' (Vol. I, p. ix).
Courtship and Family Instructor are mainly in extended dialogue form, and possess a dramatic strength despite their heavily didactic purposes and content. Clarissa very definitely uses the latter mode of presentation suggested above. There is a didactic content, but one has to separate it consciously from its organic place in the narrative.

The more an author uses drama and narrative to get across a moral, the more likely is it that his conduct book will reflect the realities of life, and the less easy he will find it to make hard and fast rules about morality. This formula does not work with the certainty of a natural law in all cases, but it works in the cases of the books I have mentioned. Thus we see that the conventional rules of The Whole Duty of Man are bent in Defoe's conduct books, and strained to breaking point in Clarissa. While Clarissa tries to guide herself by the principles of conduct books, her family must be selective in respect of these principles because of their worldly motives, most of which are inconsistent with the rules of good conduct.

In order to consider the rules of conduct relevant to the situation facing Clarissa, we must first make an analysis of this situation. We must take notice that Clarissa's 'friends' (her family) have prevailed on each other to be unanimous in the decision that she should marry Solmes, an odious and miserly
man whom Clarissa blames for the persecutions she suffers, because he refuses to withdraw his suit for her hand. She has refused to marry several other suitors whom her family has suggested. The family is afraid she will marry the aristocratic rake Lovelace, though James and Arabella's fears are more complicated than those of the rest of the family, who simply think that Lovelace is unsuitable. The fears of James and Arabella, and their consequent conspiratorial actions against Clarissa, are inspired by the danger that a marriage between Lovelace and Clarissa will reward the couple with the estates of the Harlowe uncles. However, if she marries Solmes, who is of a social standing comparable to that of the Harlowes, she will take with her only the grandfather's estate, which the brother and sister must be resigned to the loss of. Though Clarissa protests that she does not love Lovelace, she carries on a secret correspondence with him against parental orders, thinking that to break off the correspondence will provoke him into acts of violence against the family. Her two acts of disobedience, refusing to marry Solmes and corresponding with Lovelace, set in train the events leading to her annihilation. Clarissa does not regard these acts as in any way contradicting her image of herself as a striver after perfection.

The cardinal principle which Clarissa transgresses is that of obedience to one's parents. The dialogues
in the Family Instructor are horrifying in the absoluteness of power allowed to parents. Even if parents are in the wrong, they are to be obeyed. Children must sacrifice their independence since disobedience, even if justified, is a dangerous example to set.

Obedience of children to parents is a natural law; it is a first principle; neither humanity nor Christianity can subsist without it; nor can any defect in the conduct of the father discharge that duty. 6.

One is reminded of the selflessness of insects and animal herds which is necessary to the preservation of the species. The Harlowe family always represent the proposed marriage of Clarissa to Solmes as a matter of filial obedience. Mrs Howe, who has arranged a match for her daughter Anna, likes neither Clarissa's example of resistance nor the collusion between her and Anna. In attempting to thwart the correspondence between the girls, she defends the arbitrary powers of parents thus, as reported, or distorted, by Anna: 'Parents cannot do wrong; children cannot oppose, and be right.' 7. The Harlowe parents need to appeal to such a despotic authority to justify what they demand of Clarissa, since any lesser authority, for example one which might encompass the reasonableness of a parental command, would be insufficient for their

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purposes. The unreasonable or unjust demand must be seen to be reasonable and just, purely through its being the demand of a parent. The conduct book writers I have selected all grant despotic authority to parents, and their only concession to reasonableness is to beg parents to be mild. As parents are not obliged to be mild, these writers can only deplore the adverse results of a lack of mildness, since even they cannot oppose the 'natural law' of utter submission of child to parent.

One interesting aspect of Defoe's conduct books is that, though he never enunciates as a principle that parents can be in the wrong, his portrayals of their exercise of strictness without compromise, perhaps without humanity, demonstrate in a practical dramatic way the human disaster of authoritarian rigidity. The following reading of one of Defoe's conduct dramas is intended to emphasize how foolishly authority can be exercised. The situation in Vol. I of The Family Instructor is that the parents have just realized that they are permitting their children to grow up as unbelievers and pleasure-seekers. According to C. G. Wolff, this is as much the fault of the rich, worldly parents as it is the children's. The state of affairs has been suddenly brought home to the parents by the affecting ignorance of religion displayed by their little boy of six. When being told about God and the nature of prayer and hell,

he often bursts into tears which fill his parents with shame. The child is inspired with faith by fear and a few platitudes. The parents then decide to ensure that their grown-up son and daughter become Christians as well as the little boy. To achieve this, they employ constraints which the elder son and daughter are completely unused to. The theatre, the park, plays and romances are forbidden them, and they are sentenced to a life of dreary religious obeisances. In her own words, the daughter has 'a good collection of plays, all the French novels, all the modern poets, Boileau, Dacier and a great many more'.

She is graceless enough to be insolent with her mother in a quarrel about religion, with the result that the mother throws this fine collection into the fire. The elder son defends secular literature in a quarrel with his father.

Son: I cannot be without my plays; they are the study of the most accomplished gentlemen, and no man of sense is without them.
Father: No man of vice (you may say) is without them.

There is a relationship between this rejection of secular literature and Defoe's limiting of the extent of parental authority. If Defoe attacks secular literature, he should attack his own productions, like Moll Flanders or Roxana. Richardson

at least makes it explicit that for the sake of morality he is willing to meet pleasure half-way and write 'histories (or rather dramatic narratives)' with a moral. Pamela, in Letter LIII of Part Two, approves of plays that teach as well as delight. The father's stance on plays and romances in The Family Instructor may be Defoe's way of pandering to the Puritan distaste for them. In this way, a strict parent could not accuse him of deriving his desire for parental mildness from secular and irreligious tendencies.

Like the rejection of worldly literature, the explicit espousing of absolute parental authority as a natural law also puts puritan strictness at its ease. Thus Defoe can have it both ways: the explicit in his dialogues can be held up as exemplary while the drama itself implicitly contradicts it. A happy home is shown to be turned into a hotbed of strife, anger and recriminations. Friendly relations are destroyed by resentment. In the dialogues of Vol. I, Part III, the father sticks so closely to his principles that, when his elder son returns home after a life of military misfortunes and sexual dissipation, he refuses to see him, despite the son's repentance and terminal illness. This heartbreaking ending subversively appeals to the puritan reader's sense of pity at the same time as his sense of duty is lulled by the

11. Clarissa, 'Postscript'. 
abstract expression of strict rules. The pathetic ending is at odds with the general moralistic structure of the work. The Defoe who wrote such a successful piece of irony as *The Shortest-Way with the Dissenters* is obviously capable of the humane duplicity involved in this contradiction between the explicit and the implicit. The contradiction is a natural result of Defoe's ability to write stories which grow too complex for the original moral he intends to illustrate.¹²

In *The Family Instructor*, the father's refusal to recognize his children as separate human beings with a will of their own (though they are recognized as individual souls capable of salvation) leads to radical conflict with his daughter. After originally knuckling under to her parents' pressures, she sees a way of escape. Like the elder daughter in the film *Family Life*,¹³ she marries. The father opposes the match, considering the daughter 'guilty of an unpardonable fault', just as James Harloue Sr. considers Clarissa to be guilty of such a fault in wanting to marry Lovelace. The daughter returns to her old heathen courses after marriage. But she sickens, and, near death, is once again converted to religion. From then on, she leads a perfect Christian life, having made a splendid recovery.

This sincere conversion can be contrasted to

¹². The length and complexity of his stories could be a natural result of being paid by the word.
the conversion which Roxana's maid makes when death by drowning threatens her. Her later crimes make this conversion a mockery. The laws of existence for picar-esque characters apparently differ from those obeyed by characters in moral dialogues. (Defoe, not very convincingly, tries to affirm the moral aspect of Roxana by representing it as a warning against the evils of a life of crime.) However, if the daughter had gone the same way as Roxana's maid, then the puritan reader could have been persuaded that leniency toward children is wasted. Defoe creates a complete puritan world for the puritans, and shows that even in this context too much force is inconsistent with the human frailty of the unconverted. To quote a maxim extracted for the Collection of ... Sentiments, 'A Duty exacted with too much rigour, is often attended with fatal consequences.'

Defoe and Richardson, therefore, want parents to be aware of facts as well as law, of human beings as well as their religion. Since Richardson seriously expected Clarissa to change the behaviour of parents, he uses the power of the narrative to create emotions in his readers' hearts just as Defoe uses the dialogue.

To persuade people to leniency in administering the law is more important to them than to be thought to go to the extent of creating scepticism about the law itself, which they certainly do not want to do. The latter course cannot be tolerated as it suggests

14. P. 118.
that there is no basis for authority. The scepticism of Anna Howe is so strongly expressed that it must have been calculated to draw a gasp of indignant horror from readers.

AUTHORITY! what a full word is that in the mouth of a narrow-minded person, who happened to be born thirty years before one. 15.

If that narrow-minded person had not been born thirty years before one, one would not exist to complain: perhaps Richardson is indirectly alluding to the 'natural' aspect of the 'natural law' and creating an absurd argument. Clarissa calls the filial duty 'a duty prior to all other duties', 'anterior, as I may say, to [one's] very birth.' 16. Still, there is a great deal of force in the main point of Anna's argument, which implicitly demands that authority be justified by wisdom. A recalcitrant child could easily find comfort in Anna's expostulation. I mention here a thought such a child would have because Anna Howe specifically excludes it. Negation has a way of being positive if what is negated is glaring enough. Anna pulls her punches after deriding authority.

Of your uncles I speak; for, as to the parental authority, that ought to be sacred. But should not parents have reason for what they do? 17.

Richardson can take shelter behind Anna's hedging and qualifications, which do not modify the suggestiveness

17. See note 15.
of her arguments. After all, why should she bother to deride the small authority of an uncle? Richardson does not advocate scepticism, but gives the ammunition for those who want to be sceptical.

We must remember that the parents in Defoe's dialogues feel they are being cruel to be kind to their children, in their good intention to convert them. Also the Harlowe parents' desire to save Clarissa from Lovelace, being the only decent motivation they have, shows some care for Clarissa's welfare. In pointing out the woes of downtrodden children, one must take into account the protective and generous feelings of the parent. In the preface to *Familiar Letters*, Richardson says he 'has endeavoured to point out the duty of ... the parent, not as a person morose and sour, and hard to be pleased, but mild, indulgent, kind, and such an one as would rather govern by persuasion, than force.'

This view of the personality of the parent appears to make conduct books redundant. There is no need to write such a book for the perfect parent. And since these books maintain that imperfection in parents does not mar the obligation of their children toward them, parents may act how they like.

Even if parents have imperfections, the child as likely as not has no legitimate criteria for evaluating them.

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There is ordinarily such a pride and headiness in youth, that they cannot abide to submit to the counsels and directions of their elders, and therefore to shake them off, are willing to have them pass for the effects of dotage, when indeed they are the fruits of sobriety ... 19.

The child therefore has ulterior selfish motives in wanting to justify disobedience to parental commands. To be blameless, children must 'behave [themselves] toward [parents] with all humility and observance'. They 'must not on any pretence of infirmity in them despise or contemn them, either in outward behaviour, or so much as inwardly in their hearts.',20. As well as describing a child's contempt for his parents as either deceit or illusion, the Whole Duty is careful to state that real abuse still gives the child no case against his parents. Point 17 of Sunday XIV says that

no unkindness, no fault of the Parent, can acquit the child of his duty, but as St. Peter tells servants, I Peter ii 18, that they must be subject, not only to the good and gentle masters, but also to the froward: so certainly it belongs to children to perform duty, not only to the kind and virtuous, but even to the harshest, and wickedest Parent.

If this had not been stated explicitly, one would have thought that such a point of view could only be a reductio ad absurdum of the principle of filial obedience. Owing to this rule, it is unnecessary for a

20. Ibid.
child either to blame or excuse his parent by attributing parental harshness to dotage or infirmity.

Let us look at several examples of parental harshness, whether deriving from illness, dotage, or faults of character. In Part II of Vol. II of *The Family Instructor*, a father is said to beat his son so badly that the lad prefers jumping out of a first-floor window to remaining in his father's presence. One character in the dialogue discussing this says

I own the father is to be blamed, but the son is also inexcusable, and I am warmer upon that head, because I know the example is dangerous in its nature. 21.

Perhaps the son should have waited to be beaten to death: it is difficult to understand how the principle that one should suffer brutality willingly could be defended. Both characters in the dialogue agree that the father errs in mistaking his angry passions for the virtuous desire to correct the child. All they do is offer a useless tut-tutting and resign the child to an inevitable misery. The particular 'fault of the Parent' here (to use the words quoted above from the *Whole Duty*) is a proneness to anger. Nevertheless, his daughter looks on his anger in a pious and favourable light, purely because it resides in her father. To her brother, who has returned home after his beating, she says (without resentment, despite her father's ill usage of her as well),

Dear brother, our father's weakness should be our affliction, and may be instructing [in] many ways to us. God has ways to bring us to a sense of our duty, that we do not think of. 22.

Utilitarianism did not grow from such sentiments as these; though as a way of rationalizing pain, they are excellent. Such willing and knowledgeable submission is the mark of an adult, not of a dependent child requiring the guidance of a parent. And this, Defoe is implying, is what being young is: also a growing up to maturity. The natural father has failed to be mature himself, but this neither relieves the children of their duty to him, nor of their duty to grow up. While this opinion is a more reasonable view of filial obedience, the spirit of The Family Instructor in general does not convey this, and is overloaded with the praise and sanction of filial submission as a good in itself.

The view of absolute authority and submission in The Family Instructor also occurs in Religious Courtship, in which an irascible tyrant of a father tries to force his daughter to marry an irreligious man. The girl justifiably refuses, since a father does not have the power to marry off a daughter willy-nilly. 23. As a result, she suffers from her opposition to her father, because of his monumental anger. Again, Defoe shows a father doing anything he likes, as is

22. Ibid., p. 251.
23. This principle will be discussed later in this chapter.
his right, but also shows the bad effects of this. From then on, the girl lives in a state of depression, until at last her suitor gets religion and she may conscientiously marry him. Various relatives, more open-minded than the father, reason with him: amongst them there is no conspiracy against the daughter as there is against Clarissa.

The father certainly is not persuaded in the daughter's favour by the principle, espoused by his dying wife to her three daughters, that one should marry a Christian of one's own sect, not only for spiritual reasons but for the sake of family harmony and government. When his second daughter, a real beauty, is courted, he does not insist on religion, just as he has not insisted on it for the youngest. The difference is, she does not care either. Defoe uses the situation as a foil to that of the first daughter. After a while, the second daughter discovers her husband has concealed his real religion, Catholicism. Her religious principles may have been lax, but the most lackadaisical Anglican is intolerant of Catholicism (or was). The father can now blame himself for blighting her whole life. Without uniformity of faith, the second daughter complains,

we could not have a religious Family, all social Religion was lost; mutual Help and Assistance in Religion were wanting; publick worshipping God in the Family as a House, could not be set
19.

up; Education and Instruction of Children was all destroy'd; Example to Servants and Inferiors all spoil'd; nothing could be of Religion, but what was merely personal and retir'd. 24.

The problem of religious courtship, therefore, was not just one of conscientiousness, but also one of grave practical importance.

In Religious Courtship, just as in The Family Instructor, the principle of obedience in uncritical silence is supposedly to be illustrated. Yet Defoe shows us disobedience instead, as manifested in the resistance of the religious daughter and of the beaten boy to the harsh parental command. Also, the positive side of the principle is not favourably demonstrated, in an exemplary case where the child obeys the parent and good is seen to come of it. For, when a child does obey, e.g., the wife of the Catholic, misery is the result. Logically, Defoe should show that filial resistance is either justified or unjustified. If it is justified, then the uncompromising parent should be censurable, but Defoe is hesitant to take this view. If it is unjustified, then he should show the children obeying, but he shows them having apparent good reason to disobey. This mish-mash of principles is a faithful reflection of the moral actions in Defoe's dialogues. The plain solution to the quandary is that the children should obey and be seen to obey in the dialogue, but this

cannot be, since it opposes Defoe's ulterior motives of urging mildness of authority. The nearest approaches in the dialogues to the plain solution are the obedience of the Catholic's wife, and the suggestion that the beaten boy should have taken more beating. It can only be a matter of regret that Defoe did not dissent from the 'natural' legality of parents' authority and admit that children could have legitimate complaints. This would have been heterodox, but then at least he would have been making honest conclusions from the events in his dramas.

Now let us see how the relationships between the infirmities of age, the pride of youth, the disobedience of children and the wisdom of parental commands apply to Clarissa's correspondence with Lovelace. The correspondence was originally approved by the parents, since its purpose was to obtain travelling information from Lovelace for a cousin of the Harlowes going on a grand tour. It was only prohibited some time after the Rencounter between James and Lovelace. (The prohibition is reported in an undated letter by Clarissa written between 3 and 4 March.) The Rencounter gave the family an open reason to hate Lovelace, and this they were not able to do before, owing to his birth and deportment. The reviewer in the Gentleman's Magazine takes the traditional line:
It is certain that a lady of her prudence, and purity of mind, should have broke off all correspondence with Lovelace, the moment it was forbidden by her mother; for the necessity of continuing it, to prevent ill consequences ..., is apparently no more than a pretence; and a good intention does not justify an evil action. 25.

The parting aphorism is a pastiche of Clarissa's own style of discourse. Clarissa by her disobedient actions considers herself knowing better than her parents. If the correspondence, to her mind, is necessary to prevent violence, then it is also necessary to Lovelace in order to entice her away from home. After this is accomplished, she often laments over 'the sin of a prohibited correspondence!' Richardson is not content to leave the question there. Although Clarissa's sin here could be called one of the faults Richardson used to create humanity out of her perfection, he has Belford excuse Clarissa in the 'Conclusion'.

... Had [the family] trusted to a discretion which they owned she had never brought into question, she would have extricated them and herself. 26.

This hypothesis squares neither with the principle of authority nor with the events of the book. An absolute command prevented Clarissa from corresponding; and since Clarissa trusted to her discretion anyway and wound up disgraced and abducted, she demonstrably could not have 'extricated them and herself'. She is in the wrong on both counts.

Belford's hypothesis is evidence of Richardson's ambiguous moral pose in *Clarissa*, the same pose as Defoe took. There is no moral resolution of the quandary in which a child is placed when he has to obey an order he knows is unwise. Clarissa condemns her own disobedience; Belford condones it as a forgivable offense; and events prove it unwise. Thus her disobedience already has the status of fault on at least three levels before the primary principle of absolute parental authority is even referred to the wielders of that authority, and their exercise of it is characterized as wise or not. If the parents are proved to be unwise, then only wrong and no right has been proved on either side, the children's or the parents'. Advocates on behalf of either side have no decisive arguments. Using Richardson's correspondence with friends, Eaves and Kimpel, in their chapter, 'Richardson's General Ideas', demonstrate his unwillingness to resolve the question firmly one way or another, though, without making a categorical ideological point of it, he did object to tyrannical parents and those who coerced their children to marry. 27.

Clarissa honestly tries to argue with her parents that her decisions are wise. Being unable to change their minds, especially in relation to marrying Solmes, she commits the sin of attributing an infirmity to

her father. The sin lies in the attribution itself, and is not excused by the contingent fact of her father's actual possession of an infirmity. This she does in a manner typical of the working of her personality.

My father, I have heard you say madam [her mother], was for years a very good-humoured gentleman, unobjectionable in person and manners. But the man proposed to me —. Forbear reflecting on your father. 28.

Clarissa then observes to her correspondent Anna with an air of injured incomprehension:

Did I, my dear, in what I have repeated, and I think they are the very words, reflect upon my father?

If the answer is not in the affirmative, then Clarissa is unaware of the full import of her words, and perhaps is also unaware of the deviousness of her own mind. From this example, one can see that part of the reason a child should not point out infirmities in his parents is that such an act is shabby and unworthy. Clarissa is also misguided in thinking her mother would side with her sex rather than the head of the family.

This example of Clarissa's opinion of her parents must be considered generally an unrepresentative one, even if we give Clarissa the benefit of the doubt in relation to the pejorative overtones of the example. In a particularly brilliant quarrel between Lovelace and Clarissa, 29. she taunts him into describing the

persecutions her family subjected her to. In this he is arguing against her willingness 'to think the best of [her] father'. Her aim, of course, is to elicit from him his interested motives in saving her from her own family. Clarissa also staunchly defends her parents from the adverse criticism of Anna Howe, whom she regards as partial to her in a misguided way. Her defence is double-edged.

One cannot oneself forbear to write or speak freely of those we love and honour, when grief from imagined hard treatment wrings the heart; but it goes against one to hear anyone else take the same liberties. 30.

Even to communicate details of the family's shoddy actions towards her, without 'free' comment, is to violate the family privacy in an unforgivable way. The first part of the preceding quotation - typically? - is a self-justification for complaining about one's own family to outsiders. Its clumsiness is an effect of the limitations inherent in the epistolary novel form. To make the convention seem realistic, Richardson has Anna Howe ask Clarissa for complete accounts of events in the family, though her right to these accounts is surely questionable. Clarissa is thus forced to maintain that the merciless exposure of family faults and behaviour is not a solecism on her own part.

Since there are degrees of 'love' and 'honour', Clarissa permits herself to be freer with her brother 30. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 132.
and sister than with her parents, using them to excuse her parents' inflexibility.

So they are to lose a son or conquer a daughter - the perversest and most ungrateful that ever parents had! This is the light [James] places things in ... 31.

The parents' actions are attributable to James's ultimatum that he will leave if Clarissa is not married off; therefore, in Clarissa's opinion, they are not to blame for resultant harshness. They have to bow to the wishes of their 'only son, more worth in the family account than several daughters', 32. as Clarissa describes him near the end. James's intransigence causes the family's final moves toward reconciliation to be delayed until after Clarissa's death. At the (long) time of dying she permits herself a few harsh words about the tardiness of her friends to reconcile with her. She blames all of them, no matter how much only one of them instigates her persecution, and despite her opinion that they are 'self-acquitted'. 33. She unfavourably compares the enquiries of the family with those of Morden. 34. Perhaps she regards this process of comparison as different in kind from the simple assertiveness of the filial censures of parents which are disapproved in the canons of good conduct.

When her request for a last blessing before death

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31. Ibid., p. 239.
32. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 362.
33. Ibid., p. 59.
34. Ibid., p. 254.
is answered by Uncle Harlowe with a query as to whether she is pregnant, she sees fit to upbraid her family, thereby employing a confident self-righteousness rather incongruous with her state of humiliation. She calls his query a 'cruel question, put by him in a shocking manner'. Perhaps Uncle Harlowe is being just as unmannerly as Morden is being when he makes observations to Anna Howe on the question of proof of rape. In the latter case, Anna objects only to Morden's crudity, but Clarissa, objecting to her uncle's inquisitiveness, is also fired by a just sense of her own innocence and 'unfeigned repentance'. The tone of Clarissa's letter is ambiguous: it can be read either as a complaint or a reproach. The family take umbrage at it as a reproach to them, and justly accuse Clarissa of not giving the question a direct answer. Such an answer would have done Clarissa more good than maintaining her abiding obsession with propriety, and commenting on how hurtful Uncle Harlowe was to ask the question. Her righteous behaviour helps to keep the family alienated from her, and is an indulgence which the domestic conduct books forbid to children.

Clarissa's superior wisdom seals her hard fate. Her decisions, to carry on prohibited correspondences with Lovelace and Anna Howe, and not to marry Solmes,

35. Ibid., p. 101.
36. Ibid., p. 269.
have a scrupulous maturity which the family's decisions, to fight Lovelace with his own spies, to protect Clarissa from Anna's corrupting advice, and to abuse their dignity by begging her to marry Solmes, do not have. It would be a compromise with a venal shallowness for her to submit to the wishes of her family. Shallowness is its own punishment. While, on the other hand, wisdom confers benefits, Richardson must not allow a child who wisely disobeys her parents to prosper. This ambivalent poetic injustice is a necessity for the didactic novelist. Clarissa's rebellion and defiance must have justification to occur at all, otherwise the reader would feel outrage at her behaviour. The reader would feel similarly outraged if rebellion and defiance were to go unpunished. There can be no forgiveness and no grace for such sins. To reduce the events in Clarissa to these elements makes it appear that Richardson is slavishly following the most stringent aspects of conventional morality, at the same time keeping Clarissa on her more enlightened paths of virtue, and never daring to challenge either.

It is a hollow victory for a harassed and persecuted child to know he has right on his side. The pious youngest daughter in Religious Courtship, opposing the match her father has arranged, contents herself with the maxim, 'No Father can command counter to God's command', although the command countered
by her father had been her mother's, and its justification lay in pragmatic questions of family government rather than in the laws of God. Before a child can win his own way, his disobedience is likely to lead to sanctions, such as the cutting off of the love and respect of the parent, or even disownment. In Religious Courtship, the father's reaction is to cast his youngest daughter off into a loveless, parentless limbo.

Then from this time forward you are no Relation of mine, any more than my cook maid. 38.

The effect of this on a sensitive young girl is depressing and disorienting to say the least, and in most instances of it in literature it is usually followed by an emotional and physical decline in the parent's victim. The daughter in The Family Instructor who refuses her father's match falls into a 'deep consumption' after her father angrily 'bade her go out of his house.'

It is true she did not go out of his house, but he neither eat nor drank with her, would not suffer her to come into the room where he was, he gave her neither necessaries nor the money to buy them. 39.

This treatment is similar to that meted out to Clarissa. Her father refuses to see her while she is confined in the house for as long as she persists in her disobedience; and after she escapes, most of her

38. Ibid., p. 30.
belongings and money, necessaries for her existence, are refused her. In the Familiar Letters, Letter CLXIX is by a man writing to his brother over the brother's daughter's marrying a penurious rake. He counsels his brother against disowning her in her current poverty.

Let this prevail upon you to allow her necessaries; for oh! 'tis a sad thing for meagre want to stare in the face a young creature used to fullest plenty! especially when it is aggravated by the reflection that it is all owing to her own rashness.

In the last resort children adhere to a hard parent because of their state of economic dependence on him. The parent may abuse the child's dependence to force his will upon the child. One of the most shocking things about Clarissa's final decline, in the opinion of Belford and Morden, is that she has to sell her clothes to live. Their shock, strangely, is not mitigated by the fact that Clarissa has refused loans from well-meaning friends nor by the fact that her clothes are ridiculously expensive. To them the Harlowes' neglect is the purest expression of an inexcusable lack of natural parental care, and friends do not enter into the matter. The Harlowe parents have gone to an extreme of disownment which the parents in Defoe's dialogues, who keep their fading daughters at home, have not gone to. The great expression of disownment is the curse Clarissa's
father puts upon her, 'that you may meet your punishment, both here and hereafter, by means of the very wretch in whom you have chosen to place your wicked confidence.'

'It is wished you may be seen a beggar along London streets.'

By the time of the curse, Clarissa is not just a recalcitrant child, but, in the opinion of her parents, a harlot who has disgraced her family. She could be forgiven, in her later mental decline, for the illusion that a curse which had operated so effectively here would continue to do so in the hereafter.

The parent who does not go to the extreme of eviction to demonstrate disownment sometimes casts aspersions on the legitimacy of the child, and this verbal abuse can be very cruel. The angry father of the Family Instructor engages in a bitter quarrel with his son, whom he will not permit to marry the girl he loves. After he tells the son something 'very dishonourable of his mother', the son professes that it will be 'a deliverance for him to escape from [the father's] inhumanity'. The father takes the quarrel to a higher plane by wishing that the son, who wants to travel to the East Indies, should go to the West Indies too. This curse and dismissal 'stabbed' the son to the heart. The parental curse, in the hands of Richardson and Defoe, is

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41. Ibid., p. 171.
43. Ibid., p. 248.
certainly very trenchantly presented, and it is shown as having a devasting effect on erring children. This gives children something to ponder over, while it also is a warning to parents not to use this sanction lightly. Whether it is more sincerely meant for children or parents is too deep a question to answer with certainty.

In the second part of Pamela, the doubting of one's children's parentage is a subject left at the level of domestic comedy. Sir Simon Darnford, whose fault of anger is caused by his infirmity of the gout, is not as feared by his children as other examples of fatherhood that have been discussed. His wife and children make allowances for his irascibility, and no feelings are truly hurt. His anger is tetchy and cranky, not cruel and hard-hearted. If his children should cross him when his gout gives him a twinge however, he denies their legitimacy and as well throws things at their heads. His own letter, Letter XXII, recounting a particular occasion when he lost his temper, omits what he said at the time. Polly Darnford's letter to Pamela, Letter XVI, quotes him as having called his children 'little bastards ... that were fathered upon him for his vexation'. The terminological inconsistency of his phrase is evidence that he does not really disown his children, whom he entertains with double entendres when he is in a good mood. His household fortunately
has only those superficial quarrels that purge the soul, and does not have those tragic disturbances that scar the souls in the Harlowe household and the households of Defoe's dialogues. The children's long drawn-out suffering in the latter is certainly a more exquisite punishment than the mercifully brief execution of disobedient children mentioned in the law of Moses and primly regurgitated in *The Whole Duty of Man*. The consumptive daughter in *The Family Instructor* has the macabre opinion that filial disobedience is still 'oftener confessed at the gallows than anywhere else'. There is certainly a great difference in viewpoint between people like the Darnfords with their mutual tolerance and the kind of person who can blandly talk about execution as a fitting mode of human transaction.

In this discussion of the rights and duties of parent and child, I should now like to become more specific and deal with the subject of courtship and marriage. Courtship is the only instance where the usual rules insisting on absolute obedience to parents do not apply. It is not the case that no rules apply; the rules are only modified. In short, the child should be able to refuse the parent's choice of a prospective mate, and the parent should be able to forbid the child to marry a partner he considers unsuitable. This liberality can come into conflict

44. Sunday XIV, point 14, p. 242.
with parental despotism. To amplify this theme, we must begin by considering the sort of marriage prescribed by the conduct books.

Point 17 of Sunday XV of the Whole Duty advises:

It should therefore be the care of every one that means to enter upon that state, to consider advisedly beforehand, and to choose such a person with whom they may have [a] spiritual friendship, that is, such a one as truly fears God. There are many false ends looked upon in the world: some marry for wealth, others for beauty, and generally they are only worldly respects that are at all considered, but certainly he that would marry as he ought, should contrive to make his marriage useful to those better ends of serving God, and saving his own soul; at least he must be sure it be no hindrance to them, and to that purpose the virtue of the person chosen is more conducing than all the wealth in the world, though I deny not but that a competency of that may be likewise considered.

This condensed and seminal text puts forward arguments which could be brought against Clarissa's marrying any of her proposed suitors. She cannot have a spiritual friendship with the atheist Wyerley; the only argument for marrying Solmes is wealth; one very apparent motive for marrying Lovelace is the beauty of his person. The ideals of marriage are far from her family's thoughts. On the Sunday before what is expected to be the final confrontation between Clarissa and her family on the subject of marriage with Solmes, she reflects: 'Nobody, it seems, will go to church today. No blessing to be expected perhaps on views so worldly, and in some so cruel'.

the extra effect of making genuine family devotions impossible.

On one Sunday at home Clarissa is visited by Dr. Lewen, who is reserved and unenthusiastic, and does not touch upon her courtship problem with the family. It is only afterwards that she learns that he has been given the impression by the rest of the family that she has taken the first steps toward marriage. All she has done is to have agreed to a meeting with Solmes. Dr. Lewen is of course aware that a marriage to Solmes can only be from the worst materialistic motives, so that Clarissa seems to have compromised her virtue by not living up to conduct book and prayer book principles of marriage. She realizes, with the chagrin created by being thought imperfect, that Lewen's reserve derives from disappointment in her. She is apparently about to set up an irreligious household.

**Conjugal Lewdness** is exclusively about bad marriages. Defoe sets up the theory that people who marry without loving each other are indulging, or being forced to indulge, in 'whoredom', as his sub-title indicates. He uses the word 'matrimony' as a normative term to indicate a happy marriage. People can be married without being in this state of matrimony, and such unhappy beings regard themselves as having been 'raped' or 'ravished'. The concepts of marriage in **Conjugal Lewdness** are germane

47. Ibid., pp. 363-366.
to Clarissa's resistance of suitors who would lead her into unhallowed marriages. To appreciate the importance of this, one has only to consider Richardson's parting shots concerning James and Bella, who make miserable marriages. The case of James is ironic in that he makes a marriage against the will of the family. _Conjugal Lewdness_ presents graphic examples of what happens to people who marry from improper motives, and generalizes about what one must avoid.

HOUSEHOLD Strife is a terrestrial Hell, at least, 'tis an Emblem of real Hell; ... 'tis a Grave from whence there is no return; nothing but the King of Terrors can open the Jayl. 48.

Only people who marry out of love can live in harmony and avoid the 'Life of Torment' that is the lot of those who take love lightly.

Defoe instances the case of a couple who marry in the expectation that they will grow to love each other. In their case, it does not come about. The wife heartily despises her husband, but she is already caught in the 'irreversible Decree' and nothing can be done to extricate her.

Love is the only Pilot of a married State; without it there is nothing but Danger in the Attempt, nothing but Ruin in the consequence. 49.

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49. Ibid., p. 119.
Optimism before a marriage that love will come about after it is therefore foolish and reckless. The desire to lie with a member of the opposite sex is also an insufficient reason to marry, as shown by the case of a man who, having married only to gratify his lust, offers his wife a garter to hang herself with after he is sexually satisfied. The most distressing story Defoe tells is that of an arranged marriage between two people of rank, in which the husband deliberately infects his wife with venereal disease on their wedding night and later boasts of it 'among his viler companions'. She dies within a year, 'a deplorable Object', and the husband, accused by her friends, 'answered with a kind of laugh, that he thought he had been cured'. Such negative instances as these go a long way toward suggesting the immorality of marriage without love, associating concepts of damnation with earthly unhappiness. An authoritarian personality, like Mr. Harlowe, who believes in ideals of duty in children, would not be impressed by Defoe, who places an unseemly importance on happiness instead of emphasizing the gratification to be gained from selfless surrender to all paternal commands.

Clarissa's resistance to Solmes is based not only on her lack of love for him, but on his proven indifference to whether he has her love or not. At an early stage, Anna reports to Clarissa a conversation

50. Ibid., p. 34.
in which Solmes said that

Fear and terror ... looked pretty in a bride as well as in a wife: and ... it should be his care to perpetuate the occasion for that fear, if he could not think he had the love. 51.

When Clarissa is being terrorized by her family, as Solmes either looks on or pretends to take her part, she observes:

He that can see a person whom he pretends to value, thus treated, and approve of it, must be capable of treating her thus himself. 52.

What the family see as the highest instance of her duty Clarissa sees merely as an invitation to a lifetime of fear and oppression. She and Anna seem to share Richardson's view of woman's lot in marriage. Though Richardson married twice himself, he shows us in Letter CXLVII of Familiar Letters a widow who is advised against re-marrying, since by experience she should have found marriage to be

all free-masonry, all empty hope, flashy, foolish, unworthy, impermanent, and, but for the law of nature, despicable.

These hard words are all the more remarkable in that they are to be found in a conduct book.

It is more reasonable to expect to find scorn of marriage in a book like Roxana. Roxana wonders that a man offering to divest her of her wealth and

52. Ibid., p. 383.
freedom should consider himself to be paying her the greatest compliment a woman can get. At least the intransigence of Clarissa's and Anna's stances on marriage (like that of Roxana) is qualified in its moral authority by its being the expression of particular characters in particular situations. There is no justification, of course, for a general discrediting of marriage, such as Anna seems to indulge in with some of her acerbic observations. She describes courtship as 'to be courted as princesses for a few weeks, in order to be treated as slaves for the rest of our lives.' Under such circumstances Anna and Clarissa can only consider courtship as a meaningless, hypocritical ritual, and the Harlowes are absurd when they suppose that they are offering real concessions to Clarissa, in allowing her easy stages in which to be reconciled to marrying Solmes. With no prospect of a marriage of love with Solmes, Clarissa cannot suffer herself to take any steps towards it.

Defoe would have agreed with Clarissa in this. In a rhetorical flourish, he professes to find problems, much like hers, incongruous 'among Christians', and wonders 'that in a country where we pretend to so much personal, as well as national Liberty, any such Violences could be offered, or at least be suffered.' Yet such violences were offered. It is usually parents who insist on the match. The

53. Ibid., p. 131.
54. Conjugal Lewdness, p. 166.
suitors in the conduct books are amenable to persuasion not to persist, Solmes being the eminent exception to this rule. The suitors in Religious Courtship and The Family Instructor, upon a hint from the girls that their presence is not appreciated, absent themselves. Their acquiescence is consonant with the right of a child to refuse a match. In line with this, Clarissa tells Bella she is asking only for the 'liberty of refusal, which belongs to my sex.' This right is acknowledged by Defoe and Richardson, but is sometimes hedged around by timid qualifying, as shown by the three I think's in this passage from Conjugal Lewdness.

The Limits of a Parent's Authority, in this case of Matrimony, either with Son or Daughter, I think, stands thus: The Negative, I think, is theirs, especially with a Daughter; but, I think, the Positive is the Children's. 56.

The argument to support this pleading is phrased more strongly.

... Nor can the Command of a Father or Mother bind her to marry the Man she cannot love, because it would be an unlawful Action, unjust and injurious both to the Man and to herself.

Some casuistry is needed to buttress such an argument, and it hinges mainly around the word 'unlawful', for the laws of matrimony, and the wedding service itself, require a free consent and a promise to love, as Defoe points out in Chapter VI. The almost absolute

authority of a parent has but one limitation, according to Defoe and the Whole Duty, and that is when the parent asks the child to do anything against the laws of God.

If any parent should be so wicked as to require his child to steal, to lie, or to do any unlawful thing, the child then offends not against his duty, although he disobey that command. 57.

Even here, the child must refuse to obey 'in a modest and respectful manner'. Clarissa certainly has such a manner in refusing Solmes, at least to begin with. Thus by the morality of the books, she is in the clear.

Her elopement is a different matter, of course. While children may refuse the parent's choice of a mate for them, the child does not have a free choice over the parent's veto. The Whole Duty gives a barbaric reason for this restriction, claiming that 'children are so much the goods, the possessions of their Parent, that they cannot, without a kind of theft, give away themselves without the allowance of those that have the right in them.' 58. At least Defoe is concerned for the child's welfare in upholding this right of the parents, warning against children's marrying their father's coachman, a book-keeper, a drunkard, a gamester, a rake, etc. The guidance of parents can be needed to ensure happiness in marriage. Elopement is a means of escaping the parental veto,

57. Whole Duty, Sunday XIV, point 14.
58. Sunday XIV, point 15.
and thus is to be disapproved. Clarissa pours scorn on 'those giddy girls, who have in the same hour, ... that they have fled from their chamber, presented themselves at the altar that is to witness to their giddy rashness.'\textsuperscript{59}. Perhaps it is to avoid being in this category that Clarissa lets the hour slip, so as not to catch at Lovelace's 'first word'. In this she refuses the advice of Anna Howe, who uses a revealingly different terminology to describe the 'giddiness' of creatures who 'in the same hour ... leap from a parent's window to a husband's bed'.\textsuperscript{60}

We can say that the morality of arranged and free marriages is clearly delineated in the conduct books, and by their means one can adjudge the issues at stake in the coercion the Harlowes exert on their hapless daughter. Their actions and Clarissa's comments on them are evidence of the depth of Richardson's knowledge of the morality involved in the life-long bondage of two people to each other, as enforced in the contemporary economic and religious system. Clarissa is abused when this morality is flouted by her parents' unjustified appeal to her duty. Clarissa knows there is no duty incumbent upon her to obey the command to marry for motives she 'despises'. Looking around her, she realizes that hers is the only family who asks for this kind of submission. She is asked to sacrifice all for the

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., p. 450.
sake of the rest of her family but certainly not for her own sake.

If you mean to show your duty and your obedience, Clary, you must show it in our way; not in your own. 61.

She is even dared to propose that the family's desires are not virtuous, which is a hard thing to suggest to a mother in an excited state of self-righteousness.

What therefore can be [your father's] motives, Clary Harlowe, in the earnest desire he has to see this treaty perfected; but the welfare and aggrandizement of his family ...? However slight such views as these may appear to you, Clary ... your father will be his own judge of what is, and what is not, likely to promote the good of his children. 62.

'Welfare and aggrandizement' is not love: there is no surer indication than this of the family's deviation from the most proper Christian notions, and even here the two terms are specious descriptions for an ambition and greed necessarily involving a callous indifference to Clarissa's emotions.

So extreme are the measures the family is prepared to use that the father plans to abase his authority by kneeling to Clarissa. The most that can be said for this measure is that it involves a curious species of logic. The abdication of his

61. Ibid., p. 78.
62. Ibid., p. 99.
position is supposed to shame Clarissa into doing wrong. Indeed, Clarissa, safe from her family in the clutches of Lovelace, reckons 'I had deserved annihilation had I suffered my father to kneel in vain.' 63 In surrendering to his wishes, Clarissa would have gone the way of Mrs. Howe and Mrs. Harlowe, who must maintain the virtue of such a surrender to avoid reflection on themselves.

The father by kneeling and the family by their aggressiveness are appealing to and trading on a moral quality praised to the hilt in the Whole Duty. 'Indeed none but the meek person hath the true enjoyment of any thing in the world.' 64. Clarissa is indignant when she speaks of the family's 'absolute dependence upon what they suppose to be a meekness in my temper.' 65. They mistake it for cowardice. There is no course for her but intran- sigence when she contemplates what they are leading her to.

I have to deal with people who govern themselves in their conduct to me, not by what is fit or decent, right or wrong, but what they think my temper will bear. 66.

The family, in other words, forsake virtue when they plot and fight against her unfairly.

The most significant aspect of the plotting of James and Bella is that it constitutes a usurpation

64. Sunday VI, point 16.
66. Ibid., p. 329.
of the authority of the father. They represent to him that their plans for Clarissa are his plans. The situation whereby the marriage of Clarissa and Lovelace will mean considerable financial loss to her siblings has been noted. Clarissa is perfectly aware of this, but when she tries to blame them in an encounter with her father, she is silenced.

They have a just concern for the honour of my family. 67.

To have acknowledged the truth of Clarissa's aspersions would have been an affront to his own power. James himself is put upon disowning avarice as his motive for coercing Clarissa, when she offers to make over her grandfather's estate (already in the trusteeship of her father) to him and Bella. 68. Owing to the knowledge of their avarice and to the experience of persecution inspired by them, Clarissa concludes that her absconding would serve their purposes just as well as marriage. 69. Indeed, after she leaves, the general gossip, according to Anna Howe, is that James and Bella were aiming for her to flee. 70. Clarissa has much evidence for thinking she is not in the true control of her parents, 'that I am given up to my brother and [Bella], by general consent.' 71. After her mother on one occasion tries to plead reasonably with her, Clarissa has

67. Ibid., p. 36.
68. Ibid., p. 306.
69. Ibid., p. 347.
70. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 4.
the mortification to hear her later making excuses to Bella, to satisfy Bella that she has done her best. While taking a turn in the garden, Clarissa hears her father 'wholly commit this matter', the matter of marrying off Clarissa, to her siblings.

James is certainly her worst enemy, as he has the most to lose and he has the best means of blackmailing the father into doing what he wants. James can appeal to his spotless moral record and his bravery in the Rencounter, and he can trade on his position as scion of the family. He convinces the father of Clarissa's undutifulness. It follows from this that to be lenient to Clarissa is to give in to vice. The father has some freedom in preventing some of James's more violent excesses, but he no longer has the freedom to back out, as James can then attack his turpitude and reproach him for a lack of authority. Also, James's threats, to leave for Edinburgh and never see the family again if the father should change his mind, are never challenged, though surely they amount to substantive insubordination where Clarissa's insubordination only exists in James's fantasy. With the formalities on his side, James can indulge in a violent self-righteous arrogance which none of the family has the strength to withstand. He is the true and prime offender against the principle.

72. Ibid., p. 104.
73. Ibid., p. 411.
of absolute parental authority and Clarissa is only the seeming one.

The Whole Duty of Man puts the case for harmony between siblings mildly:

Kindness and Love between Brethren and Sisters ought to be very firmly grounded in their hearts; if it be not, they will be of all others in most danger of disagreeing; for the continual conversation that is among them whilst they are at home in their father's house, will be apt to administer some occasion of jar. 74.

The degree of disagreement between Clarissa and her siblings is in a world of malice far away from the world of minor disagreements conceived in the Whole Duty.

One point which links Clarissa to conduct books, in their didactic role, is Clarissa's apparent and almost literary awareness of herself as an example to be followed. This involves a great degree of self-consciousness and self-evaluation, and an unhealthy concern for her own reputation. C. G. Wolff shows how Clarissa's painstaking examination of herself in search of spiritual faults was traditional among seventeenth-century Puritans. 75. After having eloped, it galls her deeply to admit (though Anna denies it in a reply) that she who once was an example is now a warning to young girls. 76. For Clarissa to disclaim supposing herself 'ever in the

74. Sunday XV, point 2.
76. Clarissa, Vol. II p. 73.
right', is merely to add a further merit to her multitude of merits. If she has a fault, such as eloping with a rake, this is owing to being 'tricked' out of herself, her real self not being responsible. She considers that her moral arrogance is qualified by the use of phrases like 'as I may say' or 'humbly presume'. When Anna professes to discern love for Lovelace in Clarissa's letters, she replies

> My conduct must then have a faulty appearance at least, and I will endeavour to rectify it ... I am sure you will excuse my desire of appearing ... the person I ought to be. 79.

In the posthumous letter to James, she says, 'Now you will forgive [your sister's] faults, both supposed and real!', 80.

One may find many more examples to use to debunk Clarissa in this fashion, but their inclusion here is intended to show the cracks in the wall of her obsession with perfection, through which one can see her innocence mixed with other qualities. Other characters in the novel sincerely appreciate her perfection. Anna praises her well and at length. 81. Even Lovelace, who began with a total lack of respect for her, at the end is calling Clarissa's 'the cause of virtue, and, as such, the cause of God'. 82. Such sentiments are authorially

78. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 47.
80. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 361.
81. For example, see Vol. II, pp. 281-2, and Vol. IV, pp. 490-510.
82. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 91.
meant to be taken seriously, though the latter one in form ironically recalls how Clarissa interpreted Solmes's blasphemous 'For God's sake' as an identification of his sake and God's.

Whether as a warning or as an example, Clarissa the character serves a moralizing purpose in the novel's function as a conduct book. The aspect in which Clarissa may be said to transcend conduct books lies in how Clarissa shows life resisting categorization according to facile moralities, although it certainly is a concern for morality that generates the dramatic conflict of the book. For a reader to see human failings in Clarissa, he must see the inadequacy of a 'moral' to be applied to the book, and regard her character as dramatically more viable for her possession of these failings. Dramatic credibility is an important part of a good conduct book, as it represents a deference to the intelligence of a reader. To preach a moral using insipid drama is an insult.

Defoe has this respect for his reader too. In proving love to be the basis of marriage, he does not merely allude to a religious contempt for wealth and to a virtuous rejection of sex, and then, in a self-righteous manner, expect his case to end. His dramatic proofs appeal to the utilitarian sense (if an anachronous word may be used), not to the desire to make virtuous gestures. He demonstrates how the failure to attend to
the central issues of affection and religious agreement destroys the harmony between people and creates misery. He relates every domestic issue, filial duty, marriage, fraternal affection, matrimonial affection, to the central question of happiness and harmony. In taking this line, Defoe presupposes that, if anyone does not care to conform to moral principles for the sake of conforming, at least everyone should find the matter of his own peace of mind of primary importance in determining his behaviour.

I have now finished my consideration of Clarissa's status as a conduct book and happily part company with it. The world of good conduct is a constricted universe. Its strictures are inhibiting rather than creative. They tell one what to do and then one regrets not having done it. What more can one do with them, unless, like Clarissa, we allow them to be an ever-present familiar devil? At this stage, we know some of the characters for what they are, at a basic puritan level, and next turn to examine their subtle strategies as means of human interaction. Where the moral drama creates moral indignation, the psychological drama creates sympathy, recognition, and alarm.
I feel good
Therefore I am good
Therefore everyone loves me.

I am good
You do not love me
Therefore you are bad. So I do not love you.

I am good
You love me
Therefore you are good. So I love you.

R. D. Laing: Knots.
The rules of good conduct are inadequate for the situations Clarissa meets with. There is no use in her appealing to the principles established by Defoe and *The Whole Duty of Man*, since they have no effect on a determined family who believe her sincerity is specious, and whose own sincerity she knows is specious. It is simply beyond question that her parents ought not to dictate what the rest of her life will be. It is only to quibble if one tries to discern any parental right in contemporary society that will mitigate the guilt of the Harlowes. In this melodrama they are engaged in a battle with Clarissa. Each side wants the fulfillment of its own desires, and goes to great lengths to get it.

Obviously, there are certain lengths to which the family cannot go. They cannot hold a wedding that is an absolute fraud, as that could eventually be challenged by Clarissa. They cannot confine her indefinitely, as their goals would be brought no closer. They must elicit from Clarissa some amount of free will in cooperating with them. They must persuade as well as coerce. Cynically they can appeal to her virtue to bring her around to her elders' way of thinking. They can trade on the emotional value of family relationships. In short, they can abuse her love and respect for them, and act as if her independence is inconsistent with these qualities.
Real decency is only somewhere in the background. As tools of the didactic novelist, the Harlowes are intended to demonstrate how not to behave, and in this they may be as unorthodox as imagination allows them to be. Still, I must not disown the preoccupation with orthodox morality in my previous chapter, even if it only provides a negative kind of characterization of the Harlowes' actions, in that their actions do not measure up to truly virtuous standards and rules. If moral rules expressed in the abstract have been appropriately deduced from certain real situations, it should be easy to apply them to other real, and fictive, situations. So inadequate is it to apply rules to the situation of the Harlowes that one is moved to ask whether there is some more significant way to describe their behaviour. Should we give up like Clarissa, as she cries, 'I cannot ... give this treatment a name!'?

In order to appreciate the inadequacy of rules, let us consider the interviews Clarissa has with her family on Tuesday 4th and Wednesday 5th April. These, well enough for the purposes of our present consideration, form a single dramatic action, in that they are the family's last, most determined effort at persuasion before Clarissa runs away with Lovelace. In these forty or so pages are encapsulated most of

the issues governing the family conflict. On learning of Solmes's agitation before the interview, Clarissa asks Aunt Hervey, 'Who is it, madam, that so reluctant an interview on both sides, is to please?' Aunt Hervey's declaration that it is the reluctant ones who will benefit hides the more likely possibility that it is only the Harlowe family who will benefit, through a land deal and through the pacification of James's rage. Clarissa's reluctance is increased when Aunt Hervey reveals that the meeting will be regarded as an 'advance' towards marriage and that Solmes will be regarded as an 'admirer'. This treachery from her family more than ever adversely predisposes Clarissa to meeting Solmes, which is an effect opposite to the softening-up which the family expected Aunt Hervey would bring about. The family's manipulative strategies in this interview are always miscalculated. When Clarissa is left alone with Solmes, he is too diffident to make any headway with her, and she blames him directly for harsh treatment she suffers from her family. Her opinions on this are corroborated by Antony's ill behaviour as he bursts in to persuade her to be more hospitable to Solmes. Seeking to mollify him, she blames his angry passions on James, who then enters to maintain family solidarity and to exonerate himself by vociferously insulting her. He hurts her shoulder and threatens her with disownment by the family.

2. Ibid.
After refreshing herself by bursting into tears in the garden, she learns of the unsuccessful dissent from the family's plans on the part of Aunt Hervey, Mrs Harlowe, Uncle Harlowe and Solmes himself, who all want to stop coercing her. Antony tries to bribe her with a threat of disinherition, yet when Clarissa, using a tactic involving similar material temptation, offers to make all claims she has to the family property over to James, James accuses her of making a 'spiteful construction' of his motives, though everybody knows his and the family's darling view of aspiring to be rich enough for a title. She begs audience with her father after he banishes her to Antony's, and her brother helps prevent this audience by tripping her 'flat on [her] face'. After a hiatus in the proceedings, Aunt Hervey announces that 'gentler means' will be tried, and Solmes tries in vain to read out a letter denouncing Lovelace's intentions towards her. Again thinking erroneously that she can employ tactics used by the family, Clarissa denounces Solmes for his neglect of his flesh and blood. She becomes so enraged at their warnings against Lovelace that she sees in the warnings only Solmes's interested motives in marrying her, and does not heed their obvious superficial truth. She mistakes her sense of injustice for wisdom, and believes Lovelace's previous denial of his stated opposition to marriage. She professes to 'know [her] own heart', saying her 'affections are
engaged'. By forcing Solmes onto her when they need only disaffect her from Lovelace, the family in effect are forcing Lovelace onto her. As Clarissa says,

But really great care should be taken by fathers and mothers, when they would have their daughters of their minds in these particulars, not to say things that shall necessitate the child, in honour and generosity, to take part with the man her friends are averse to. 3.[!]

James, by castigating both Clarissa and her aunt, invites the criticism of the father, who orders him to withdraw. Solmes kneels to beg mercy of Clarissa, who points out, to Solmes's inexpressible anger, that mercy to him is cruelty to herself. Clarissa tries to explain how no steps by the family, however mild, can induce her to marry Solmes. She refuses to be swayed into marriage for material motives. In self-defense she overstates her own case; in asserting her integrity she excludes the influence of others: in both cases to an unwise degree of self-assertiveness and self-reliance. She thinks she appreciates the situation in a disinterested fashion, though this just happens to coincide with her wishes; her ability to turn a sentence well blurs the distinction between true aphorisms and expressions of her desires. It is not completely ingenuous to say, 'Do not let one cause unite him [Lovelace] and me, and we shall not be united.'

3. Ibid., p. 403.
4. Ibid., p. 394.
This entire confrontation is the penultimate move in a chess game of surprising complexity and of many levels, and puts her in a precarious position. A series of mistakes and misrepresentations has created an explosive situation, after which the family as a unit ceases to exist, or, at the most, it survives in a degenerate form. Clarissa is necessary to its existence, no matter how much selfish members of it are willing to expel her, apparently for their own ends. Once she breaks the fundamental rule of remaining within the house, the game is forfeit. The moves in the game are all personal interactions, since the game is life, and thus played for stakes of absolute value. Clarissa is surrounded by forces destructive to her own kind of individuality, forces which she is impotent against, and which at times she does not recognize. Lovelace and the Harlowes play an equal part in the utter destruction of her spirit, though not her will. The family lay the groundwork for this aggression when Clarissa finds herself no longer in a position where she can give or receive affection, but in an emotional vacuum where her happiness is prostituted for the plans of others. Although on the surface the family can be seen as plotting against Clarissa, at the same time and at a more profound level they are depriving her of emotional sustenance upon which she used to depend. They alienate her from themselves, who are
the source of her well-being. They make conflicting demands on her: to be virtuous yet not to do virtuous things, to give respect to her parents yet not to expect any in return, to marry Solmes yet not necessarily to love him. They disconfirm her worth as a person by making their regard of her conditional on an intolerable and impossible act of compliance.

I should like to amplify these statements about Clarissa by considering the novel in relation to the psychological works of Laing, whose treatment of the family throws light on events in the Harlowe household. A psychological explanation is not the ultimate explanation, but only an explanation of one aspect of the novel. It has more to do with the novel's basis in life than with its conventions, although both of these are germane to the novel's aesthetics. There are certainly precedents for this kind of criticism of art, and even of Clarissa itself. Ian Watt says, in a blast of Freudian-derived terminology,

[Richardson] added to the already complex series of dualities embodied in the relationship of Lovelace and Clarissa quite another range of meanings which may be regarded as the ultimate and no doubt pathological expression of the dichotomization of the sexual roles in the realm of the unconscious. 5.

Watt then goes on to examine Lovelace's sadism and Clarissa's unconscious equation of love and death. Morris Golden, after enumerating instances of Lovelace's fantasies, charges him with being 'technically mad'.

58.

[Emphasis added.]6. But whereas Lovelace might be considered mad in a lunatic sense, Clarissa is mad in the sense that she is driven so through emotional and nervous exhaustion. And this is the kind of psychological phenomenon which Laing analyses, in the context of the family.

Laing's work had its origin in an examination of schizophrenia, which he claimed to be a label rather than a disease. He branched out, seeing a wider significance in schizophrenia than just its importance to mental patients. The behaviour of schizophrenics is one way of resolving stresses which everyone feels. Another resolution of the stresses is to be 'normal'. Clarissa feels these stresses within her family, but unlike the schizophrenic, she does not crack. Instead of adhering to the mental therapist's usual job of changing the behaviour of the patient from schizophrenic to normal, Laing decided also to analyse the experience of the patient, and found that the patient's behaviour had its own kind of validity as a response to his experience.7. While Clarissa's behaviour does not correspond to that of mental patients, her experience, what happens to her, certainly possesses great similarities. Her

adverse experiences in the Harlowe household are not of long enough duration to drive her to the extremity of madness. As Laing, Esterson and Cooper point out, it is the family who characterize the patient's behaviour as mad and even bad. The Harlowes regard Clarissa as 'perverse', 'disobedient' and 'unpersuadable', which are rather similar traits.

Peter Sedgwick summarizes succinctly the elements to look for in a typical schizophrenic's family. He denotes the family by the term 'Doublebind family', after one of the chief factors discovered to drive people to schizophrenia. As Laing tells us in *Self and Others*, the double bind was identified by Gregory Bateson and others, whose findings were published in 1956. To find oneself in a double bind a person has to be placed in two irreconcilable positions at once. This involves other people who place one in such a position, and they must do it over a long time (Clarissa's mistreatment at home lasting only one and a half months, and lasting two more months with Lovelace up to the rape) in order to establish a course of action by repetition. In this context, according to Bateson, a person receives a primary negative injunction. I could say that Clarissa is told she must not resist the will of her family, but this would be somewhat casuistical.

If she really loves Lovelace, which she does not admit, then an order not to have him is genuinely negative. The existence of the injunction to marry Solmes is arguably sufficient to fulfil the requirement of a primary injunction, which, as Bateson specifies, is explicit on the part of the people making it. That this injunction need not be negative is suggested by David Cooper in *Psychiatry and Anti-Psychiatry*, where he claims that Bateson in postulating negativity is using an inappropriately strict application of Russell and Whitehead's theory of logical types.

A secondary injunction, conflicting with the primary one, is either implicit or, as in Bateson's words, 'at a more abstract level', not necessarily inhering in the words of a verbal communication, but perhaps involving the manner or tone of voice in which one is delivered. An example of a verbalized secondary injunction given by Bateson is 'Do not question my love of which the primary prohibition is (or is not) an example'. This notion would apply to Clarissa, who is not supposed to question the family's identification of the family honour with her best interests and happiness. This is infuriating, as her happiness is inconsistent with the primary specific injunction to obviate a coupling with Lovelace by marrying Solmes. A tertiary injunction not to

leave the field also exists. It is manifest in the
general confinement of Clarissa to her room and the
plan to incarcerate her at Uncle Antony's moated
house. Bateson concludes by saying that when the
double bind is established, any part of its sequence
can serve 'to precipitate panic or rage'. Clarissa's
fainting and crying fits serve to bear this out,
though often she has the strength to spar with her
opponents.

After this summary of the elements of a double
bind, let us consider Sedgwick's description of the
behaviour of the Doublebind family. His characteri-
zation of the parents affords some similarities to
the Harlowe parents:

Mr Doublebind is reported to be a shifty, spine-
less, passive father, impoverished and rigid in
his mental processes and bewildered by tasks
involving quite elementary social graces.

The elements of these traits are in James Harlowe
Sr.: he is spineless and passive in his surrender
to the will of his son; he is impoverished and rigid
mentally in devaluing his relationship with Clarissa
for socially respectable and profitable ends; far
from having mere social graces he does not even have
the far more important qualities, love and generosity.
Sedgwick's Mr Doublebind is narrow-minded and pathetic;
Richardson's greater creation, Mr Harlowe, is narrow-
minded, yet anything but pathetic. He is potent, partly
deriving this quality from falling in with the plans of his more determined son, partly possessing it as a residue of his once great authority. Where Sedgwick sees Mr Doublebind upstaged by his 'domineering dragon' of a spouse, we can see a similar relationship of domination between James Harlowe Sr. and his son.

While Mrs Harlowe does not have the domineering quality which Sedgwick attributes to Mrs Doublebind, she does have other qualities he mentions:

- her tiresome nigglng obsession with conventional manners, her intellectual and emotional dishonesty and her incessant moral blackmail. [She is] insecurely reproachful to [her children] when they fail to live up to her immature stereotypes.

Mrs Harlowe, in her pliancy and fragility, is as pathetic and weak as Mrs Doublebind. She is willing to do anything for the peace her elder children will refuse her unless she fulfils their exorbitant conditions.

It is at the description of the Doublebind children that we approach the nub of the problem. They are a dependent, weedy brood, mentally unstimulating and mutually disloyal ... [They gang] up, in coalition with their unspeakable parents, against the unlucky fall guy or girl of the house, Charles (or Clarissa) Doublebind. It comes as no surprise to note that Charles/Clarissa, a naive and dithering but basically sweet personality, has been driven into a spiralling psychosis through this unholy conspiracy of pressures from his/her nearest and
purportedly dearest ... They are convicted in the fact of their disagreement one with another, for such discordances of outlook are to be taken as attempts to disconfirm, disqualify and invalidate the autonomous personal experience of the other, especially of the victim Charles/Clarissa. Let them not, on the other hand, try to escape the charge by agreeing with one another: the common assent of the Doublebinds is a collusion, and any mannerisms of warmth or cooperativeness should be seen as expressions of pseudo-mutuality, a false front of domestic solidarity tricked up for the outside world by this collection of competitive, mutually suspicious individuals.

This model to a surprising extent fits the situation in the Harlowe household, in which Clarissa is picked out by the conspiring and envious elder sister and brother as the victim for humiliation, not through election to the status of mental patient as happens now, but through election to the status of unwilling wife, a degradation at least as intolerable. Sedgwick's stylistic irony in describing the model reflects his awareness of the difficulty in doing justice to a complex situation in a short compass. Laing and Esterson's *Sanity, Madness and the Family*\(^{12}\) gives eleven examples of schizophrenogenic families. It is impossible to distil the essence of even just these in a couple of pages. To simplify can only be to distort. Since, therefore, no particular case can be comprehensively represented by a model, my comparison of Clarissa's situation with a model of schizophrenia has a value limited by the model's artificial

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simplicity, although enhanced by the model's relationship to observable life.

Sedgwick's model puts across the essential idea of a conspiracy against a victim in the family by the rest of the family, who require the victim's humiliation for their own security and solidarity. Richardson's imagination provides us with a great dramatis personae to flesh out the idea of the model. Comparisons with the mother and father have already been made. The other personae are equally interesting. There is Arabella, with her bitter sexual frustrations and envy of Clarissa because of Lovelace's love for her. Uncle Antony has a deep-rooted fear and contempt of women, which manifests itself as condescension when he tries to be respectful to Mrs. Howe. Uncle John, unlike Antony, has a gentle personality mellowed by fornication with his housekeeper, making him a black sheep. James, with a burning lust for wealth and title, indulges in 'puisne gallantries', as Lovelace calls them. His puerile boasting about himself and disparagement of others derives from wounded pride, which Lovelace was partly responsible for at university. Anger and revenge keep him alive. These family members are not caricatures in a Dickensian sense. If we invoke Forster's celebrated notion of a rounded character, we have to say that Richardson has achieved a three-dimensional presentation of two-dimensional people. It does not necessarily take a schizophrenogenic family to have a collection of
negative traits like those of the Harlowes. Their traits are simply human, though none the less deleterious to emotional health for that. Richardson takes these characters and convincingly sets up emotional tensions which erupt in crises and distress.

Clarissa's interior experiences may be related to issues raised in Laing's book *The Divided Self*,¹³ which analyses the feelings of the individual schizophrenic. Laing's patients have had their individuality outraged. They have an interior life involving their true self and an exterior one either foisted upon them or found necessary for interaction with the world. They find approval for this false self from the outside world. We might cynically regard Clarissa's pious identity as false in the sense that it is factitious, and regard her love of Lovelace as belonging to a true self, though on a subconscious level. Be that as it may, Clarissa has no false self in Laing's sense since she does not take over a complete identity for her interaction with the family. She does find it a tactical advantage to use a deliberate falseness however, such as when she decides to let her family think she is in love with Lovelace, in the hope that they will not try to change her affections. Her real self is not defended by a false self, and in its bareness lies its vulnerability. Clarissa does not recognize, and only suspects, the existence of her real amorous self.

To become schizophrenic, one encounters a crisis which makes the false self an intolerable burden or redundant, and the real self in sympathy suffers dislocation and shock. Perhaps one feels hypocritical at not being one's false self, or afraid that somebody can penetrate one's false self to see the reality within. The schizophrenic is afraid of outside threats to his real self, threats which can only come to fruition to his harm. When the necessary false self becomes intolerable, there is a fear that one's real self is not adequate to face the world. About the schizophrenic real self there is an 'ontological insecurity', as Laing would have it, and such a self does not have sufficient strength to be a normally integrated person. This is a relative matter: whereas a weak self may not cope with a mild world, a strong self like Clarissa also would have difficulty in coping with an unusually unsympathetic world.

_Self and Others_ concerns itself with the interaction of the individual with others, just as _The Divided Self_ is about the individual by himself. The latter is seen to be partly an artificial exercise, since it is impossible to talk about the self in utter isolation. Laing, in the second book, even reminds us of cases which he discussed in the first. As groundwork for investigating interactions, he examines the ontological nature of experience, calling into
question the validity of the dichotomy between 'phantasy' and 'reality', inner and outer. Surely reality is only fantasy translated into action. A fantasy is not the less 'real' just for having no existence outside one's skin, and even a fantasy involves others in some way. Others, indeed, can actively collude with one to substantiate a fantasy. For example, one's conception of oneself may derive from others, who may attribute goodness, happiness or certain likes to one. With sufficient repetition by them and insufficient resistance in oneself, it is possible to become confused about the nature of one's own character. Also, if the self receives no confirmatory responses from anyone else, self-doubt is caused. A typical interaction in such a course of events occurs when a small boy is told he is dirty, though all he wants from his mother is a comment on the size of the worm he holds. A mother who gives her daughter a too-large, plain, expensive, non-returnable blouse is telling her daughter she is plain, and at the same time reproaching her for not fitting it and thus wasting the mother's money. A family who buys wedding silk and makes marriage settlements without consulting the bride-to-be is indirectly but effectually denying an autonomous validity to her will and personality. If there is a conflict between an attribution and an injunction, each originating is someone else, but applied or
addressed to oneself, one may find oneself in a double bind. For example, a boy who wants to leave a school where he is regularly bullied is told that he is not a coward and does not want to leave. A family acknowledge a girl's 'heart is free' but urges her to marry someone she hates.

Laing's analyses have been found fruitful for drama. The film Family Life is an imaginative telescoping of the cases in Sanity, Madness and the Family. The daughter in the film, like Clarissa, being a minor, is in the power of her parents. Traditional psychiatrists diagnosed her condition as schizophrenia, a mental condition to be treated with injections, shock treatment and other physical, chemical and electrical paraphernalia. By dramatic representation, the film easily demonstrates that her withdrawn state and passivity are the result of living in a home where the parents' good intentions are warped by humdrum old-fashioned prejudices and proclivities to violence. Her mother does not allow her to rely on her own feelings and tells her she is confused. When the parents visit her in hospital, the father first tells her she should not be ashamed of her actions because she is sick. She replies that she is not ashamed. The mother then launches into a long diatribe to say she should feel ashamed. She asks her father the reason why her mother whispers to the nurse, and the father denies what is plain for anybody to see, that the mother is in fact whispering to the nurse.
It was very difficult for the psychiatrist originally on her case, a type like Laing, to explain anything to the mother, since he would have to criticize her and her values adversely. The mother insists that there is something wrong with the girl, because she went out with men and had sexual intercourse, although she was really not a girl like that! The frustrations of the girl's will in the ordinary courses of life issue in apparently wild acts of rebellion, which are also doomed to frustration. When angered by her parents' crushingly ignorant conformity, e.g. when she tells them she will pick up the first tramp she sees and offer herself to him, she is either taken back to hospital or cuffed soundly by her father. She is caught in a spiral of repression, rebellion and confinement. In a particularly lucid judgment, she tells her boyfriend that she will never get out of hospital, because any signs of improvement (at least, what she rightly considers as improvement) are actively discouraged. To the staff at the hospital, she improves when she behaves as a model patient, rather than as an independent, sane human being enraged at the constraints put upon her. She is recaptured after an escape, her final desperate bid for sanity and happiness. Being so cruelly crushed by force of law, she succumbs to an impenetrable passivity. A bored lecture class has no questions to ask a doctor who exhibits her as a
case of mutism.

The tragedy of *Family Life* diminishes *The Trial* to the status of a joke for intellectuals (albeit a very good one), since the former presents authentic experience and a recognizable social organization. The girl's boyfriend was about to give her a painting of the world depicted as a globe enclosing clockwork machinery. The obviousness of this metaphor for human society does not detract from its truth, especially in her case, since she came from a dire home and was doomed to jobs of crushing mechanical boredom, which she was always losing. Clarissa is caught in the same spiral she is, and opposes similar conventions, in Clarissa's case those which reduce life to the routine of abjectly procreating with and submitting to her husband. Clarissa's stupid and prejudiced parents never say she is mad, but she is subjected to the same pressures and tortures as if she were, since the only acceptable proof of her goodness, or lack of perverseness, is compliance with their wishes. In the eyes of the family, to marry Solmes is a proof of normality, yet to be really sane in her own eyes she has to resist the pressure to be normal.

Just as Laing's work has inspired drama, so he has himself used art to illustrate his insights. He uses *Crime and Punishment*, not because any character is schizophrenic, but so that he can identify the
general pressures in life which in certain cases prove to be schizophrenogenic. His treatment of Crime and Punishment also is a model for my treatment of Clarissa in this chapter. In Self and Others, Laing analyses the letter of Raskolnikov's mother, to show the tension created when another declares one will be made happy by something that the other desires but that one abominates. The gist of the letter is that Dunya, Raskolnikov's sister, is going to marry Peter Luzhin, a rich man she does not love, just as Clarissa does not love her rich suitor, Solmes. Raskolnikov can then get a job with Luzhin. This material advantage is just as irrelevant to love as the deals connected with Clarissa's marriage to Solmes. Laing interprets the effect of the letter on Raskolnikov in an idealistic fashion, partisan to Raskolnikov and unsympathetic to his mother. According to Laing, Dunya, by entering the prostitution of a profitable, arranged marriage, is seen to be undergoing greater humiliation than on the occasion when her sexual morals were publicly called in question. Clarissa has similar alternatives of prostitution to Solmes's money or the scandal of harlotry with Lovelace. The prospect of the marriage makes Raskolnikov even less happy than the scandal would have done, had he known of it. The mother throws a burdensome obligation on Raskolnikov when she

declares the happiness of all three of them to be dependent on his being happy. Clarissa too is urged to make her family happy, by being satisfied with Solmes. Arranged marriages are more sordid to Raskolnikov than the godlessness his mother warns him against.

Basically, says Laing, 'The person to whom [the letter] is addressed is placed in a non-compossible set of positions all at once'. Raskolnikov would have to be hypocritical to agree with his mother, yet the letter, according to Laing, in its appeal to the religion of his childhood, also tells him not to be hypocritical. While the root of the problem lies in how one person disagrees with another over what is happy and good, it is the complex situation arising out of this disagreement which confuses and destroys one side or the other. Laing rather gleefully (since, for a change, the would-be destroyer of children is herself destroyed) points out that the mother goes mad. Raskolnikov's incarceration and Dunya's marriage to someone other than the rich boy confound her warped hopes. In analysing the pressures on Raskolnikov, Laing is discussing an already unstable person. Also, Laing does not consider it necessary to make a slavishly neat parallel between what happens to Raskolnikov and theories of the family. However, the family

15. Ibid., p. 171.
pressures on Raskolnikov are clearly identified and are close enough to Laing's theories to be very significant.

Clarissa is never consulted about what will make her happy. The family assume that the carrots they dangle before her will provide plenty of happiness. The generous marriage settlements and the promise not to challenge Clarissa's title to her grandfather's estate have a validity to the family which they do not have for their intended recipient. The family feel it best for Clarissa to be alienated from Lovelace: he would only make her unhappy. Her moral sense makes it easy for her to realize the unacceptability of her parents' demands. She recognizes the hollowness of the family's appeals to virtue and recognizes the sincerity of their appeals to cupidity, but finds it impossible to make them understand. The untenable alternatives Clarissa is offered are paralysing to her will. The only way she can recover the affections of her family is to comply with their wills. She only discovers this truth after penetrating the family's pretended displays of affection to the iniquity underneath.

She comes to this discovery after a course of action characterized by the repetition which Bateson demands. It cannot be called repetitive when one regards the variety of devices and plots brought
against Clarissa, but each of them repeats itself in the sense that they involve constant trading on her affections and her notions of dignity. The family's deceit in exhibiting affection is similar to that of a woman in a case instanced by Bateson.\(^\dagger\) She greets her son by beginning the motions for an embrace, and then freezes. He responds to the latter gesture by not following through with the embrace, leaving himself open to her accusation that he fears his emotions. This involves the pretence that her frozen posture does not signify anything, when it in fact reveals her inner repugnance to being hugged by him. Similarly, Clarissa's family may accuse her of coldness and obstinacy when she will not pay them the high price of their affection. If she loves them, she should be eager to fulfil their conditions. In Clarissa's encounters with her aunt and mother, almost always physically demonstrative and posturing affairs, she finds they control expressions of affection in such a way that they effectively deny love to her. The signification of their actions is contrived, and therefore the love the actions signify superficially does not exist. Clarissa's hopes for affection are raised and dashed time and time again, as it is the family's selfishness and not their love which dictates how they 'act' towards her. If love does intrude, they accuse themselves of weakness or being deceived by Clarissa.

\(^\dagger\) Quoted in \textit{Self and Others}, p. 146.
While Clarissa remains at home, the family confront her with a 'can't win' situation. If she refuses to marry Solmes, the family will continue to punish her. If she marries Solmes, the family's punishment will cease, but the marriage will be unbearable. Clarissa sees no way to be both a woman of virtue and Solmes's wife. There is no solution to her problem to be found. By her rejections of Anna's alternatives of escape, either to Anna herself or to Lovelace, Clarissa is obeying Bateson's postulated tertiary injunction not to leave the field. The social sanctions of disgrace, poverty and ostracism enforce the tertiary injunction. Indeed, it is mainly because of such sanctions that the existence of the injunction is inferred.

Clarissa's emotional state at home is suggested by her dream of being stabbed at the heart by Mr. Lovelace. Although she acknowledges the dream as an 'imaginary' evil, her agitation is undeniable, perhaps owing to the dream's imaginative truth. Laing sees a relationship between the myth of Prometheus and that feeling of having one's heart cut out which destroys the spirit of a schizophrenic. He describes the rock and the eagle as aspects of the schizophrenogenic mother, to whom one is chained, and by whom one is devoured. Clarissa's dream is not only a premonition of her future involvement with Lovelace, but an expression of her present state. She is

so desperate to end her suffering that she considers
dying, if only to reject the idea. Laing describes
the schizophrenic patient as one who 'really wants
to be dead and hidden in a place where nothing can
touch him and drag him back'. The motive for
this desire is that, being dead, 'One no longer
fears being crushed, engulfed, overwhelmed by
realness and aliveness'. One of Clarissa's
chief problems is the possession of a 'feeling
heart', something which Bella, in her hardness
and comparative invulnerability, does not have.
Clarissa is more susceptible to emotional exhaustion
because of this heart. Just after the rape, she is
ready to give in to death, and calls 'life not worth
the keeping'. Death is only an alternative pre-
ferable to the plans of others. The ultimate plea
of this pathetic victim is 'Only leave me myself'.

Her plea is unheeded, and she is bombarded with
clever plots in an attempt to manipulate her. All
members of her family present her with their own
little strategies, offering her material things she
does not want in exchange for doing something she
cannot do, denying her spiritual things along with
the material things. Such an offer allows them to
pride themselves on a fancied generosity, styling
themselves as Clarissa's friends. Mrs Harlowe assures

18. Ibid., p. 430 and p. 443.
19. Divided Self, p. 175.
20. Ibid., p. 176.
Clarissa she is indulgent to her, and that she advises as a friend rather than commands as a mother, although at the same time she commands absolutely that Clarissa should let her duty govern her 'free' heart, and says that Clarissa should not debate an absolute duty. The advantage of such a contradictory attitude is that both sides of the contradiction are favourable to the mother and put Clarissa in a bad light. On the other hand, the family see contradictions in Clarissa as culpable. Her mother professes not to tolerate the dichotomy between Clarissa's 'outward gestures of respect' and her intransigent heart, though Clarissa is obviously suffering. The most evidently harrowing example of the kind of game the mother is playing occurs when she orders Clarissa to go from her chamber, and then, when Clarissa complies, asks whether her compliance is the 'effect of sullenness or obedience'. A genuine divalence is exhibited here, as the authoritarian mother gives way to the affectionate one. Despite Clarissa's distraction, in which she cries and clasps her mother's knees, the mother asks Clarissa again to leave. Clarissa, then, in conformity with the only reasonable construction to be made of this double changing of mind, refuses to leave and declares that she is disobedient, since to love her mother has become disobedience.

23. Ibid., p. 89.
24. Ibid., p. 90.
The mother tempts Clarissa by offering her an immunity from litigation concerning her grandfather's will if she cooperates. Clarissa resists, saying she hopes 'Mr Solmes will be apprised of these flaws' in the will.  

The tactic of Clarissa's gentle irony here will later change into unequivocal indignation, when she receives worse treatment, such as at the time when Solmes enters the company of herself, her mother and her sister to create a courtship situation. Since Solmes presumes to treat her as the fiancée she's not, Clarissa considers herself absolved from the obligation to be polite to him as a guest, and mentions her objections to him to his face. Even Clarissa admits that she 'never was so bold' in her life. After a shocked mother draws her aside to demand civility from her, Clarissa is openly disobedient and refuses to go back to the room where Solmes is. This situation is so provocative that Clarissa cannot disobey with dignity or respect. She must forsake the appearance of reluctant deferential refusal and be downright rude, fighting fire with fire. Niceness and civility are the typical refuge of the schizophrenogenic family, never indulged for their own sake, but for putting up a front. They cover up a problem to which they are never an answer, and are an insulting depreciation of the child.

25. Ibid., p. 96.  
26. Ibid., p. 105.
The family create situations, like this courtship one, which provide opportunities for Clarissa to prove she is 'obstinate, perverse, undutiful'.\(^\text{27}\). The disobedient acts thereby procured justify drastic measures, like confining Clarissa and removing her writing materials. Just as her own efforts to liberate herself lead to adverse conditions, so do Solmes's efforts. Solmes can only pretend to liberate her from her family, since to do so he must take her himself. Clarissa's recognition of Solmes's help as an act puts her at the mercy of her family, who have a simple faith in the rightness of their deeds. Aunt Hervey, for example, has no qualms about asking Clarissa to pray to enable her to conform to her father's will. This blasphemous association of God's will with the father's is the product of a dull wit and a shallow faith. Clarissa's response to this shoddy appeal must surely be a despair at the lack of deep feeling and attachment to herself. It is more than her patience can bear when Solmes himself appeals to her 'for God's sake'.\(^\text{28}\). The family's religious mildness is a sinister mask which even they cannot penetrate. The family, arguing about the mildness of their treatment of her, conveniently forget what they are so gentle about persuading her to do. 'To what end?' Clarissa has only to ask.\(^\text{29}\). In her own mind, and

\(^{27}\) Ibid., p. 108.  
^{28}\) Ibid., p. 387.  
^{29}\) Ibid., p. 383.
indeed to us too, this is as competent a confounding of their arguments as need be made. In contrast to this, when Clarissa claims only to want 'kind looks and kind words' from her uncles, giving up all claim to their estates in favour of her siblings, the family is quick to blame her for the end she aims at. Since she will not obey them, it appears that she does not regard obedience as necessary to prove affection, though the family regard affection as what distinguishes obedience from independence. The uncles find emotional security in their wealth, and regard Clarissa's non-compliance and rejection of their wealth as indifference to themselves. Her declaration of love for her uncles themselves and not her uncles as personified in their fortunes, expressed by relinquishing their fortunes to James and Bella, is taken as a slight to her brother and sister, whom supposedly she is indirectly characterizing as greedy. Offering estates has two aspects, the donation by the giver and the consumption, whether parasitic or deserved, by the receiver. The family emphasize the one or the other as it suits them and especially as it does not suit Clarissa. While it is all right for them to appeal to greed in her, she is blamed for appealing to the same thing in others.

Clarissa's quandary as to what actions she can
undertake and preserve her happiness at the same time is made more puzzling by Lovelace's virtual refusal to recognize anything other than marriage with Solmes as a rejection of himself. Clarissa thus has three adverse fates to choose from, whatever she does: marriage with Solmes, disownment from the family, elopement with Lovelace. More threatening is the compatibility of the last two of these. The power of her family against her is more than matched by that of an aristocrat who is not afraid of 'offended magistracy'. The greater forces around her must be daunting to her will.

The power of Bella is of a lesser order, and may be repulsed by the judicious use of teasing. Clarissa parries Bella's rebuke of her for loving Lovelace by quoting to her the aphorism that unrequited love turns to deepest hate. Bella invokes the family's power by asking Clarissa what her intentions for the future are. Being suspicious of what her reply can be twisted to mean, Clarissa offers to 'break with' Lovelace, which is an implicit admission of the existence of a connection to be broken. Since Clarissa is not offering to marry Solmes, Bella, using a distorted conceptualization of the situation, describes Clarissa's reply as 'neither receding nor advancing one tittle'. It is not much to ask for one tittle, and Bella trades

30. Ibid., p. 183, for example.
31. Ibid., p. 214.
on the specious modesty of such a demand. Of course, there is no such thing as a tittle, or degrees, in a question which admits only of an absolute affirmative or negative in response. Clarissa can only agree or refuse to marry Solmes. It is meaningless to ask her to make an advance when this requires a complete change of her mind. It is insinuating, hypocritical, and perhaps even malicious to pretend to be reasonable in such a case. On an occasion when poor Aunt Hervey tries to report back to the awful judicature in good faith, 'she was asked what new concessions she had brought [Clarissa] to? ... [and] she looked about her and knew not what to answer.'\textsuperscript{32} Clarissa's advocates subscribe to the conception of polarizing compliance and resistance, but the hard-liners in the family regard these actions as belonging to a continuum.

I hope I have made it evident that Clarissa is in a general state of impasse. Her tactics, offers and decisions are all in vain, and she is impotent in an uncontrollable situation. Her control of Bella results only in temporary victories, Bella's insecurities being only a small chink in the family's armour. The family's exertion of force on Clarissa is a 'dishonour' to the nature of marriage, according to Clarissa\textsuperscript{33}, as well as

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{32} Ibid., p. 262.
\item \textsuperscript{33} Ibid., p. 406.
\end{itemize}
a dishonour to herself. While the family oppose the view of the turpitude of their efforts, they certainly do not mind being thought irresistible.

This is an idea which they try to instil into Clarissa early in the piece, for instance during the intermittent interview between her and her mother on Friday 3 March. Mrs. Harlowe makes the mistake, when she castigates Clarissa for 'debating an absolute duty', of saying that she will reason with Clarissa, providing that 'say what you will, it will be of no avail elsewhere'. The mother has no mandate to make promises, and has been re-proved for her maternal indulgence to Clarissa. Clarissa realizes, therefore, that she is arguing within a closed system, that her objections can have no effect on her mother. Both sides are playing a game. This is frustrating for the mother too. She cannot use her full measure of authority to change her mind since she has been given the shabby task of persuading Clarissa to accept Solmes. The only means of fulfilling her role as mother is that which has been allotted her by others. If Clarissa is disobedient she has failed. If Mrs. Harlowe wishes to retain the appearance of a good mother, Clarissa must acquiesce to her role in the game. The specious happiness thus produced would be proof to the outside world that all is harmonious in the Harlowe household, and proof to Lovelace that the Harlowes have beaten

34. Ibid., p. 74.
him. 'We want to secure you against a man so vile' as Lovelace.  

There is no genuine word of consolation for Clarissa in this interview being discussed, except for physical demonstrations of pity behind which is a will of adamant. Mrs. Harlowe even resents being affected by Clarissa's 'discomposure', and, after a short absence to rally her ragged nerves, accuses herself of behaving as if she 'expected a denial'. Clarissa's discomposure originates from regret at her family's utter lack of sympathy and frustration at her impotence. An effective way Clarissa can prove she has a will of her own is to disobey. A much more concrete reason for disobedience is her affection for Lovelace, which she disowns in a letter to Anna, claiming it to be dissembled for her family's benefit. But her mother perceptively disagrees.

Such extraordinary antipathies to a particular person must be owing to extraordinary prepossessions in another's favour.

Clarissa does not have to say anything; her resistance of the family's will is taken as a proof of her affection for Lovelace, and this she does not bother to deny. This helps to form a vicious circle. The more the family think they have to fear Lovelace,

35. Ibid., p. 72.
36. Ibid., p. 74.
37. Ibid., p. 136.
38. Ibid., p. 83.
the more they will coerce Clarissa. While she continues to resist, the family fancy Lovelace has a hold over her which must be broken by stronger and stronger measures.

The transparency of the mother's mildness is a goad to Clarissa. To respond to Mrs. Harlowe's double-dealing in the way it deserves, she must interrupt and expostulate. Such actions give her mother a pretext for further reproof, and demonstrate how 'bad' Clarissa really is. Clarissa's lack of manners is used by her mother as a red herring. Clarissa's sufferance of reproof for it is construed as a surrender in the major courtship matter as well. The mother cleverly alternates between two levels of discourse, one being the level of the style or propriety of communication, the other the topic being discussed, in order to prevent a frank discussion. When Clarissa dares to speak of 'maidenly objections', her mother is shocked by her verbal indecency, but not so shocked by the substantial indecency of a parental disregard of such objections.

For all her mother's subtle cruelty, Clarissa can have sympathy for her, although she cannot excuse her.

[She is] obliged to take methods to which her heart is naturally above stooping; ... she sees that no arguing will be admitted anywhere else! 40.

39. Ibid., p. 79.
40. Ibid., p. 81.
This gives artificiality to the mother's negotiations. Clarissa and her mother are interacting at one remove. Clarissa has to respond and appeal to the personality her mother is assuming in place of her own. The mother has to judge and admonish Clarissa not as she would do herself, but in the way an implacable autocrat would. This reinforces the alienating and isolating nature of Clarissa's dealings with her family. Sometimes the role the mother is forced to play is too much for her, but at such times she is in no condition for Clarissa to reason with, since she is not in control of her emotions.

The goal informing all the family's strategies is to force Clarissa to be an integral part of the family as a unified entity. To them, she is not an individual, and is only viable as an actor with a specified role. To treat a family's behaviour as a whole is the mode of analysis of the family in Aaron Esterson's book *The Leaves of Spring*. Like the Harlowes, the Danzigs regard their child not in her own right as an individual, but as an investment, a ' [part] of themselves to be controlled' for the goal of 'maintaining the "public" appearance of group order' .

*Alteration, or interiorizing into oneself the 'parental ordered family group - for "the - others"', the others being the scrutinizing respectable public, is a sign that a child is 'of age',*
since she will then autonomously perpetuate within herself and indoctrinate into her children the obsession with convention and conformity instilled by her own parents. The mad, bad schizophrenic, however, cannot alterate and scandalizes her family in the face of the nosy critical public.

In revealing [the family's problems], she revealed publicly that the family as a family was failing to cope privately with the problem of coping privately. 43.

She violates the family identity. Clarissa's mother asks 'who at the long run must submit - all of us to you; or you to all of us?' 44. Clarissa's resistance is no longer just a matter of her own will. James has cleverly and factitiously persuaded the family that Clarissa's compliance is necessary to its reputation and its existence. They no longer consider the proposed marriage on its own merits. It has become an unquestioned element in a larger conception, and it is the larger conception which is put before Clarissa in quarrels. Reverence for the family is an article of faith which blinds them to details. The mother is so concerned to conform that she is greatly affected by the accusation that she, with Clarissa, is dividing the family by opposing all the rest. 45. Instead of arguing, a member of the family simply states that what he or she desires is

43. Ibid., p. 35.
45. Ibid., p. 98.
what the family needs, in the same way as appeals are made to reverence for God or one's country.

The family goes so far that they lose the ability to break free from their exalted conception of themselves. They are not free to capitulate. They build up an inertia which they cannot resist unless they gain a critical self-consciousness about their actions. Lovelace at least gains such a consciousness of his acts. The apparatus he sets up to control Clarissa controls himself as well. He feels as if he's in a 'machine',46 and cannot stop the consequences of his plots, e.g., those of the fake Lady Betty and the pretended communication with Uncle Harlowe. Lovelace cannot submit to the temptations of his own small residual conscience, and has to continue playing the part he has created for himself. Both Lovelace and the Harlowe family have to maintain to Clarissa the validity of what is only pretence.

Since the expulsion of Clarissa was one of the intentions of James, Lovelace cannot congratulate himself on handling the Harlowes like puppets, as Richardson says he handles them.47 Lovelace certainly does not want the blame for their 'malice and resentment',48 and Belford even denies him the credit of being able to manipulate them, describing him, after

46. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 146.
47. Ibid., Vol. I., p. 257, in a footnote.
the abduction, as

the instrument even of her implacable brother, and envious sister, to perpetuate the disgrace of the most excellent of sisters. 49.

In answering the question of who is really controlling whom, one must be aware that it is only metaphorically inconsistent to maintain that Lovelace and the Harlowes are each other's puppets. That the family are trapped in their unity in harassing Clarissa is supported by the theory that the members of the family have a kind of symbiotic relationship, one with another. Their actions are more meaningful when considered as the actions of a group, rather than only as the actions of individuals in the group. The principal meaning which such actions have pertains to the preservation of the family's cohesiveness, in Esterson's sense for example. This involves a basic conservativeness and is reflected in Mrs. Harlowe's stated aims of

The preservation of family peace ...; to reinstate you in the affections of your father and uncles; and to preserve you from a man of violence. 50.

Mrs. Harlowe goes on to mention the family ambition almost as a afterthought. Her aims are high-sounding, and are to be brought to fruition merely by Clarissa's marriage to Solmes. Clarissa, reduced to being a

49. Ibid., p. 320.
50. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 82.
means to an end, is asked to become a functioning cell in an organism that has become diseased. Being healthy in herself, she can have no reason to pervert herself to their sickness. To conform to her allotted family role, Clarissa would have to repress an individuality well worth expressing, one that even she does not realize the full nature of. There is no reason to effect such a repression since the peace of such a family would be well lost. The opposition of the family members to each other is only apparent. Their general opposition to Clarissa creates a unity more significant than the disunity created by the dissent of the tenderer family members.

Clarissa's resistance of the family's invitation to be assimilated into their unity is punished by a very effective curse, which operates partly as a prediction and partly as a destructive agent in itself. Clarissa is crushed under the malevolence it expresses. There is no longer any confusing difference between the Harlowes' cruel acts and their virtuous intentions. The curse is a confirmation of the family's regard of Clarissa only as part of themselves; independent of them she is a threat to their harmonious public image. She cannot make any effective request to be treated as an individual. Her pathetic appeal to her father to 'Reprobate not thus your distressed daughter' is an attempt to escape from the constricted world.

51. Ibid., p. 390.
of movement created by her family. The 'father' wishes to treat her as a 'daughter'; there is no genuine communication transcending their given roles.

Clarissa sees in the nature of her bond with her relatives more of blood than they do. It is in their lack of sympathy that she finds a denial of the bond of kinship. To reproach Bella for not having put her case to the awful judicature, Clarissa, half-weeping, says she is mistaken in thinking she has a brother and a sister.\textsuperscript{52} Bella mocks her by enumerating the rest of the family and including those in her loss. Clarissa regrets this loss, although she should see in it her liberation. She is too attuned to things as they should be in a conventional sense to take the creative leap which would show her other forms of living with an equal validity. Since she is not fulfilled in family life, she lives in an emotional void of vain interaction with her family which she, with her 'feeling heart', finds hard to bear. Still trying to be part of a happy family which will only admit her on their own terms, Clarissa finds fault with them for not taking her on her terms.

Previous to the critical situation with Solmes, Clarissa had never had any reason to question the way her family behaved, thinking it to be normal. It takes a testing situation to find out how truly to characterize certain ways of behaving. In \textit{The Politics}

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., p. 225.
of the Family, Laing talks of the post-infanthood hypnotic trance, during which one's consciousness is quiescent about the world, and which may last a lifetime if nothing happens to disturb it. Once a person awakes from this trance, having discovered he has been only 'the shadow of a puppet', he must be careful whom he communicates this discovery to, since inconvenience to the extent of confinement could result from telling it to an unsympathetic person. Clarissa, indeed, tries desperately hard to believe in her dream of life, and tries not to awake from it. Her family eventually accumulates for her such effective disproofs of the dream that she has to wake up. She has little desire for this awakening, since to bear her sorrows she would have to harden her heart. She is placed in an unenviable situation, where determined and active opposition to her friends is necessary to extricate herself from misery. However, to oppose one's parents is undesirable for a 'nice' girl, since it involves making a fuss. One would have to forsake appearances and dirty one's cloistered innocence, and she is just as unwilling to do this as her family is to allow her to do it.

The problem Clarissa encounters when she refuses to free herself from the childhood trance is her attachment to her basic image of herself, which is

threatened with destruction. Any detraction of herself she greets with incredulity, except when it originates from herself, when it can be dismissed as modesty. Her basic conception of her purity is promoted by a naive sincerity. Clarissa is self-satisfied despite her soul searchings, and before anything else she chooses to remain self-satisfied.

When making an unsympathetic interpretation of Clarissa's deeds, it is puzzling whether one should blame her for her pride or condole with her for her overestimation of the humanity of others. When endeavouring to characterize Clarissa, one should take note of the character she tries to project, together with the moral authority she supposes this character to have. Her claim that she is only leading the family on to think she loves Lovelace means it is not quite nice to love such a man. It is also an admission that frankness with her family no longer works. As a strategy, it fails because it appeals to the family's respect for her in exactly the same way as her stated repugnance for Solmes does. If they still wish to bind her to him despite her aversion, there is even less reason for them to refrain from their efforts because of her love for the dastard Lovelace. Clarissa can only hope to achieve a downgrading of the family's tiresomely repeated argument that she should not object to
Solmes because her 'heart is free'. However, the family can now, as a result of her confession of love, reproach her for that love and for lying to them that her heart had been free. Their aim is still to protect her from Lovelace by marrying her to Solmes, but such a marriage now outrages her declared affections, to which they are indifferent. One truly wonders whether Clarissa would have been willing to allow the family to think she was in love with Lovelace if she detested him as much as his moral laxity deserved. She surely would have been more willing to allow this if she in fact was in love with him. Arabella tells Clarissa that her declaration of love for Lovelace is only a 'fetch'; yet this means the family can both believe her, in order to blame her for loving Lovelace, and disbelieve her, in order to blame her for deceiving them.

While Clarissa is strong-minded enough to counter-plot on an imaginative level, the effectiveness of her plotting is vitiated by the way her parents evaluate her offers only in relation to their own plans. Her offer to relinquish an affection she admits to is refused because the price, freedom from Solmes, is unacceptable.

Let me but be permitted to avoid the man I hate, and I will give up with cheerfulness the man I could prefer. 56.

54. Instances occur in Vol. I at pp. 74, 80, 81, 83, 136, 191, 256, 262.
55. Ibid., p. 140.
56. Ibid., p. 307.
They will never believe Clarissa if she says she has no affection for Lovelace, or if she offers to give it up, their incredulity depending not so much on evidence as on the necessity that their tyrannical protectiveness appear to have some basis in fact. Her admissions of 'inclinations' for Lovelace and her defence of him as 'no villain' thus simply play into the family's hands. James is not surprised that Clarissa attacks Solmes for his libels of Lovelace, since he has ulterior motives for believing in her love of the libertine, and needs little proof of it.

Though there is a confusing contradiction between Clarissa's statements to Anna and those to her family concerning Lovelace, one can be very positive about Clarissa's reluctance to marry her family's choice. Her family's use of this reluctance to prove a 'prepossession' for someone else is counterbalanced by Clarissa's expounding of her reluctance on its own merits. Considering the prudish restrictions on discourse, it is amazing that Clarissa makes an explicit if oblique argument of what the omissions in discourse are supposed to conceal. She objects to the 'marriage duties' and the 'marriage intimacies ... so very intimate' which Solmes would demand, and defends the sordidness of her imagination by claiming that even the 'purest'

57. Ibid., pp. 225-226.
must think of these customary concomitants of the married state. A fortiori, then, Clarissa may think of them.

Her willingness to put forward these arguments could derive from speculating about these intimacies with Lovelace. Having chosen him, it would be a species of infidelity to marry Solmes. When Solmes seeks to defile her affection by making her abhor Lovelace's moral performance, Clarissa's seemingly forensic regard for justice to Lovelace's reputation is less disinterested than she tries to pretend it is. Clarissa's premature trust in him seems to derive from her self-esteem, if we consider the occasion when Lovelace responds in the correct conciliating manner to Clarissa's indignation that he should profess hatred of marriage and at the same time presume to address her. Lovelace says he is 'captivated with the graces of [her] mind'. 59. One sees from her account of a secret meeting with Lovelace how impressed she is with Lovelace's deferential behaviour, and she wonders whether there is not something in 'blood'. She claims it was shock that stifled her scream upon first seeing him, but this could easily be a way of rationalizing of her sense of anticipation and fascination. Her simple but treacherous belief in her rationalizations of events lead to distortion of events. The continuation of her secret correspondence with Lovelace, an act which

she cashes in terms of the peace and protection of her family, is also done for more selfish ends, e.g., to communicate with, seek reassurance from and (Clarissa being Clarissa) reprove her lover. To her mind, though, she must be seen to do it for someone else; she is too charitable ever to do anything to please herself. And what more perfect candidates for Clarissa's charity could there be than the people who hate her the most? This increases the disinterestedness and dutifulness of her love and service.

Clarissa again attempts to rationalize her acts after absconding with Lovelace, when her noble intentions misfire and Lovelace fails to propose properly. 'No prudery, no coquetry,' she wails, as an excuse for her part in Lovelace's failure to guess how she thinks he should propose. Rather than prudery or coquetry, she exhibits, in fact, outright antipathy. No sin of Lovelace's is ever too small for her not to forgive. After any offence, she comes back at him with such words as 'I hate you with my whole heart Mr. Lovelace' or 'My soul is above thee, man.' The provocation for these is often small: Lovelace vilifies her family, Lovelace kisses her. Sometimes it is not small: Lovelace feigns anger, Lovelace is rude. But these latter occasions do not modify her fault in fastening on the smaller offences as well. Her unfailing sense of her innocence is

provoking to others. Relative to it she deduces her characterization of James and Bella as greedy, malicious and envious. She refuses to see the situation from the point of view of her siblings, and accuses them justly, but rudely. The truth hurts and infuriates them. When Bella derides Clarissa's 'insinuating address', saying it reduces other people to 'cyphers' in her presence, Clarissa calls her 'unsisterly', refusing to recognize Bella's truth, unselfconsciously assuming that her address is in some way authoritative and not insinuating.  

The only thing that would make Bella's accusation truly unsisterly would be if Bella had said that Clarissa deliberately used her address to devalue others. As her words stand they are a fair comment, despite their disparaging quality. Clarissa does not apologize for the unintended effects of her garrulous virtuous pose even though Bella has obligingly pointed out its faults.

Bella does verge on the obnoxious when she accuses Clarissa of charming their grandfather. This reveals a real grudge on Bella's part, if not one adequately based in truth. Bella simply does not have the imagination to know what it takes to make another person happy. Therefore, inspired by envy of course, she sees only dissimulation and conspiracy in Clarissa's attentions to the slabbering old dotard, where Clarissa

sees herself only as fulfilling the role of a good girl. In doing so she is being 'a set of obsolete responses', to use a phrase of Eliot's. It is fundamentally because of her move outside this set of responses that she reproaches herself for acceding to Lovelace's hurried extrication of her from her home. She is supposedly 'tricked out of [her] self'. More realistically, she was guided by the only part of her that was truly her own, her love for Lovelace residing in her true subconscious self. She is afraid of her individuality, an anarchic, passionate being who has got her into difficulty. It is this dichotomy between her role and herself that calls into question Mark Kinkead-Weekes's notion of the 'sacredness of her innermost self', in which he states that Clarissa through the rape discovers her essential being in virtue. Clarissa has a certain uncompromising integrity which forbids her submission to the family's or to Lovelace's plans, but this quality does not arise from a well-defined 'inner' self. Her character is comprised of a complex set of often conflicting forces, the most prominent of which are acquired, others of which are her own though she attempts to disown them. It is her obvious self rather than a hidden inner one that resists Solmes and Lovelace. Lovelace tries to remould her character to fit in with a given role, which is that of his

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concubine, the role adopted so briefly by so many other women. Clarissa is strong enough to resist all the blatant temptations Lovelace offers to her, but to do this saps her strength. It is not just Lovelace's sexual assaults which are hard to combat. Just about all interaction with Lovelace is a game the rules of which Clarissa has to learn fast to preserve herself. Her status as a beginner gives Lovelace an advantage which he uses to the full, e.g., when he engineers her decision to go to London by appearing not to want to go there instead of somewhere else.

An important element of his plans is that he must not propose marriage to Clarissa; therefore he has to propose in such a way that she will not accept, as Ian Watt points out. In this he does not have to try too hard, because Clarissa's punctiliousness actively assists him. Her scruples about not responding to his first proposal derive from a fatal combination of pride and weakness. She fears to be thought so dependent on Lovelace as to 'catch at his first, at his very first word' without his having passed through his 'state of probation'. She admits that, despite her reluctance,

if he really wishes for a speedy solemnization, he never could have had a luckier time to press for my consent to it.

She tries to attribute to virtuous motives her failure to respond to his proposal, at the same time blaming Lovelace for counter-responding correctly to her silence or her rebuffs. Clarissa on one occasion fails to accept a proposal from Lovelace which she suspects is from 'compassion' rather than 'love', a proposal which he makes after she cries on his shoulder, regretting her estrangement from the rest of the family. Her reasons for refusing are finicky if not disingenuous.

These two examples of unacceptable proposals from Lovelace indicate an eagerness on Clarissa's part always to find reasons to define any of Lovelace's proposals as unacceptable, perhaps still jibbing at the prospect of 'marriage intimacies ... so very intimate'. She wastes occasions as if Lovelace will continue proposing indefinitely, but begins to relent with her strictness when Lovelace makes fewer and more half-hearted proposals. She should be warned when Lovelace says things like 'For God's sake, let it [the wedding] be tomorrow! But if not ...'. She tries to mitigate her alarm by deploring his lack of a 'proper manner'. Later on, her desperation is such that she unsubtly and transparently hints at marriage to Lovelace. She tells him how glad she would be 'to have a father who would own me', despite her own experience with a father. Lovelace turns

65. Blake's 'Willian Bond' clears up the conceptual confusion here concerning the not inconsistent terms 'love' and 'compassion'.
67. Ibid., p. 197.
68. Ibid., p. 310.
this around to say that Lord M, the prospective new father, is suffering gout, which would prevent an early date to the wedding, conveniently disregarding that he is arranging an early date for something he has never made explicit. This places Clarissa in an untenable position of cruel uncertainty, keeping her 'soul in suspense', as she describes the situation a long time later, when she intends never to have Lovelace.

Lovelace keeps her in this state deliberately, so that she never gets used to considering herself his fiancée and she can never accuse him of breaking a promise. This disconfirmation of her expected identity diminishes herself in her own eyes, and is intended to make her more amenable to accepting a meaner position than wife. Her first taste of Lovelace's disconfirmations occurs in the first stopping place after the escape from the Harlowe household. There he represents himself and her as brother and sister. To deny it, she will have to be bolder than is decent, and court rejection.

So that Clarissa will not reject him out of hand for his lies, Lovelace provides her with some days of happiness. She even allows him to kiss her hand, though not her lips, 50 times, says Lovelace. She keeps him at a distance by always being fully clothed as early and late in the day as possible.

69. Ibid., p. 341, for example.
She is constrained to see Venice Preserved with him, after which, for reasons she is ignorant of and thus fears, Lovelace acts as if he is angry with her. She claims he has ruined her temper 'utterly', and that his inexplicable anger puts her soul 'above' him. The disingenuousness of the happiness he had provided is a severe setback to her. Just as she was about to trust him, he betrayed her. Rather than try to sweet-talk him out of his anger, a procedure that she will not stoop to, she returns to her old position of refusing to marry him. She has lost her only potential friend, and in her new frame of mind she is disaffected from an empty alienated life. 'What is equipage; what is life; what is anything?' This recalls the hollowness of the feelings of schizophrenics as described by Laing, though not the extremity of those feelings.

The bleakness of the fate ahead of her must have helped reconcile Clarissa to an equivocal undeclared state of betrothal. Marriage settlements are drawn up though no proposal is made, except a mocking one after Lovelace goads her into anger. Clarissa falls in with this ambiguous situation by asking for a private day without Lord M, unintentionally conspiring against herself. She is resigned to marriage rather than willing.

70. Ibid., p. 382.
71. Ibid., p. 389.
72. Ibid., pp. 393-476, generally.
While Lovelace uses his trickery to maintain Clarissa's uncertainty, he also uses it for his own greater certainty. When he takes ipecacuanha to feign illness and test Clarissa's reaction, she seems to forget how inappropriate she thought it was to confuse compassion with love. Perhaps she was worried that Lovelace's compassion had been unmixed with love when he proposed, but knows that love is mixed with her own compassion for his apparent illness. Lovelace is thus at a further advantage for later plotting against Clarissa.

The most impressive disconfirmation and trap-laying occurs when Lovelace must persuade the ladies of the inn Clarissa escaped to that they are married and that she is lying or distracted. To make it supremely difficult for her to contradict him, he makes his lies big ones. Clarissa is so outraged that her powers of speech and argument are diminished. By judicious interruption and gratuitous 'forgiving' of her, he manages to manipulate her so that she never comes to the point of actually denying marriage with him. Mrs. Moore, Miss Rawlins and the others thus doubt her. She is rendered helpless against Lovelace's determined and accomplished extemporizations. By forewarning the women to expect Clarissa to deny his charges, she cannot put her case and expect them to believe her. She is in the clutches of something she can't control. It is bad enough, in this
situation, that she cannot win an argument with Lovelace, but he also finds it necessary to constrain her by force in the presence of the impartial ladies, and this taxes his ingenuity to the full. She is inhibited against becoming hysterical or violent, since the ladies have the impression that Lovelace is acting within reasonable and polite limits. She has to simmer in her impotence.

In this analysis of Clarissa I have considered both what happens to her and what she does in response. The latter involves her resort to a treasured concept of virtue as a defense against others and also her use of it in a morally arrogant aggression against them. Its usefulness entangles her further into it, as if it were a knot like those written about by Laing in his poetry. To untie herself she would have to face the horrors of Lovelace and Solmes. As a comment on her relationship with Lovelace, I would like to conclude by quoting from one of Laing's Knots.

She does not get what she wants from him so she feels he is mean
She cannot give him what he wants from her so she feels that he is greedy
CHAPTER III

AN EXAMINATION OF THE MIND AND BODY OF MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE

My countenance, said she, is indeed an honest picture of my heart. But the mind will run away with the body at any time.

Clarissa,
Vol. IV, p. 9.
The feelings of Fielding, Lady Bradshaigh and a certain colonial judge in India concerning Clarissa's tragic death have been quoted so often by critics of Richardson that there is no necessity to repeat them here. The tearful empathy of those early readers with Clarissa's hard fate testifies to the strength of Richardson's art and reproaches his unyielding embrace of the didactic aesthetic. One way or another, Clarissa's death always seems to generate strong reactions, although they are not always as favourable as the tear of sensibility. Dorothy Van Ghent describes Clarissa as a 'paean to death', a phrase calculated to deny all worth to the novel.\(^1\) Perhaps that critic reflects (I would not say subscribes to) a certain twentieth-century attitude to death, in which the dying person, instead of feeling he deserves some sympathy, should feel guilty that he is an unpleasant reminder of our common destiny.\(^2\). While the latter is certainly the wrong way to feel about death, it does not really seem necessary to go to the lengths Richardson does to demonstrate a respect for the dying. In Clarissa's death Richardson makes a massive statement about death, which encompasses and implies matters of art, religion, morals, the mind and the

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body. Richardson's syncretism is a mixture, often found in the eighteenth century, of current science and fundamentalist religion, and this manifests itself in a psychologically realistic presentation of a physical decline inspired by spiritual, religious motives. Richardson of course knew that he was achieving at least this, but there are also aspects of the situation he created which we can characterize in a way he would not himself do. He might have regarded Clarissa's depression as melancholia and her fits as mania or hysteria, and this condition might in his view have made Clarissa susceptible to consumption, but it is doubtful whether he would have regarded the religious passions so intertwined with her condition as delusion. A firm religious belief is not the delusion of a maniac after all — that is except when it determines one's emotions and behaviour to such an extent that it causes a decline and eventual death.

Why is the etiology of Clarissa's decline generally passed over or dismissed by critics? Its mythological aspect is well-recognized: the bourgeois Christian saint receives her just heavenly reward while the devilish Don Juan goes to hell. At this level of criticism it is unnecessary to ask the physical causes of her death because the critic's view of its literary implications is all too
dominant. Some critics take an extreme position. R. F. Brissenden says her death is 'implausible'. Mark Kinkead-Weekes says 'The curiously drawn-out ending cannot, however, be adequately explained in physical, psychological or social terms, and Clarissa turns out to be a religious novel in a far deeper sense than Pamela.' I do not agree with these opinions, and I believe that Clarissa's death poses a challenge in terms of the history of science and society. It is unusual to connect literature with contemporaneous physiology. Is it possible to discuss the physiology of a fictional character? One cannot absolutely talk about a literary character as if that character were a real person, yet an author's conception of his character is influenced by his conception of real people, and this might involve physiology as well as character traits. In the conception of Clarissa, Richardson was influenced by contemporary physiology, immediately through his friend and physician George Cheyne, and generally through the eighteenth-century outlook, shaped, as G. S. Rousseau points out, by Thomas Willis and John Locke.

In this chapter we are considering what happens in the book between the time of Lovelace's rape of Clarissa on 12 June, and the time of her death, on

4. 'Defoe and Richardson', p. 253.
7 September. Three months seems ample time for Clarissa to be consumed by her melancholy. Before the rape she had suffered severe depressions, but none which affected her as vitally as her demotion from virginity. The occurrences in the family, those outlined in my previous chapter, predispose her for a surrender to the dislocations she endures at the hands of Lovelace: the family soften her up for the fatal blow to her ego. Being alienated from family and Lovelace, in effect everybody, she relies only on God, who, even if he really does exist, can never be more than one's fantasy of him. As Clarissa says, 'But God Almighty would not let me depend for comfort upon any but Himself.'^5. Like the melancholic, like the schizophrenic, she turns from the more apparent and concrete forms of outside reality to fantastic and oneiric forms of interior life. Her experiences have disproved the validity of the material world, whereas in the heaven she aspires to she finds the love and happiness she seeks for.

The novel is rather unspecific about the nature of Clarissa's complaint. She seems to suffer a fading away. Certainly, if her consumption was of a pulmonary nature, Richardson could have waxed just as gruesome as he did for the death of Mrs Sinclair. But an angel like Clarissa does not cough up blood

and pus like a tubercular human being. She dies spiritually, anticipating and having foretastes of heavenly rewards, inquiring gaily and eagerly about the date of her death, feasting her eyes on her coffin, yoking Biblical passages by violence together to make 'meditations' that apply to herself, hating her vile body. The very foolishness of her aberrations makes her a figure of pathos rather than ridicule, just as it makes her a perfect symbol of purity for eighteenth-century middle-class Anglicans. Her behaviour is the only clue we have to the nature of her illness. Her doctor does not name this illness; he only names its cause, a broken heart. A single label or name for her complaint cannot be found, but her complaint has meaningful similarities to hysteria, hypochondria, mania and melancholy.

In an age like the eighteenth century which no longer sees madmen as the mouthpieces of God whose souls have access to another dimension, one's soul is firmly implanted in one's body, and suffers in sympathy with it. The soul's control over one's body is no longer a matter of speculation. In such an age, Clarissa's soul suffers explicable complaints. In a religious work like Clarissa, however, her soul is not to be completely identified with her mind, which is a part of her body. There are two ways to look at the
soul: the religious and the physical. The physical belongs to doctors and scientists, who of course are loth to dismiss the soul's religious aspect. By the phrase 'physical aspect', I do not wish to suggest that the soul was considered material. The soul's physical aspect pertains to the way it thinks, the way it belongs to the body, and the way it controls the body, supposedly through the mediation of the nervous fibres extending throughout the body. These fibres are considered either as tense and string-like, or as containing animal spirits, a fluid, in pores or in a hollowed inside. To consider the soul in its material aspect therefore involves considering how an immaterial soul works in a material body. Both the religious and the physical aspects of the soul occur in Clarissa, the religious aspect being more explicit and prominent owing to Clarissa's love of preaching and reproving. The religious aspect of the soul is easier to describe than the physical.

Clarissa's religious soul actually seems distinct from her mind, and comprises her essence in a form resurrectible by God. This is the true duality of existence in Clarissa, a duality, as it is in the Bible, between the soul and the body, which is much more important than a duality between the mind and the body. For one to give in to the temptings of
one's body, via the bodily organ of the brain or mind, is to spoil one's soul. Clarissa cares less about what Lovelace does to her body than she does about letting herself be corrupted by him, and thus soil her soul. The soul is a kind of aggregation of one's life, deeds and character, one's self in a timeless context, although time is the context in which one feels oneself living and creating one's soul. The religious soul is divorced from oneself because a person is never aware of himself as the aggregation I have suggested, unless he keeps a diary and reads it daily. Lovelace is the 'enemy' of Clarissa's 'soul'. As she sees it, he wants to blot her copybook, for her soul is nothing other than this. Her soul is not her actual self, which Lovelace physically violated in time. Yet Clarissa imbues this entity, this soul, with life, her own life, identifying herself with it, thinking that it is her and that the eternity God is sure to grant it belongs to her living physical self. The ruined maid which used to be herself disappeared somewhere.

To examine the physical aspect of the soul, let us begin with Locke who couches the notion of soul in terms of mind. To Locke, the soul is that thinking thing that is in us, and which we look on as ourselves. 6.

The Christian kind of soul is more than this, however. Locke's distinguishing of the traditional Christian soul from the soul as he sees it is based on a generally accepted definition:

... We ordinarily [take] the soul of a man for an immaterial substance, independent from matter, and indifferent alike to it all. 7.

He can even accept this definition for the sake of argument, though elsewhere he doubts it.

About the Immateriality of the Soul, if our faculties cannot arrive at demonstrative certainty, we need not think it strange. 8.

Locke here holds himself back from making any unwarranted inferences, saying it is a matter of 'faith and probability', not of knowledge, that there is an immaterial soul. Whether or not one believes it is immaterial, one has to take into account, as Locke does, the doubt that consciousness can inhere in matter without a soul 9. and the doubt that animals have a thinking soul. 10. The Christian ramifications of the concept of a soul, to Locke though not to Richardson in Clarissa, are that it contains innate ideas and is always thinking, starting from the day of birth, continuing during sleep, and not, of course, ceasing after death. On the other hand, the soul Locke conceives of is a more mundane beast. It has

7. Ibid.
9. Ibid., p. 196.
10. Ibid., Vol. i, p. 131, (Book II, Chapter I).
no innate ideas, does not think during a dreamless sleep, and does not think 'before the senses have furnished it with ideas to think on.'\(^{11}\). Locke's soul is strangely like an ordinary mind.

Mandeville, like Locke, reduces the status of the soul to something like a mind. He is very explicit in analysing its materiality, a concept antithetical to the orthodox Christian one. In the second edition, corrected and enlarged, of *A Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Diseases in Three Dialogues*, Misomedon, a hypochondriac scholar, claims that 'we consist of nothing but what is corporeal.'\(^{12}\). Mandeville distances this opinion from himself by putting it into the mouth of a character in a dialogue. Of course, everyone knew that Mandeville, the 'man-devil',\(^{13}\), was an atheist. Misomedon may be regarded as expressing the scholarly side of Mandeville's character, while his partner in the dialogues, Philopirio, expresses the other chief facet of Mandeville's character, that of the pragmatic physician. Specifically in relation to the soul, Misomedon considers the proposition that 'mere matter cannot think', and objects,

> But this is *gratis dictum*; and tho' it has the Air of an unquestionable Axiom, yet it is built on the falsest Supposition in the World, viz. That what we cannot comprehend is therefore impossible.

\(^{11}\) Ibid., p. 139.  
... Is it more impossible that what is incorporeal [the soul] should act upon the body & vice versa than that God could create matter that thinks? ¹⁴.

This goes to the centre of the problem of the interaction between the soul - whether its nature is corporeal or incorporeal - and the body.

Like Locke, Misomedon here distinguishes between what we know and what is only a speculation. That we simply cannot conceive that matter thinks is no reason to regard it as impossible. To satisfy the Christians, Mandeville has Misomedon state that this sceptical materialism is not against Christianity, since Misomedon is not claiming that God cannot resurrect the human consciousness. He cannot deny resurrection after death, owing to the scrupulousness of his philosophy: he has no way of knowing its truth or otherwise, so he is not conceding a thing in throwing out this sop. Mismedon then claims that nobody knows about this matter anyway. He mentions the similarity in bodily functions between man and beasts with a view to questioning why man should be considered as having an immortal soul when beasts do not, and he concludes that even the greatest philosophers believe in the soul's immortality only because of self-love or the 'eager wish' that it should be so. ¹⁵.

¹⁴. Treatise, p. 51.
¹⁵. Ibid., pp. 52-53.
Mandeville's enlargements and corrections were evidently made with little regard that consistency in viewpoint be maintained. Misomedon later says that he had said 'Thought is wholly incorporeal.' To retain the consistency of the work, we would have to interpret this statement as a belief of his, and say that previously he had been indulging in the quite different verbal activity of strict philosophical reasoning. Misomedon himself at this stage cannot conceive of the extreme subtilization of the animal spirits required to make matter think. Philopirio claims that 'the Soul consists in thinking,' but that, although matter by itself cannot think, 'the Soul cannot exert herself without the assistance of the Organick Body.' Thus, he says, we cannot know how the soul thinks after death, being deprived of its body. We may leave that up to God.

Locke's characterization of the Christian soul is not as obviously sceptical. He reduced its function to the causation of dreams, whose impressions one experienced but could never retain in the mind. If one could not retain them, reasons Locke, they could not have been given to the mind by the senses, neither had the mind consciously reflected on them.

16. Ibid., p. 158.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., p. 159.
Since the body therefore had nothing to do with the matter, it must be the soul that dreams. The Christian soul is reduced to having only a piddling function, and Locke asks whether the Creator would have created something so useless. Locke encounters the problem of having to discredit popular intellectual prejudices because he persists in very sensibly regarding the soul as a living entity, coterminous in time and space with the body. It was by means of this assumption that he demolished the concepts of innate ideas and constant thinking, and was left with the dreaming soul. The soul of Locke's conception was much more impressive than this diminished one.

When Clarissa tires of earthly life, she wishes to relinquish it for the sake of her soul's chances in eternity. None of Locke's or Mandeville's sophisms apply to her soul, which is immaterial and eternal. Naturally, owing to the self-contradiction in her notion of the soul, viz., that the soul is herself, but that it is not the 'ruined maid' part of herself, God tells her that is is she who will experience the delights of eternity, not to be confused with the 'she' whom at the same time she wants to kill. This other 'she' is doing the suffering and will expire while the more hardy soul lives on. This 'she' possesses the mind and body whose suffering is analysed

and treated by physicians who are not fazed by its emotional origins, and who know when medicines are of no help. This 'she' is a physical entity which an age of science had put down to a more accessible level by removing its metaphysical mystery while subversively retaining the use of the word 'soul', as Locke used it for example.

Her attitude to her soul governs her eagerness for death, which is thus not only due to her desperation about her present life. Lovelace is afraid she is like those 'passionate and offended' women, Sanderson and Anderson, who killed themselves for love. At a crucial confrontation after the rape, in which Lovelace intended to consolidate his victory over Clarissa, she takes him and the whores down a peg and, as a defence against imminent assault, attempts suicide. Her pose, arm upraised, pen-knife pointing towards her heart, 'the whites of her lovely eyes only ... visible', indicate a basic readiness to go through with it, all to protect her 'honour'. She often explains her reasons for wanting to die.

Since all my own hopes of worldly happiness are entirely over; let me slide quietly into my grave.

I do so earnestly wish for the last closing scene.

22. Ibid., p. 374.
23. Ibid., p. 381.
She regrets that 'Death from grief ... [is] the slowest of deaths.,' and wishes to be divested of her 'rags of mortality'. Her collections of verse on death, Paper X and a Meditation, are also evidence of her affinity to it. She would hardly be so eager if she were not certain of an immortal soul.

It is not just the inevitability of her death that resigns her to it. She regards the prospect of life as intolerable, even if she could survive. Her conjectures of life's possibilities are rather class-bound. The kind of existence she supposes she cannot cope with is that of an upper-middle class wife with a household of servants, with whom she would not be able to indulge her favorite activities of 'reproof or admonition, lest their bolder eyes should bid me look inward.' Neither could she preach 'virtue and morality' to Lovelace or leave 'cautions for the elder girls' of the neighbourhood poor. From the intolerable nature of a life barren of moralizing she deduces the desirability of death, the 'cessation from mortal life', 'the refreshing inn after a fatiguing journey.' Her ideas of death are as jejune as her ideas of life. 'Then, divested of the shades of body, shall we [Clarissa

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24. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 305.
27. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 520.
and Anna] be all light and all mind.'

She is happier in her misery than ever she had been before. The hysterical ecstasies of her fantasies about God surpass the concrete satisfactions she used to enjoy. Death, the 'passage into an awful eternity' is 'a better tour than to France or Italy either! or even than to settle at my once beloved Dairy-house.' Even the love of other people will be as dross. God is promising her 'supreme fervours' than her dearest earthly love, of Anna Howe. Clarissa rejoices in 'prospects', 'assurances' and 'charming forebodings of happiness' surpassing 'the vanity of earthly existence.' 'HE, I presume to hope, has forgiven me.' She orders her own coffin 'with great serenity.'

As we can see, Clarissa has constructed for herself a very self-consistent little world which provides a transcendent, prim, supercilious fulfillment. Congratulations are in order from all sides for her complete fidelity to it. Her example of perfection, as Anna said once, leaves one 'heartless to imitate it', although one can admire her for it. She can be everyone's proxy for perfection. One receives advice from her on how one falls short of her. Like Hobbes she has created a logical system; unlike Hobbes she presents it piecemeal and out of order, in

29. Ibid., pp. 300-301.
30. Ibid., p. 361.
a dramatic rather than a linear sequence. Her system is like a fortress in that it is inassailable from the barbs of assault or blame; it is her body, not her soul, which lets her down and makes her suffer. Her system is also like a crystal - perfect, but its beauty is sterile. Foucault claims that

The essential symptoms of mania result from the fact that objects do not present themselves to the sufferers as they are in reality. 32.

Clarissa's world is transfigured by the divinities she communes with, and becomes something marvellous.

In discussing the plight of someone like Clarissa who lives at such a high level of fantasy, it is unnecessary to prove that her fantasies are erroneous. The deleterious effect on her health and her emotions remains. Foucault maintains that 'madness is precisely at the point of contact between the oneiric and the erroneous.' 33. We readily cluck our tongues at the case of a man who believes that society exists to create garbage for him to eat. 34. This belief creates strange behaviour which we find uncomfortable to the extent that we will not tolerate it. The desire to ascend into heaven, however, is so universal

33. Ibid., p. 106.
that the pious behaviour it creates is tolerated by everybody, and was loved in the eighteenth century. Her behaviour does not make a mad seer of Clarissa. G. S. Rousseau observes that the revolution in brain theory of the seventeenth century separated religion from madness. 35. Owing to the tenuous link between the soul and the body which existed before that revolution, the soul could easily be considered to be in touch with God. A mad person's soul has almost loosed its moorings with the body. The only kind of soul that existed after the revolution was only firmly rooted in the body, having definite relationships with it. Clarissa's mania then was not divine, although it was concerned with divinity.

The work of G. S. Rousseau on the history of the mind-body dichotomy in seventeenth and eighteenth-century England is well worth examining, particularly as that writer claims that Clarissa is the great literary result of the revolution in thinking about the dichotomy. 36. Rousseau claims that Clarissa is a new phenomenon in literature, since in Clarissa it depicts a character who knows exactly why she is going to die. She knows this because of a world-view derived from Locke and Willis, without whom

that novel would have been impossible. Rousseau draws attention to this by referring to Richardson's 'turning inwards and internalizing the relation between Clarissa's anatomy, feelings, action and finally knowledge.' This amazing insight into Clarissa is tantalizing in that it does not hint at how this internalizing is done. Perhaps anything more than a suggestion would have been a digression from his subject of 'Nerves, Spirits and Fibres'.

Locke and Willis wrote books for which Rousseau reserves the title, created by Kuhn, of 'paradigm'; by this term he denotes an original book containing open-ended theories which deflect men's thinking after them. Once the monumental paradigm has been written, lesser talents can then specialize in the field of knowledge which has been opened. When, after some decades, the ideas in the paradigm have permeated society, creative writers can assume the new knowledge in their work. There is about eighty years between Willis's first works on the brain and Clarissa, time enough for Willis's physiology to affect moderately educated people. And what was Willis's discovery? That the soul was limited to the brain. This is Dr. Rousseau's interpretation of what Willis's discoveries amount to. He does not mention Willis's postulation of two kinds of soul in man, a body-soul as the motive principle in all animals and, exclusive to man, a rational soul for
for his reasoning, abstract thought and will.\textsuperscript{37} Although Dr. Rousseau wishes to claim that Willis first limited the soul to the brain, we must be aware of the words of Robert Burton, who repeated only platitudes, when he described the brain as the 'seat of the soul.'\textsuperscript{38} Obviously, then, there must be ramifications to the notion of the soul being in the brain, in Dr. Rousseau's sense, which distinguish this notion from the accepted beliefs previous to Willis.\textsuperscript{39}

Dr. Rousseau, I think, misses a good chance to show just why this discovery is 'an imaginative leap of the first order.' (No doubt all such leaps are inspired by a few good hints beforehand.) He does not tell us what it is a leap from, though surely it is from the traditional Christian notions of the soul, Willis's declarations of faith notwithstanding. Rousseau does not say, either, that Willis, by using experiments rather than the Bible to analyse the nature of the soul, has implicitly reduced it to a material thing, nor that Willis's theory is a theory and not a proven truth. Thus the physiology deduced from it is of a pragmatic rather than a factual nature. Since the soul is in the brain, this


\textsuperscript{39} Further discussion of this occurs in the Postscript to Chapter III.
means that all data are conveyed to the soul via the organs of the body, specifically the fibres and the nerves. It also means that one's 'sensibility' is not due to intellectual fragility, but due to the fragility of the body, of the fibres themselves, which only convey rather than hold cognition and feeling. Thus the eighteenth-century concept of mania, according to Foucault, involves deliriums caused by the 'defect in the transmission of sense impressions to the brain.' 40. One may be admired for one's sensibility although it is a credit to one's fibres and not one's free will.

Clarissa's sufferings are based on this physiology according to Rousseau. Foucault records - and a reading of Mandeville corroborates this record - that doctors believed women's fibres, like their entire physiology, to be more fragile than those of men, who are 'more robust, drier, hardened by work.' 41. Women are the same as men, says Mandeville through his mouthpiece Philopirio, in that they have just as many fibres as men have. But women are more impatient of 'Heat, Cold and other Injuries.'

Their Frame, tho' less firm, is more delicate, and themselves more capable both of Pleasure and of Pain, tho'endued with less Constancy of bearing the Excess of either, generally speaking. 42.

From the fragility of women's fibres and the necessary

41. Ibid., p. 154.
42. Treatise, p. p. 246.
connexion between the fibres and the brain, Mandeville concludes women incapable of the deeds of men which require steadiness and application. They are 'unfit for abstruse and elaborate Thoughts.' Yet their soul is supposedly the same as man's, soul being distinguished here, apparently, from the brain or mind it inhabits. Suprisingly Frings, in A Treatise of Phrensy (1746), subscribes to this notion of a soul, which is closer to the old religious soul and further from the physically based soul I have been describing:

The human soul is immutable & unalterable, being always the same; neither can it be inflamed, or receive any Hurt from any internal or external Cause whatsoever. 44.

Mandeville and Frings divorce the soul from the mind, i.e., the soul's general form from the contents of the individual soul. Only in this sense is a woman's soul the same as a man's.

Since hysteria can be a result of idleness, sedentary living, and all forms of sensual self-indulgence, exercise, which cleans and strengthens, is needed to prevent the fibres becoming so effeminately fragile that they are prone to hysteria. Though Clarissa's inactivity is not due to such unworthy self-indulgence, her fibres are too far gone even to

43. Ibid., p. 247.
44. Phrensy, p. 21.
allow her the strength to exercise, and as a result the worse she is, the less able to exercise to cure herself. Although Clarissa is in poor shape, Belford still sees her as an exception to the rule of the fragility of women, and says on the occasion of a visit to the jail:

Who would think such a delicately-framed person could have sustained what she has sustained? ... Such braves as thou and I should never have been able to support ourselves under half the persecutions, the disappointments, and contumelies, that she has met with. 46.

It is not her frame but her soul that is sturdy. On seeing the doctor at the jail she admits that her 'spirits have been hurried.' 47. Her bodily degeneration is accelerated by her jail experience, and near her end she sums up her general condition:

You see how weak I am. You must see that I have been consuming from day to day; and now, if I can judge by what I feel in myself, putting her hand to her heart, I cannot continue long. 48.

She also experiences shortness of breath and tremor of limbs.

However, Clarissa's sufferings are more meaningful than would be determined by this basis in physiology. They are more than the responses of a fragile body to persecution. Rousseau places too

47. Ibid., p. 468.
much in the hands of the fibres and not enough in their master, the brain. 'Nerves alone can be held responsible for sensory impressions, and consequently for knowledge.' The use of the word 'responsible' blurs the fact that the nerves are only conveyors of sensations; but then, Dr. Rousseau does not wish to maintain this.

It was impossible before the revolution in brain theory to expect the totality of human feeling to be nothing but motion in the nerves ... This implies that every response to a moral crisis is physiologically ground, fated and determined in the _a priori_ sense.

For the scientist this elevates physiology to the level of morals, while to the Christian morals are degraded to twitchings of the cells. Generally, Rousseau's statement describes a diminution of human experience, a denial of creative choice to the human being. Clarissa was virtuous not simply because she was delicate and vice offended her nerves, but also because she made her choice and stood by it. While her outlook is certainly influenced by her delicacy, which is a quality inhering in all her actions, she always in addition has well thought-out reasons, expressed at great length, for what she does.

Clarissa's more serious problems begin with her rape by Lovelace, what Dorothy Van Ghent calls 'a singularly thin and unrewarding piece of action.' Since Lovelace executes the rape in a peculiarly vicious way, it is anything but a 'thin' act to
Clarissa, who places supreme positive value on a complete absence of sexual intercourse. The construct of reality which makes the rape really unbearable for Clarissa is that rape, for her, is only a metaphor for dishonour. Lovelace is amazed.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe has but run the fate of a thousand others of her sex - only that they did not set such a romantic value upon what they call their honour. 49.

Clarissa asks:

And canst thou, Lovelace, be so mean - as to wish to make a wife of the creature thou hast insulted, dishonoured, and abused, as thou hast me? 50.

Thus her idee fixe, her ruined honour, is the focus of a downward spiralling hysteria. She considers herself ruined, though it is frequently pointed out to her that her will has not been violated. The basic fact of penetration remains irrevocable. She has entered a different caste of human beings, never to be reinstated. This is what sticks in her craw so that she chokes to death on it. She is not just the victim of the worst crime in the world of man, but she is tainted by the crime, becoming the sort of person she wholeheartedly despised when she was a virgin. She hates her 'ruined' body and wants to

49. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 199.
50. Ibid., p. 237.
51. On the other hand, her idee fixe may simply reflect the preoccupations of a male chauvinist author prejudiced against the idea of female promiscuity.
get rid of it, by death. This emotional position cannot be controverted by the mere reasonable logic of the arguments that she did not consent to sexual intercourse and that virginity is a physical, not a spiritual, state.

Once Clarissa has been raped, she has experienced three of the causes of melancholy mentioned in the 1771 edition of the Encyclopaedia Brittanica. Melancholy is said to arise 'from violent disorders of the mind', 'from narcotic and stupefactive medicines: from previous diseases especially acute fevers.'

Clarissa almost died of a fever earlier in life, which would have enfeebled her constitution somewhat. In order to rape Clarissa, Lovelace uses so much of the disabling drug that he fears afterward lest it 'should have for ever damped her charming intellects.'

His fears turn out to be well-founded. As for 'disorders of the mind' like 'long-continued grief, sadness, dread, uneasiness and terror,' Clarissa seems to be suffering from one or the other at any time in the book. These feelings mount in intensity when Clarissa is persuaded back to the brothel by the fake Lady Betty and Charlotte. Her frenzy increases as her suspicions are confirmed. Her post-coital depression is of unusual magnitude, lasting a week.

52. Edinburgh, p. 149 of Vol. III.
My head is gone. I have wept away all my brain I believe; for I can weep no more. 54.

This indicates an awareness, not only of the character of her emotions, but also of their relationship to her physiology. (Her words are also noticeably pathetic.) The enervation and abuse of her body has contributed to the way she feels. Her affections have been deadened while her ability to feel depression keenly has been amplified.

She feels her melancholy along with the hysteria which grips her and destroys her. Melancholy is defined in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, which regards it as a symptom of hysteria and hypochondria, as

a strong and lively working of the fancy, with a fixed attention of the mind to a particular Object, which it continually dwells upon; together with a delirium, a long continual dejection, dread and sadness without any particular cause, arising from a difficult circulation of blood through the vessels of the brain, where it is too copiously congested and becomes stagnant. 55.

This succeeds as a general description of Clarissa's condition even down to the typical insistence on the thickness of the blood associated with melancholia. Belford not only notes her emaciation and the fading of her cheek, but in relation to the visible blueness of her veins remarks on them as 'veins so soon, alas! to be choked up by the congealment of that purple

stream which already so languidly creeps rather than flows through them.\textsuperscript{56}. Clarissa's external actions, her confinement to bed, her difficulty in moving, these indicate the state of her body.

But see how little and little it has come to this. I was first taken off from the power of \textit{walking}; then I took a \textit{coach}. A coach grew too violent an exercise: then I took a \textit{chair}. The prison was a large \textit{DEATH-STRIDE} upon me - I should have suffered longer else! Next, I was unable to go to \textit{church}; then to go \textit{up} or \textit{down stairs}; now hardly can move from one \textit{room} to another; and a \textit{less room} will soon hold me. My eyes began to fail me, so that at times I cannot see to read distinctly; and now I can hardly \textit{write}, or hold a pen. \textsuperscript{57}

Her 'progressive weakness' throws her more and more inside herself, where she is left, not with the essential nothingness of oneself that a twentieth-century paring away of the external world seems to leave us,\textsuperscript{58} but with her only faithful lover, God. 'Only a few fibres vibrate in the melancholic, those which correspond to the precise point of his delirium.'\textsuperscript{59}

Despite Clarissa's weakness and passivity, she still responds to one area of existence, religion, which is not affected by the changing nature of her blood circulation. One might even consider that the spiritual qualities she exhibits during her physical decline - her steadfastness of mind, her unchanging pessimistic evaluation of her dishonour and weakness, her impenetrability

\textsuperscript{56} Clarissa, Vol. IV, p. 332.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., p. 229.
\textsuperscript{58} Cooper, \textit{Psychiatry and Anti-Psychiatry}, p. 96, has this opinion.
\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Madness and Civilization}, p. 126.
to persuasion or cheering up - are evidence of the effect of the slowing down inside. Foucault declares:-

Melancholia, in fact, is characterized by immobility; in other words, the thickened blood congests the brain where it accumulates. 60.

The organs of the body have affected the organ of thinking, the seat of the soul, and made it rigid in its processes, turning its ideas into certainties, making her end inevitable.

Passions of the mind, such as Clarissa's distress at being raped, play little part in Mandeville's conception of hysteria, which is definitely physical. He attributes it to a wasting of the animal spirits, due to inadequate nourishment. These spirits direct the body from the brain, since they are the 'internuncii' between the soul and the body, or, as Sydenham says, they are the highest grade of matter, verging into the 'very confines of the Immaterial Being.' 61. Good nourishment provides a good supply of blood and spirits, says Mandeville, 'unless they are wasted by something extraordinary.' 62. Mandeville fails to analyse extraordinary things like ideas, delusions and passions. In this he is reactionary, not following the lead given by Sydenham, who, according to Dr. Rousseau, had attributed hysteria to passions in the second half of the

60. Ibid., p. 104.
62. Treatise, p. 245.
seventeenth century. Having several times suffered 'something extraordinary', Clarissa by her emaciation manifests inadequate nourishment and an ebbing of animal spirits, though it is not by eating that her hysteria may be cured. Over the few days she is in the jail, she has only one dish of tea and a little bread and butter. Foucault says:

A body too close to itself, too intimate in each of its parts, an organic space which is, in a sense, strangely constricted: this is what the theme common to hysteria and hypochondria has become. 64.

With bodily thinness comes a constriction forcing the fibres into a greater density, while the animal spirits inside them have diminished. Cheyne also talks of the exterior appearances, such as thinness, that denote the quality of the fibres and nerves within. 65.

It is strange that doctors should ascribe hysteria to the absence of an entity which does not exist anyway: the animal spirits. This is at least its physical cause, the lack of the animal spirits itself being due to an emotional cause. Dr. Rousseau claims that, in accordance with Willis's discoveries, the message from the brain to the organs via the fibres must take place by means of a liquid

64. Madness and Civilization, p. 154.
flowing through those fibres. The fibres thus are tubular. Isler recounts that pores in the fibres were observed, in the course of Willis's experiments, by the aid of the microscope. Willis concluded, says Isler, that the nervous juices in the pores contained the animal spirits moving about in them. Impulses supposedly moved along them with 'immense velocity', like light from its source, or like moving water creating motion in still. Since Willis made these conclusions, why should Dr. Rousseau worry about the necessity to prove or disprove the nerves tubular, and consider these the only alternatives available until the discovery of electricity?

Dr. Rousseau's speculations on this are born out not by Willis but by Mandeville, who thought the nerves hollow, apparently encountering no scientific or philosophical problem in doing so, and not concerned with Willis's observation of their porous state. Philopirio accepts the existence of the spirits inside the nerves only by the 'Reasonableness and the Necessity' of such acceptance. He extrapolates from observations that have been made with microscopes—that the least fibres of muscles, and the flesh of animals, contain liquids; that both hair and the fibres of the smallest insects contain liquids; that some capillary vessels are very minute—and postulates that fibres must contain liquids too. This conclusion is both reasonable and a physical possibility.

66. Treatise, p. 137.
It controverts Misomedon the scholar's beliefs that the nerves are solid like string and that animal spirits do not exist. Foucault mentions the former belief, saying that in this case the nervous fibres operate by means of tension, like a vibrating musical string. This means that melancholia was a product of nerves exhausted after too severe an agitation. This also explains the melancholic's withdrawal.

The melancholic can no longer enter into a resonance with the external world, because his fibres are relaxed or because they have been immobilized by too great a tension. 67.

The soul's links with the world, indeed with its own body, have deteriorated so that messages or sensations can get through only with difficulty. This is expressed in Clarissa's case by the misting-over of her vision, which closes off the sight of a hurtful world. Rather than respond to the world, she responds with ecstasies to her own dialogue with God. Shocks and fits cause an almost unendurable agitation in Clarissa's fibres, and leave them weakened. The result is the same if it is animal spirits instead of tension that convey sensation to the soul; if they are lacking, the medium of communication between the body and the soul is inadequate.

The physicians who see Clarissa care less about her physical state, the treatment of which would only be symptomatic, than about the emotional cause of it. They instantly recognize a love case. 'There is one person in the world who ... can do her more service than all the faculty.'68. Her problem is not as simple as their initial suspicions lead them to believe. Clarissa's case is that of a person whose strong affections have been cruelly trampled upon. Her trouble is 'rather to be relieved by the soothings of a friend than by the prescriptions of a physician.'69. The only cure lies at the root cause, in the affections, but it appears to be too late even for this. The doctors prescribe neither the diets nor the exercise which the textbooks advocate. For one thing, it would be artistically crass for Richardson to cure Clarissa in this latter way. Also, unlike Clarissa's hysteria, the kind of hysteria cured by such methods is usually caused by physical things as well, such as the sensual indulgences mentioned before. A hysteria preceded by a devout sobriety would not be affected by a continuation of that sobriety. A fortnight before Clarissa's death, the doctor had given her up to her illness: 'Her heart's broken: she'll die ... There's no saving her.'70. Later, aware of

69. Ibid.
70. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 177.
the temporarily restorative effect of the love of her family, he writes to them before her death, pleading Clarissa's 'painful, lingering and dispiriting decay'. The physical ill certainly cannot be cured at this stage, even with a cure of the spiritual ill which began it. The family, however, suffer from the same spiritual ill, a lack of love, though, since it suits them, their physical robustness is not impaired.

What is the nature of hysteria, if we are agreed to define Clarissa's illness, before she is precipitated into melancholy, as hysteria? Is it too precious to suggest that when Lovelace violates her, he causes a radical change in her womb, the traditional breeding ground of hysteria, and that this change has played a part in generating her condition? (Probably!) Tradition, from Galen on, had it that the womb, during hysteria, loosed its moorings and went drifting about the body creating havoc. Willis recognized how ignorant it was to ascribe any illness of unknown origin to causation by the womb. Willis's revolutionary neurological discovery was that hysteria and hypochondria were diseases of the nerves. This involved locating animal spirits in the nerves, which was consistent with established older beliefs, mentioned by Burton for example. 71. Willis only made a small differentiation between hysteria and hypochondria, stating

the latter occurred less in women because they were susceptible to the more extreme condition, hysteria, by virtue of their frailer constitutions. The hypochondriac, 'peevious, fickle, censorious and mistrustful'\textsuperscript{72} manifests mild symptoms, 'disorders of the stomach and heart, timidity leading to suspicion of everything, imaginary diseases, and unrest of thought.'\textsuperscript{73} His condition can be aggravated so that he also has typical hysteric symptoms, fits, coughs, convulsive laughing, raving, excessive talking, or swellings.\textsuperscript{74} Similarly to Willis, Sydenham, at the end of the seventeenth-century, according to Dr. Rousseau, declared hysteria to be of the same nature as hypochondria.\textsuperscript{75}

In 1771, however, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is still saying that hysteria is improperly confused with hypochondria. The only difference between these diseases common both to *Britannica* and to the writings of Willis and Mandeville seems to be that when this disease occurs in women it is called hysteria and when it occurs in men it is called hypochondria. This difference, however, is more than dogmatic even if it turns out to be erroneous. Though we may consider, say, smallpox or influenza

\textsuperscript{72} Treatise, p. xii
\textsuperscript{73} Isler, Willis, p. 131
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., p. 281.
\textsuperscript{75} See introduction to Hill, op. cit.
to be the same disease whether it occurs in women or in men, the same does not apply for hysteria/hypochondria, the difference occurring because of the signal difference in the sexual physiology of women from that of men. The nervous fibres in which hysteria operates connect all the organs of the body together in a network, a state called 'physiological solidarity' by Foucault. The fibres themselves are of the same nature throughout the body despite the dissimilarity of the organs they serve. Hysteria, having this access to all the organs in this network, is thus 'a disorder that can attack it [the body] in each of its parts.' 76.

If one organ should become diseased in the course of hysteria, other organs in sympathy may also manifest disease, which is conveyed to them by the agitation or weakening in the fibrous network. Such a phenomenon is today called referred pain, a process which Willis described as owing to the transmission of the diseased state through the irregular anarchic movements of spirits in the cerebrum. 77.

Naturally this distribution occurs in both women and men. But the womb tyrannically dominates the physiology of women, owing to its especial fragility, with the obvious result that the affections of the womb create in women symptoms which men do not have. This is easily seen in cases other than

76. Madness and Civilization, p. 155.  
77. Willis, p. 95.
hysteria. Pregnancy, childbirth and menstrual flow cause nausea, disordered appetite and headache with inflammation, the latter ills being directly attributable to the organic sympathy of the whole body with the state of the womb. It is doubtful, however, whether hysterical symptoms can be regarded as the referred expression of the womb's disorders, given Willis's reluctance to attribute everything otherwise inexplicable to the womb. Hysteria turns out to be extreme hypochondria after all, the womb not making a significant differentiation in the disease in women. Hypochondria, with its possibilities of gentle peevishness and with its traditionally splenetic origin, is equivocal as a description of what Clarissa suffers. The violence of hysteria more closely appertains to her condition.

In hysteria, the tension of the fibres can increase till they are incapable of vibrating; melancholy can set in with this rigidity or after it. Melancholy predisposes one to mania, but these two very different states may be experienced only in alternation. Willis observed this alternation, according to Foucault. 'The melancholic predisposition, if aggravated, becomes frenzy' and vice versa. The causative relationship linking these two dissimilar conditions involves the thickened blood in the brain.

79. Ibid., p. 131.
[This heaviness] makes shock more violent at the moment it occurs; the brain, the vessels by which it is traversed, its very substance, more violently jarred, tend to resist more, therefore to harden, and by this hardening the thickened blood is sent back more energetically; its movement increases, and it is soon caught up in that agitation which is mania. 80.

This shock is in the form of some violent passion, its effect on the system ultimately being a fit.

The passion inspiring Clarissa's fits is not always what one would expect from her perfection. The letter from Uncle Harlowe inquiring about possible pregnancy throws her into a 'violent fit of hysteric'. 81. This is not from depression but from an uncontrollable anger. Despite an afternoon in bed, next morning reading the Bible, and the diversion of riding in a chair, she finds it difficult to find a temper humble enough to prevent her heart 'prescribing resenting things to her pen' in answer. Her uncle's suggestion pulls her out of the state of faintness she is usually in because it outrages one of the few things she believes herself to have left: her self-respect, her sense of possessing virtue untouched by her body's defilement. After the 24-hour fit of excitement caused by the letter, she is exhausted, and relapses into a faintness overpowering enough to prevent Belford from visiting her.

Her melancholy can thus be interrupted by a fit

80. Ibid., p. 134.
brought on by shock. Sometimes, however, the fit seems to be melancholy itself in extremis.

I thought I had taken my last farewell of you. I never was so oddly affected: something that seemed totally to overwhelm my faculties ...

She survives this attack. Her death is not to be an occasion of the triumph of the melancholy of her body over her 'active mind'. It is to be a celebration, engaging her Christian faith, exciting her into a pitch of delirium which her body cannot stand. It is to be the victory of her mind and soul over her inferior physical frame. She leaps from her body into the arms of Jesus ...

such a smile, such a charming serenity overspreading her sweet face at the instant, as seemed to manifest her eternal happiness already begun. 83.

The immaterial soul kisses goodbye to its internuncii with the body, the animal spirits, which can no longer guide the lowly blood and body without their chieftain the soul. The body consequently stops, moulded by the final gesture of Clarissa's contempt, a risus sardonicus to mock the body's living mourners and its own dead intransience. The war between the nerves and the body is resolved, in favour of the nerves. The shocks each received debilitated the other as well. This reciprocity was fatal.

82. Ibid., p. 200.
83. Ibid., p. 347.
There is no such thing as a comprehensive model of the mind, body and nerves in the eighteenth century. There are too many conflicts of opinion, and these are not to be explained by new discoveries replacing the old beliefs. The old beliefs can be sustained. Mandeville believed in the hollowness of the fibres after Willis had shown them to be porous strings. Willis postulated a concentration of spirits in the brain while Mandeville said they were least needed there. The Encyclopaedia Britannica emphatically distinguished hysteria from hypochondria long after Willis and Sydenham called them the same, recognizing only a little difference. Contradictions become worse as one goes into detail. Only the very broad outlines show some kind of consistency. No wonder Dr. Rousseau in analysing Willis's discoveries sees their essential basis in something so simplified as confining the soul to the brain, since details were subject to an ocean of controversy. Superficially at least, one can see that Willis would not be differing from previous writers to maintain such a thing; but on another level, he is just getting the soul out of the way for a serious uncluttered study of the anatomy.

A reciprocity between the soul/nerves/spirit and the body was recognized. What was bad for the
one was bad for the other. Somatic problems affected the mind just as the mind's woes affected the body. This intimacy between the two halves of bodily existence could surely be more imaginatively termed a placing of the soul in the entire body rather than just in the brain, or even an identification of the soul with the body in the sense Mandeville considers their relationship, when he cannot conceive what a soul without a body is like. It does not matter that scientists display a deference to the Christian religion by stating that the soul is immaterial: such a concept is immaterial, in another sense, to their analyses of the mind, the nerves and the body. In these analyses it is unnecessary to be definite about the physical status of the soul, i.e., of thought and emotion. They exist, and are affected by the body. These issues are recognized by Locke:

It is past controversy, that we have something in us that thinks; out very doubts about what it is, confirm the certainty of its being, though we must content ourselves in the ignorance of what kind of being it is. 84.

Clarissa of course is in no doubt as to the immaterial nature of her soul. She regards the body as a burden to be born by the soul through Vanity Fair, yet does not regard particles of light as too gross a medium for the soul's heavenly existence.

She is only too aware of the demeaning nature of having to live within a body. She regards it as an opponent to contend with and master. It betrays her with its inbuilt instincts and needs, which make it respond favourably to Lovelace. For her it cannot be easy to resist the humanity bred in her bones through thousands of generations of procreating animals, her only weapon for defence being a factitious acculturation a few hundred years old. She assumes the identity necessary for 'virgin purity', a stance relative to which everything else is hateful. Her body and her unconscious self, as expressed in the eighteenth-century images of soul/mind, nerves and blood, cannot cope with the privations she subjects them to. These include not only the denials of the flesh in themselves but the shocks exacerbated by her excessive niceness and her sheer inflexibility.

The effect of her emotions on her body is so extreme that she cannot but be aware of the mutuality of her soul and body. There is much concrete evidence of this - the progressing constriction of her movements until her only movement is that of the soul in her head, her crying after the rape till she could cry no more, the dimness of her eyes, her feeling of consuming from day to day, the exquisite torture of being jailed and maliciously teased by the
whores, her angry fit, her lack of self-control on threatening suicide, her faintness. For her to feel with her entire self like this, and yet to dichotomize her soul and body, means that she must subscribe to those contemporary notions of physiology which involve an acceptance of the immateriality of the soul. That she accepts this immateriality also because of her religion simply helps to confirm the time-bound nature of her physiological concepts. Even doctors accepted it because of religion, though they claimed to have no certain scientific evidence of the soul's nature. The religious dimension of her woes, which is the most obtrusive and therefore the most recognized aspect of them, in the final analysis is part and parcel of their physical dimension.

Dr. Rousseau's emphasis on the limitation of the soul to the brain is misleading, because the procedure of such a limitation is only a slightly important corollary of the really significant discovery, that feelings are not notions in the nerves. That is, feelings are not conveyed, as I said in Chapter VII, by the nerves to the brain; they in fact reside already in the nerves. The brain is not illuminated by them at all. Therefore, since the brain is illuminated to them, this must be where the soul resides, since
In this Postscript I would like to consider G. S. Rousseau's paper 'Nerves, Spirits and Fibres', and outline an alternative reading to the one I have presented in the chapter. It is possible to redefine the way Dr Rousseau uses the word 'soul', a word of so many various meanings that it would be fair to say it creates ambiguities if it is not defined. Dr Rousseau claims it is a revolutionary step for Willis to limit the soul to the brain, and that Willis was the 'first scientist' to do so. The soul Rousseau is referring to, however, is a rare, pure, metaphysical entity, about which Willis knows no more than anybody, and about which he has less right to dogmatize than a clergyman. It is thus vaguely casuistical to say Willis is the first scientist to make such a discovery and to state it, when similar statements had already been made by scholars and clergymen.

Dr Rousseau's emphasis on the limitation of the soul to the brain is misleading, because the proposing of such a limitation is only a slightly important corollary of the really significant discovery, that feelings are but motions in the nerves. That is, feelings are not conveyed, as I said in Chapter III, by the nerves to the brain; they in fact reside or occur in the nerves. The brain is not buffeted by them at all. Therefore, since the brain is impervious to them, this must be where the soul resides, since
the soul also is impervious, being immutable and indestructible. The soul had to be in the brain because the body was adulterated with emoting fibres. The soul, qua eternal metaphysical being, has no business having feelings, and consists of nothing physical. One suspects that it consists of nothing at all.

According to Locke, the senses convey information to 'that thinking thing that is in us' which he takes to be the soul. Also, Foucault only talks of the fibres conveying rather than holding information, which presupposes the alive and feeling nature of the soul. Clarissa's soul straddles the two opposing concepts. It feels, sometimes being a 'soul in suspense'; yet at other times it is the soul which lives eternally. In an endeavour to guess at some content for the eternal soul, I described it in Chapter III as possibly being an aggregation of one's life and deeds. If it is not this, however, and it also is not the feeling, thinking part of man, it must be nothing. This I believe could be the sense in which Dr Rousseau assumes Willis thinks of it. Willis is thus being thoroughgoing in his religious orthodoxy. This factor is only latent in Dr Rousseau's paper.
Would he have permitted me to have been a humble instrument to have made him good, I think I could have made him happy.

Clarissa, on Lovelace.

A great deal is sometimes made of the unintended comic effects which Richardson has in his most pathetic scenes. Let me begin this short consideration of Lovelace by quoting one of them, which occurs when Clarissa arrives at a private place of detention, and wishes to ensure that she will not be placed in Lovelace's clutches again. She speaks to the proprietors of the jail.

She asked if they knew Mr Lovelace?
No, was their answer.
Have you heard of him?
No.
Well, then, you may be good sort of folks in your way. 1.

Acquaintance with Lovelace, the book's symbol of evil, the personification of Satan, is a sure sign of turpitude; Clarissa has learned that much. Absolutely no trust may be placed in him. Clarissa comes to this conclusion by a long painful route, strewn with dashed hopes, insults, plots and treachery, all of which reversed her initial optimism that Lovelace could be saved from his libertinism and that he required but a period of probation before he would be fit to marry her.

Lovelace's adherence to the pursuit of illicit sex is so strong that a recent critic, John Carroll, has suggested that Lovelace is shackled to the role of libertine, and that he only removes these shackles after the rape, when he knows Clarissa will never love him. It is as if he continued plotting - the decision

to continue perhaps occurring on a deliberate though unconscious level - until he was proved to be unfit for her. As Carroll says, he wanted to 'abase himself before her.'\(^2\) This he cannot do if there is any chance that she will accept him, which would destroy the proof of his unworthiness. This motive contradicts his stated, and felt, love for Clarissa, with the result that he is torn apart by the contradictory forces within him. Love for each other is the mutual ground on which Lovelace and Clarissa meet from their fiercely opposed nations of vice and virtue. The love truce is violated by fidelity to their residual loyalties. Lovelace certainly cannot confirm his libertinism, and thereby maintain the integrity of his personality, if Clarissa consents to marry him. The destruction of women is necessary for his existence, and is more precious to him than he realizes. The traumatic, or formative, experience of being jilted by the girl for whom he had a 'romantic' love affected him in such a way that he could never again have with a girl a relationship of the kind where he is vulnerable. While he thinks Clarissa could be the exception to this, he goes ahead with courses proven to be safe for him, presenting these courses under the guise of 'trying' her virtue to see if it is genuine.

The role of rake, Lovelace's role, has many associations with the myth of Don Juan. Many dramatists have created many Don Juans and many gentleman-rakes,

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and there is a variegated spectrum of libertinism. The most evil and the coarsest is undoubtedly Shadwell's Don John in *The Libertine*, who is the extreme of murderer, rapist and blasphemer. He not only perpetrates the worst acts, including parricide, with the least compunction, but also is the most outspoken theoretician. He attributes his depravity to heaven, claiming that his acts are dictated by appetites given him by Nature. It is Reason, he says, to follow these appetites. The corollary is that it is against Nature to hinder oneself from acting selfishly and to obey pious rules. The bold seducer as he appears in Restoration comedy is not a Don Juan, since he is too emasculated to rape and murder. (I think of plays like *The Country Wife* or *The Way of the World.*) The Restoration stage was too secular to admit of any deep preoccupation with the profanity and blasphemy of Don Juan. Its virtues were those of lyricism and effervescence rather than the solemn exploration of evil and a warning against impious ways.

Richardson seems to have taken one of these later gentlemen and reintroduced the concern with religion and ethics. Lovelace is not a vicious murderer like Don Juan, though presumably he has killed his man in duels. He is not a blasphemer in words and deeds like Don Juan, just in deeds. He is an adulterer and rapist like Don Juan, although unlike the Don he makes some attempt to provide for lying-in and for the children, if not for his victims' dismal futures. For
the sake of poetic justice, the abandoned behaviour of the rake and the Don Juan must be seen to cease or to be punished in each drama in which it occurs: God can wreak his vengeance through the falling statue or through Colonel Morden; or marriage can stop the Restoration gent in his tracks.

Richardson injects Lovelace with some of the symbolic religious significance which is the property of the Don Juan myth, though this aspect of Lovelace might be better considered by supposing the relationship between Lovelace and Don Juan to be similar to that between Leopold Bloom and Odysseus. Owing to the psychological detail of Richardson's presentation of Lovelace, Lovelace can appeal just as much (if at all, some critics would seem to intimate) to the credulity of readers as to their imaginations. To the bold strokes in the Don's character Richardson has added a human element which diminishes Lovelace's stature, making him capable of mistakes and miscalculations, such as Don Juan is not liable to. Don Juan is beyond control by human agencies and is reserved for divine judgment. That Lovelace's death at Morden's hands also has a divine significance is anticipated and spelled out in that dream of Lovelace which sees him descending into hell while Clarissa ascends to heaven. In this same dream, Lovelace's relations plead with Clarissa's spirit to forgive him. While she forgives him the injury to her, God cannot

forgive the offence against Himself.

The real Don Juan is thoroughgoing in his intransigence, and does not snivel for forgiveness like Lovelace. He meets the statue confirmed in his ways, and goes to hell proclaiming his vicious identity. The Don is not only an atheist in the sense that he is sceptical about others' beliefs; his scepticism plays the part which the positiveness of faith or doctrine usually plays for others. Moliere's Don Juan professes to believe only that $2 + 2 = 4$. He tries in vain to tempt a beggar who prays for his benefactors to blaspheme in order to get a donation from him. The Don's scepticism is a faith which no demonstration can gainsay. If a statue supernaturally nods its head, it is really only a trick of light that makes it seem so. He would rather accept one lie knowingly than deny something which gives meaning to his entire life. This choice is the same as Lovelace is confronted with: should he accept the lie that Clarissa, like other women, can be 'once subdued; always subdued', thus reinforcing for himself the code from which he derives his identity, or should he surrender to the pious pleasures which her 'feeling heart' can provide, and thus give up his identity? His choice has integrity; it is also mightily selfish and cruel. He lives to regret it, but it is too late to be an apostate. He can never have Clarissa, and the old ways are repugnant to him. His earthly and heavenly damnation is sealed.
Lovelace is a man of action, quick to do things which express his rakish personality, so quick that he often does them without consideration. To seduce Clarissa requires a massively complex plan, and a great deal of energy to translate plan into action. The energy, once exerted, has an irresistible inertia. The helping of Rosebud in order to impress Clarissa, the negotiating of a flustered Clarissa into a waiting coach, the dizzily roundabout way of procuring Antony to suggest to Mrs Howe that she borrow Anna's money, so that Clarissa cannot have it and must therefore rely on himself, the devising of ways of proposing to Clarissa that are bound to offend her, these acts denote the existence of an invention so involved in itself that the mind it inheres in cannot step aside and evaluate what it is doing. Rather than learn from the crises and misunderstandings in his relationship with Clarissa, Lovelace simply continues to lay more plans. The ipecacuanha plot, in reassuring him of her love, merely adds to his later plots a reliable element. Owing to the difference between his definition of love and Clarissa's, however, he is mistaken in thinking her love will encompass the unseemly freedoms with her bosom which he offers on two occasions.

as possible. She learns that he is vulgar enough to abuse any intimacy or communication between them: all apparent frankness and mutual caring are just pretexts to provide opportunities to indulge a lust which is evidently unmixed with any finer feelings.

Lovelace's strategy on the first occasion is to lower Clarissa's guard and inveigle himself into her respect by wishing for a reconciliation with her family and asking for an early day to marry. Writing to Belford, Lovelace professes to rely on the fact, which Clarissa discovers afterwards, that love 'encroaches'. For Lovelace, 'Love never goes backward', but for Clarissa this displacement can become exorbitant. 'Is this the design of your flattering speeches?' Richardson, in presenting Lovelace's insidious delicacy from the latter's point of view, gives the interpretation of the event most sympathetic to him. In this way, Lovelace can speak of his aspiration for enjoying with Clarissa the 'highest act of love' without calling into use the author's official disgust with this hope. Lovelace merely reports Clarissa using rather flat insults, e.g. 'base, flattering encroacher' and 'you have an odious heart', which do not really reveal what is wrong with his assault on her. This mystery is carried over into Lovelace's retrospective analysis of the scene, when he tries to construe the reason for Clarissa's reticence. Not even considering the possibility that Clarissa cannot trust him, he asks rather whether she
proudly places undue value on her person, and whether this pride should be punished. There is thus a basic lack of communication at some levels, which should not be confused with Lovelace's refusal to communicate on other levels when he is manipulating situations. He wants Clarissa to remain in doubt as to the relationship between them. This he accomplishes, with the result that this state of doubt is Clarissa's most cordial relationship with him, her only certain feeling for him being one of revulsion.

While Lovelace thinks his own stratagems justified, he sees no excuse for those of Clarissa, e.g. her attempted escapes. He seems to think deceit should be either right or wrong without reference to what it is used for. That Clarissa uses it after condemning his use of it is a condemnation of her. Lovelace is appalled. 'Confounded art, cunning villainy!' The narration of this incident from Lovelace's point of view necessitates that he should do something especially vile which will show up even against the sympathy he has for himself, and this occurs when he drags her from the window where she has been screaming to passers-by and bodily carries her up to her room. Lovelace is willing to go to such a forceful extreme not only on account of his cruelty but his inability to sympathize with or understand Clarissa. The only thing he appreciates is that once again Clarissa has outsmarted him, even though she

did not succeed in escaping. And why does he not give up schemes as his basis of relating to others? Without them, he will 'be but a common man.'\textsuperscript{6} He apparently prefers the 'disgrace, repentance, regret' which his successes give him to becoming a 'dull, heavy creature' like Belford who like most people is frank and unscheming. Lovelace must have a grotesque lack of proportion in his values to subscribe to such a mode of living.

His insensitivity to the true import of his schemes makes it possible for him to be amazingly brazen whenever his accusers confront him with his guilt. Writing about his 'trial' before the four virtuous ladies of his family and the hypocritical Lord M, Lovelace defends his shameless speech thus:

But he must be a silly Fellow who has not something to say for himself, when every cause has its black and its white side. \textsuperscript{7}

When Clarissa's pathetic and oblique account of her treatment at Lovelace's hands is read out, he affects to be light-hearted, and he jokes about Clarissa's decorous literary style. He parries her charges of viciousness by disparaging her ambition to reclaim his soul\textsuperscript{8} and by declaring how difficult it was 'to be forgiven for the slighter offences' to her.\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., p.229.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., pp.399-400.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., pp.398-399.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., pp.407-408.
pride cannot bear the diminution of his ego inherent in the trial, to such an extent that, calling Lord M's reproaches despicable, he refuses to be humbled by the threat of disinheriting. Such a threat would have made a lesser man turn oily and ingratiating. Lovelace's verbal bluster is not an easy talent.
When Clarissa refers to the drugging as 'a means that would shock humanity to be acquainted with', Lovelace admits 'I thought myself an oak in impudence; but, by my troth, this had almost felled me.'\textsuperscript{10}. His immediate embarrassment is corrected later by a claim that Clarissa, because of her 'innocence',\textsuperscript{11} does not have any criterion for evaluating the inhumanity of an act. Once he has defended himself in the trial—and been found guilty notwithstanding his excuses—he can get back into the good graces of his family by agreeing to atone for his crimes by marrying.

All were of opinion that she might, in her present desolate circumstances, be brought to forgive me.\textsuperscript{12}

His talk only has a temporary effect, since sooner or later the ladies will discover that Clarissa won't forgive him, and they will fully appreciate the latent factor negating his repentance.

Colonel Morden has a pretty good idea what this factor is, i.e. that Clarissa's fall was due to 'more than a common seduction', but cannot act on a

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., p.397.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., p.400.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p.408.
suspicion, since he is a gentleman like Lovelace. By the time of the meeting of Lovelace, Morden and Lord M, Lovelace is tired of admitting he is a wretch. 'A bad cause gives a man great disadvantages.' 'The interrogatories put ... by the colonel made me look cursedly mean.'\textsuperscript{13}. Lovelace therefore reacts to Morden's chastisements with resentment, even challenging him to a duel, whereas Morden does not see why a man should dislike being rightly accused of his crimes.

The man who has shown so little of the thing honour ... ought not to stand so nicely on the empty name of it.\textsuperscript{14}

Neither gives any quarter to the other in the argument. Lovelace by his hypersensitivity at least achieves a steering away from the subject which cannot be discussed, that of why a woman like Clarissa should have had sex before marriage. Morden's pursuit of Lovelace's guilt is not diminished by Lovelace's haste to establish that Morden himself does not have clean hands, and that he has been a 'man of gallantry'.\textsuperscript{15}

Lovelace at no time in this meeting affects the gaiety he exhibited in the meeting with the ladies. With the changing character of his accusers, Lovelace has changed the character of his defences. With Morden, Lovelace cannot appeal to the basic family affections

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., Vol.IV, p.229.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p.226.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p.220.
which the ladies harbour, and he has to compensate for this lack of mitigation of fault-finding on Morden's part by threatening a duel. Even this hardly modifies Morden's adverse judgments.

When Lovelace sees the Howes at Colonel Ambrose's ball, Anna modifies the virulence of her accusations of Lovelace according to the politeness required at a social function. This politeness has another effect. It also makes Lovelace's charming demeanour incongruous with the seriousness of his enquiries. Anna disgustedly observes that 'nothing can touch him for half an hour together.' 16 'Your air, sir, seems not that of a penitent.' 17 Anna is amazed that no girls object to Lovelace's flirting with them, even though he has proved the sort of 'devil' he is. Lovelace has the face to last out in interviews which for anybody else would be humiliating disasters. For him, the humiliation is extreme, but his manipulation of accusers saves it from being complete. Clarissa's resistance to the idea of marrying him and her deceitful promise of reconciling with him after she goes to her 'father's house' comprise the very thin boundary separating him from utter damnation by Clarissa's sympathizers.

While Lovelace may be careful to exculpate himself as far as possible in the conversations I have just discussed, he has no such concern when describing

16. Ibid., p.25
17. Ibid., p.20
his actions to Belford. In the latter case he privately conceptualizes his actions according to images free of moral content or blatantly defiant of morality. He is so proud when he engineers the plan which lures Clarissa to the brothel that he is a mighty elephant who has 'reason to snuff the moon with [his] proboscis'.\(^1\) This inflated estimation of the stature of his miserable deed involves a degree of self-absorption inconsistent with any sense of proportion or self-evaluation. His love of glory can be referred not to what he does but only to his way of regarding what he does. It is Richardson's intention to show the difference between the despicable reality of evil and its spurious self-praises. These are to be contrasted with Clarissa's truer notions of the possibilities in life Lovelace has missed on account of his deliberate and 'judicial' hardness of heart. Lovelace sees nothing wrong with his motives when he says 'My REVENGE and my LOVE are uppermost by turns', drawing his imagery of revenge from poetry.\(^2\) He idealizes his hatred of the Harlowes into the fantastic form of 'Dryden's lion' who 'with a lordly rage, his hunters tears,' when the grotesque image of scrapping baboons would be more appropriate.

He views the 'subduing' of Clarissa as 'a triumph over the whole sex' rather than as an interaction with another individual. The symbolism of this

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\(^1\) Ibid., Vol.II, p.114.  
\(^2\) Ibid., Vol.I, p.175.
particular seduction, and Clarissa's physical charms, blind him to the most important personal elements in their relationship with each other. Clarissa recognizes the problems this creates, and has to resist Lovelace's aggressive vulgarity. This only makes him more impatient and, as a consequence, yet more aggressive and devious. Lovelace says, 'I always considered opposition and resistance as a challenge to do my worst.' At the least, this private interpretation of the nature of opposition and resistance is inadequate as a generalization. Lovelace does not bother himself about their causes, and is only concerned with his response to them.

The only motive he can find for repressing his predatoriness comes not from a feeling for Clarissa, but from some abstract entity called conscience, which as Lovelace conceives it is simply an instigator of sterile, stuffy inhibitions. He will give in to it only if I cannot do credit to human nature and to the female sex by bringing down such an angel as this [i.e. Clarissa] to class with and adorn it. 20.

Against his will, he finds himself 'soberized into awe and reverence' by Clarissa, and it is when he thinks of her power to do this that the 'lurking varletess CONSCIENCE' flies into his window, only to leave when Lovelace resolutely changes back into his

old evil self. For Lovelace conscience is synonymous with weakness and surrender. The frustration of his will inspires him with anger, even if it is anger for the shame he feels over his transactions with Clarissa. Conscience, that fifth-column partisan for Clarissa dwelling within him, is easier to deal with when it is personified. He was wrong in letting Conscience escape the first time. Next time he meets it he murders it, thus leaving himself without the scruples preventing rape.\footnote{Ibid., Vol.III, pp.145-147} At both encounters with his conscience, who is female, he considers whether he is 'a machine' or a free agent. It is the lack of conscience that disqualifies him from humanity and makes him the machine he fears to be. He has 'gone too far to recede' with his plotting, yet his persistence is owing more to 'foolishness', as he speculates, and an unwillingness to suffer the embarrassment of admitting his foolishness, than to any real necessity of persisting. He mainly regards the existence of his conscience as an obstruction to his triumph.

To have killed his conscience is merely an artificial exercise. It does, however, show that he has made his heart a little harder than it already was. When 'temporary remorse' hits him again,\footnote{Ibid., p.155.} he decides, not that his conscience is still alive after all, but that it must be 'LOVE' pleading Clarissa's case.
Consequently, he has an argument with a prosopopoeia of love, since, with his generous and open mind, he will grant 'every whiffler audience'. To Love's charge that Lovelace does not possess the 'right sort of love', Lovelace answers that Clarissa does not even pretend to love, and he asks Love in vain for a definition of the right sort of love. After Lovelace asserts that love cannot be 'governed by merit, ... prudence or any other reasoning power', and that Clarissa defies Love by having a kind of love that 'never before reigned in a female heart', Love gives her up. Lovelace's plans are thus uninhibited by Love and Conscience (i.e., not necessarily love and conscience in lower case letters). It is not until Clarissa's mortality is certain that Conscience awakes again.23.

Indeed, Lovelace's soul itself has a reawakening at this stage, so that he becomes desperate with grief, and gets mad ideas. He suggests that Clarissa, who first intended only to 'vex and plague' him, has gone to the extreme of dying and forgiving him in order 'the more to be revenged'.24. He wants to put her remains in his family's vault and keep her heart in a gold receptacle.25. He frightens Hickman when he says Death is her suitor.26. His fancies are as wild as ever they have been, but they have lost

23. Ibid., Vol.IV, p.90.
24. Ibid., p.326.
their light-hearted element. 'My temper is entirely altered. I know not what it is to laugh.'

27. He has discovered the acute suffering of the soul to be worse than that of the body.

28. He needs Dr Hale's remedies to bring him back his 'wit-jar'.

29. There is nothing left for him, or of him, even though his constitution recovers. Both his rake-self and his lover-self have been destroyed. The distractions of the European continent prove insufficient to restore his soul. The duel with Morden only confirms physically the damnation that has already taken place inside him.

The character I have described in this chapter is fundamentally perverse. His satisfactions and sports have no easy explanation; his motivations are convoluted; he has no spontaneous reactions. He possesses an ability to feel delight, but subverts it for ulterior purposes. This amazing maze is naturally too complex for Clarissa to guess the existence of when she first meets Lovelace. When it becomes hazily apparent to her, it is not its intricacies which she regards as significant, but the 'ungrateful baseness' of a 'wretch destitute of all honour'. The plain path lay before him, but instead of following it he adhered to the appearances which a rake must present, thus exhibiting a pathetic kind of cowardice. Being afraid of the ridicule of whores and fellow rakes, he finds it much easier to wound Clarissa than to respect her.

27. Ibid., Vol.IV, p.377.
28. Ibid., p.297.
29. Ibid., p.343.
Richardson's portrayal of Lovelace, in its insistence on the meanness and paltriness of his motives for giving up his chances to have Clarissa, is hardly the result of the deep psychological investment in Lovelace which Ian Watt discerns in Richardson.\textsuperscript{30}.

The 'prodigious fertility of Lovelace's sexual imagination' does not indicate the enjoyment which Watt suggests Richardson takes in creating Lovelace, but is rather the result of a willingness to plumb the abysses of human experience where Lovelace's evil resides. To depict Lovelace's evil, Richardson must write evil things. It is not necessary to associate Richardson with them in a personal sense.

\textsuperscript{30} Rise of the Novel, p.245.
CONCLUSION

Even after one analyses what is in the literary monster known as Clarissa, one must still ask oneself whether it is rewarding to read it. It is certainly a fascinating expression of a worldview that does not receive too much sympathy these days. Fortunately, Richardson's creative artistry enables him, in the novel, to transcend the limitations of that worldview. Richardson presents Clarissa's personality in the kind of detail which creates the impression of a complete individual, who is both psychologically convincing and yet dominated by a definable moral system. This does not mean one has to like her. There is even good reason to regard her as a sinister expression of a stereotype of femininity conceived by a man for specifically masculine motives. For a woman to conform to it is the quick way to earn congratulation and praise.

In 1871, William Forsyth, a dilettante literary historian, regarded Clarissa in this way:

The key-note of the whole composition is libertine pursuit, and we are wearied and disgusted by volume after volume devoted to the single subject of attack on a woman's chastity. It would be bad enough to read this if compressed into a few chapters, but it becomes intolerably repulsive when spun out in myraids of letters. If any book deserved the charge of 'sickly sentimentality', it is this, and that it should once have been so widely popular, and thought admirably adapted to instruct young women in lessons of virtue and religion, shows a strange
and perverted state of the public taste, not to say public morals. 1.

Pretty well, this sums up the worst that can be said of Clarissa. It is no basis, however, for refusing to come to terms with the novel.

Clarissa is a phenomenon rather than a work of art. It is a bold and self-confident work which is not ashamed to claim that it illustrates 'the highest and most important Doctrines not only of Morality but of Christianity'. One must respect it for the way it does this, and pay homage or damn it afterwards.

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