CLASSICAL AND GROTESQUE BODIES:
SOME ASPECTS OF COURTESY LITERATURE AND
THE MID-EIGHTHENTH-CENTURY COMIC NOVEL,

by

Tim J. Prior

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Graduate Department of English
University of Toronto

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This thesis examines the appearance of the grotesque body in Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, Tobias Smollett's *Humphry Clinker*, and Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* in relation to its appearance in the literature of courtesy. Such works as Jean Baptiste de Morvan Bellegarde’s *Reflexions upon Ridicule*, Giovanni Della Casa's *Galateo*, and Henry Fielding's own essays on courtesy demonstrate the exemplary usage of a rhetorical structure that holds what Bakhtin terms the classical and grotesque bodies in significant antithesis. However, contrary to Bakhtin's view of the beneficial subversiveness of the grotesque body, the literature of courtesy uses representations of the grotesque body to explore, to express, and to validate positive social values associated with the classical body.

The grotesque body is contained within a static order centred on the classical body; and in the novels I examine, this rhetoric of containment appears in a number of ways.

In *Joseph Andrews*, the significance of the night episode at Booby hall is developed through the grotesque activity of Abraham Adams, Mrs. Slipslop, and Beau Didapper. However, their energetic grotesquerie is contained and ultimately diffused by the presence and activity of Fanny, Joseph, and Lady Booby.

The grotesque in *Humphry Clinker* is contextualized by
ideals of intellectual and moral perfection centred on the persons of Lydia Melford and George Dennison. Lydia embodies and eroticizes the desire for retirement in a perfect natural environment that increasingly animates Matthew Bramble's dramatic progress, while George Dennison incarnates a classical body that is representative of a social order in which the principle of subordination and the prerogatives of rank are duly recognized.

*Tristram Shandy* parodies the narrow attention to details of physical comportment characteristic of courtesy literature, habitually overturning the decorums that tend to proceed from the classical body isolated in its distinctive sphere. The ideal of sexual love that is variously invoked in the novel does not escape the body's particularity, but is drawn into the realm of the grotesque by the desire for the erotic body that fixates on how that body may be entered. All bodies inescapably participate in the body's grotesque and aimless existence.
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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my parents, Joseph Prior and Charlotte Gorman Prior.
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 13
Chapter One
Introduction

This thesis will examine some aspects of the grotesque in three mid-eighteenth-century novels through the lens of courtesy literature. What I will show is that courtesy literature of the period utilizes a characteristic rhetorical structure for representing the relationship between what Bakhtin refers to as the classical and the grotesque bodies. This structure, as I call it, is constituted by the regular use of the grotesque body to explore, to express, and ultimately to validate values associated with the classical body. This rhetorical structure--this mode of representation--is reproduced in varying ways in Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* (1742), Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* (1771) and Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1760-67), each of which bears a distinct relation to discourse concerned with physical manners. Fielding's invocation of Bellegarde and his *Reflexions on Ridicule* in the Preface to *Joseph Andrews* is an explicit connection of the novelist's didactic ambitions with those of the courtesy writer.¹

¹ Fielding's allusion to the French courtesy writer Jean Baptiste de Morvan Bellegarde in the Preface to *Joseph Andrews* suggested to me the choice of that novel over the perhaps more traditionally satisfying *Tom Jones*. Additionally, the smaller canvas of *Joseph Andrews* makes its effects more obvious in comparison to the intricacy of detail that necessarily arises from the later work's expansive plot. Both the maturity and complexity of *Humphry Clinker*'s satire and the quality of the novel's verisimilitude both in its action and characters dictated its choice over Smollett's earlier work. And as will be
Smollett's idealization of the elegant and gentlemanly George Dennison, together with his continuous excoriation of the affectation of various characters, manifest his own consciousness of the significance of norms of physical comportment to the constitution of society. And even Sterne, in the precision with which he represents the postures and motions of his different characters, manifests an intense consciousness of the body's significant expressiveness. Moreover, Tristram's ironic invocation of Giovanni Della Casa's Galateo suggests Sterne's consciousness of the matter of physical manners.

I have chosen these novels because their respective comic treatments of affairs of manners and morals proceed in ways that invite ready comparison with the distinctive aspects of the courtesy literature I am interested in illuminating. Other novelists of the period do not so immediately concern themselves with issues of comportment in society. Defoe's intensely individualistic protagonists are signally uninterested in what courtesy writers tend to refer to as the "art of pleasing" in polite society. The dramatic seen in my fifth chapter, the examination of this novel in relation to aspects of my study of courtesy literature has proven particularly illuminating. Finally, I have chosen Tristram Shandy both, as I say, because Sterne has occasion to toy with the Galateo, an influential courtesy book written by Giovanni Della Casa, and because Sterne's distinctive treatment of the body interestingly complicates the view of the disciplined, classical body characteristic of courtesy literature.
authenticity of Defoe’s characters comes rather from the art of surviving on the margins of established society. I have excluded Richardson’s novels for similar reasons. Pamela and Clarissa are equally forceful individuals whose progress in their respective narratives is presented more as an intensely self-conscious adaptation to continually changing circumstances than as the choreographed movement over a landscape of carefully objectified arrangements of objects and persons that tends to form the basis of narrative development in the novels I am considering. Indeed the objectifying narrative authority in Joseph Andrews, Humphry Clinker, and Tristram Shandy (Tristram’s thoroughly dominating subjectivity is not contextualized, as in Richardson, by the consciousness of other characters and possesses an authority that, in its peculiar way, rivals the authority of even Fielding’s narrative voice) clearly distinguishes their work from Richardson’s. This authority constitutes a base of rhetorical persuasiveness that allows these novels to be brought into close comparison with aspects of courtesy literature.

Further delimitations within the range of eighteenth-century literature concern my choice of genre. The grotesque in the novel has been chosen because of the range of its appearances in that genre. The grotesque in dramatic literature more often than not comes into existence in the
theatrical realization of characters who appear in the
dramatic text only as names attached to blocks of dialogue,
and in elaborate episodes of stage business merely suggested
by the efficient brevity of stage directions. By
comparison, the novel provides many more passages of dense
and explicit characterization and narration, and therefore
provides many more clearly present examples of the grotesque
than does dramatic literature. The explicit development of
grotesque action (the hounding of Parson Adams, the tortures
of Lismahago, or the circumcision of Tristram, for example)
also sets the novel apart from poetry where narrative is,
when present at all, attenuated by comparison. Pope's
poetry springs instantly to mind as exhibiting different
elements of the grotesque.

However, if one compares Pope's with Fielding's satiric
treatment of Lord Hervey, for example, the portrait of
Sporus from The Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot and that of Beau
Didapper from Joseph Andrews, the distinctions become
apparent. The portrait of Sporus develops in the following
manner:

Let Sporus tremble--"What? that Thing of silk,
"Sporus, that mere white Curd of Ass's Milk?
. . . ."
Yet let me flap this Bug with gilded wings,
This painted Child of Dirt that stinks and stings;
Whose Buzz the Witty and the Fair annoys,
Yet Wit ne'er tastes, and Beauty ne'er enjoys,
So well-bred Spaniels civilly delight
In mumbling of the Game they dare not bite.
Eternal Smiles his Emptiness betray,
As shallow streams run dimpling all the way.
Whether in florid Impotence he speaks,
And, as the Prompter breathes, the Puppet squeaks;
Or at the Ear of Eve, familiar Toad,
Half Froth, half Venom, spits himself abroad,
In Puns, or Politicks, or Tales, or Lyes,
Or Spite, or Smut, or Rymes, or Blasphemies.
His Wit all see-saw between that and this,
Now high, now low, now Master up, now Miss,
And he himself one vile Antithesis.
Amphibious Thing! that acting either Part,
The trifling Head, or the corrupted Heart!
Fop at the Toilet, Flatt’rer at the Board,
Now trios a Lady, and now struts a Lord.
Eve’s Tempter thus the Rabbins have exprest,
A Cherub’s face, a Reptile all the rest;
Beauty that shocks you, Parts that none will trust,
Wit that can creep, and Pride that licks the dust.
(305-334)

Fielding’s portrait of Hervey proceeds differently:

Mr. Didapper, or Beau Didapper, was a young Gentleman
of about four Foot five Inches in height. He wore his
own Hair, tho’ the Scarcity of it might have given him
sufficient Excuse for a Periwig. His face was thin and
pale: The Shape of his Body and Legs none of the best;
for he had very narrow Shoulders, and no Calf; and his
Gait might more properly be called hopping than
walking. The Qualifications of his Mind were well
adapted to his Person . . . Such was the little Person
or rather Thing that hopped after Lady Booby into Mr.
Adam’s Kitchin.
(IV.ix.312-13)

Pope and Fielding are alike in vilifying Hervey as a
"thing", but Pope compiles his picture through the
accumulation of disparate details. His Sporus fairly
rustles with the art of Pope’s grotesque vituperation. As
Sporus is fixed by the poet’s rage, he is also fixed
purgatorially in space, assuming stasis within the poet’s

2 All references are to Joseph Andrews, ed. Martin C.
satiric vision. Fielding's Didapper, on the other hand, must possess a realistically, if satirically represented individuality in order to participate meaningfully in the action. Like Pope, Fielding gives some attention to the contemptible equivocations of his object's character, but the two paragraphs Fielding devotes to these details are in their way irrelevant to the curious physical appearance that will be the means by which Fielding extends his ridicule in subsequent scenes. Where Pope concentrates on imaging moral insufficiency in elaborately heterogeneous physical details, details whose force embodies the rigour of the poet's judgment, Fielding's judgment comes largely through the ways in which Didapper's physical insufficiency involves the rake in a series of absurd contretemps designed to elaborate the ridicule levelled in the introductory portrait. Didapper is judged by the way in which his behaviour compares with the behaviour of other characters. And this judgment tends to be visited comically--the grotesque is frequently accompanied by laughter.

It is in its comic aspect that the grotesque that occurs in these novels is distinct from the grotesque common to the Gothic novel. The affinity of the Gothic novel with the grotesque begins with Walpole's Castle of Otranto (1764) and is in fact explicitly recognized by Walpole's epigraph to the second edition:
This is a paraphrastic allusion to the opening lines of Horace's *Ars Poetica*, one of the earliest discussions of the grotesque in art, where a multi-formed monster is attributed to the dreams of a sick man. By and large, the appearance of the grotesque in the Gothic novel takes two forms. One is a use of the word "grotesque" that is consistent with general eighteenth-century usage confining its sense to a particular characteristic of visual composition—the sense isolated in Johnson's definition, "distorted of figure; unnatural; wildly formed." In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Emily's party comes across a collection of people by a camp fire in the woods of the Pyrenees:

They were preparing their supper; a large pot stood by the fire, over which several figures were busy. The blaze discovered a rude kind of tent, round which many children and dogs were playing, and the whole formed a picture highly grotesque. (I.iv.40)

Later in the novel, Emily describes the apartments of the chateau as "antique and grotesque" (III.xii.489). In *Vathek*, Beckford describes "the grotesque branches of the almond trees, in full blossom, fantastically chequered with

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3 "idle fancies shall be shaped so that nevertheless head and foot are assigned a single shape"

hyacinths and jonquils, breathed forth a delightful
fragrance" (100). And Emily's description of Udolpho
catches nearly exactly at the pictorial nature of the
grotesque:

From the parts she saw, she judged of the heavy
strength and extent of the whole. The gateway before
her, leading into the courts, was of gigantic size, and
was defended by two round towers, crowned by
overhanging turrets, embattled, where, instead of
banners, now waved long grass and wild plants, that had
taken root among the mouldering stones, and which
seemed to sigh, as the breeze rolled past, over the
desolation around them. The towers were united by a
curtain, pierced and embattled also, below which
appeared the pointed arch of an huge portcullis,
surmounting the gates: from these the walls of the
ramparts extended to other towers, overlooking the
precipice, whose shattered outline, appearing on a
gleam, that lingered in the west, told of ravages of
war. (II.v.227)

The other sense of the grotesque that occurs in the
Gothic novel is confined to the evocation of the uncanny and
the terrible. This appearance of the grotesque is quite
distinct from that which describes the passive object of
detached aesthetic contemplation, and it is exploited by
Walpole in The Castle of Otranto (1764), Matthew Lewis in

5 There is an interesting correspondence between
Radcliffe's description of the exterior of Udolpho and the
approaches to Eden in Milton's Paradise Lost:

the champaign head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access deny'd.

This passage also appears in Johnson's definition of the
grotesque.
his *Monk* (1796) and in Beckford's *Vathek*. Walpole attaches dread to several grotesque objects: the gigantic helmet that crushes Conrad to death at the beginning of the novel (I.16-17); the skeletal figure that terrifies Frederic, "the figure turned slowly round, [and] discovered to Frederic the fleshless jaws and empty sockets of a skeleton, wrapt in a hermit's cowl" (V.102); and the strange portrait:

At that instant the portrait of his grandfather, which hung over the bench where they had been sitting, uttered a deep sigh and heaved its breast. Isabella, whose back was turned to the picture, saw not the motion, nor knew whence the sound came, but started and said, Hark my lord! what sound was that? and at the same time made towards the door. Manfred, distracted between the flight of Isabella, who had now reached the stairs, and his inability to keep his eyes from the picture, which began to move, had however advanced some steps after her, still looking backwards on the portrait, when he saw it quit its panel, and descend on the floor with a grave and melancholy air. (I. 23-4)

Lewis' use of Horace as the epigraph to his novel draws attention to the exploitation of the fearful: "Dreams, magic terror, spells of mighty power, / Witches, and ghosts who rove at midnight hour." Lewis' effects have about them a shallow sensationalism that replaces real apprehension with the kind of giddy, slightly spooked enjoyment aimed at by the latter-day House of Horrors found at amusement parks.

Thus Elvira's ghost:

But Oh me! how I shook, when I saw a great tall figure at my elbow whose head touched the ceiling! The Face was Donna Elvira's, I must confess; But out of its mouth came clouds of fire, its arms were loaded with heavy chains which it rattled piteously, and every hair on its head was a Serpent as big as my arm! At this I
was frightened enough, and began to say my Ave-Maria: But the Ghost interrupting me uttered three loud groans, and roared out in a terrible voice, "Oh! That Chicken's wing! My poor soul suffers for it!" As soon as She said this, the Ground opened, the Spectre sank down, I heard a clap of thunder, and the room was filled with a smell of brimstone.  (III.ii.324)

Beckford, on the other hand, while certainly indulging in that same sensationalism, particularly evident in the manner in which the grotesque appears in a veritable parade of forms, nevertheless creates forms and incidents that are quite beyond the pale of the rational. The Giaour is introduced early in the novel:

Not long after this proclamation, arrived in his metropolis a man so abominably hideous that the very guards, who arrested him, were forced to shut their eyes, as they led him along: the Caliph himself appeared startled at so horrible a visage.  (5)

The Giaour troubles precisely because his form is not fixed, like the typically passive grotesque. He is rather endowed with Rabelaisian attributes of excess and transformation:

The man, or rather monster . . . thrice rubbed his forehead, which, as well as his body, was blacker than ebony; four times clapped his paunch, the projection of which was enormous; opened wide his huge eyes, which glowed like firebrands; began to laugh with a hideous noise, and discovered his long amber-coloured teeth, bestreaked with green.  (6)

Later, this bizarre figure provokes Vathek and his company to violence:

Vathek, no longer able to brook such insolence, immediately kicked him from the steps; instantly descending, repeated his blow; and persisted, with such assiduity, as incited all who were present to follow his example. Every foot was up and aimed at the Indian, and no sooner had any one given him a kick,
than he felt himself constrained to reiterate the stroke.

The stranger afforded them no small entertainment: for, being both short and plump, he collected himself into a ball, and rolled round on all sides, at the blows of his assailants, who pressed after him, wherever he turned, with an eagerness beyond conception, whilst their numbers were every moment increasing.

At first the palace and finally the whole city rises to the hysteria of the bizarre pursuit until "the confusion that universally prevailed, rendered Samarah like a city taken by storm, and devoted to absolute plunder" (20). The sense of the grotesque developed in the Gothic novel, both by virtue of the exploitation of particular visual forms and of varying combinations of the fearful and the uncanny, is manifestly different from the appearance of the grotesque in the novels which constitute the focus of this study. As Novak observes in his essay on the grotesque in Gothic fiction, "The grotesque of the Gothic is . . . 'grotesque in the proper sense' [quoted from Kayser], the end result of which is likely to be disgust rather than laughter. The demons of the Gothic--real, imagined, or fabricated--represent a sudden revelation of the uncontrolled forces of the mind as they are reified in the seemingly ordered, real

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6 Todorov applies the term "uncanny" to works where "events are related which may be readily accounted for by the laws of reason, but which are, in one way or another, incredible, extraordinary, shocking, singular, disturbing, or unexpected, and which thereby provoke in the character and in the reader a reaction similar to that which works of the fantastic have made familiar" (46).
world" (58). The grotesque in the novels of Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne invite neither uneasiness, nor the kind of dread that accompanies the experience of horror in popular fiction. Rather the grotesques in these comic novels are concerned with arousing ridicule, invoking standards of difference, and directing judgement. This grotesque occurs in the context of the normal, and does not exist as a free locus of expression aiming to inspire and to utilize unbounded fields of emotion.

* It is customary to begin a study of the grotesque with a history of the term. Such history typically proceeds by noticing the frescoes in Nero’s Domus Aurea and their discovery in the late fifteenth century (Kayser, 19; Barasch, 17; Harpham, 23) (fig. 1). This history follows the etymological trail left by the word "grotesque" as its

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7 It should be noted, however, that certain episodes in Smollett’s *Ferdinand Count Fathom* (1753) display a Gothic grotesque quality—the well known scene in chapter 62 in which Melvile experiences "a real rapture of gloomy expectation" (312) being most notable in this respect. See 312 n.5 in the Georgia edition for further commentary on the Gothic in Smollett. Novak notices in a general way that "the scene in that work involving a mysterious inn, a dead body, and a band of banditti might fit into a Gothic novel" (58), though he is careful to point out that the novel is firmly in the tradition of picaresque fiction.

8 See Kayser, Barasch, Harpham.
Fig. 1

"Nicolas Ponce, engraving from Domus Aurea designs, in Descriptions des bains de Titus, 1786, detail."

(from Harpham)
sense expands over the course of the Enlightenment and proliferates wildly through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. By the last half of the current century we come upon the veritable explosion of interest in the grotesque with the concomitant expansion of its bibliography, in which such names as Kayser, Clayborough, Thomson, Steig, Bakhtin, and Harpham occupy a central position.

However, in embarking upon a study of the grotesque in the eighteenth century, the existence of this history is problematic for a number of reasons. Chief among these is that the history of the word "grotesque" itself does not ultimately coincide with the history of those phenomena which might be described as grotesque. For certainly the Roman artists at work in the Domus Aurea in the first century AD did not refer to their creations as grotesques. This etymological myopia gives rise to a related difficulty: if "grotesque" fails to describe those objects which antedate it, its attenuated usage in other periods may fail to account for existing objects or phenomena we would now be comfortable labelling "grotesque." Thus, while Johnson's definition of the word--"(adj.) distorted of figure; unnatural; wildly formed"--might be used to determine what things the eighteenth century might describe as "grotesque", Harpham's application of the term might be considered to cover a usefully larger range of phenomena. However, this
presents our second difficulty. Harpham, for instance, makes the claim that "the grotesque is any kind of art that stands at the margins of experience, that enlarges our conception of human capacities" (184). It is a claim that is so broad that it is difficult to accept.

In the canon of grotesque theory itself, studies of the grotesque provide relatively little elucidation of the phenomenon in the eighteenth century. Wolfgang Kayser's seminal work, The Grotesque in Art and Literature (trans. 1963), sees the importance of the grotesque in literature developing from the early nineteenth century. Kayser defines the grotesque as "an attempt to invoke and subdue the demonic aspects of the world" (188), and the weight of his examination of the grotesque has fallen on the twentieth century and on the absurd and grotesque elements of such artists as Dalí and Max Ernst and of writers like Thomas Mann. Kayser emphasizes the existentialist atmosphere of twentieth-century art and regards the grotesque as an important means of managing certain anxieties. And while there may be some truth in the general tendency of his definition—the management of unauthorized elements of experience—it is clear that the invocation of the

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9 Bakhtin criticizes Kayser for the narrowness of his conception of the grotesque, and for his failure to recognize its earlier forms: "The modernist grotesque that inspires [Kayser's] own concept has almost entirely lost its past memories" (47).
explicitly demonic will not necessarily broaden an understanding of a figure like Fielding's Parson Adams.

Arthur Clayborough's short account of the eighteenth-century grotesque in his The Grotesque in English Literature is devoted to a brief examination of Swift. Clayborough's psychoanalytic examination of the response to the grotesque is problematic because it takes as its object not the concrete characteristics of a literary text but its effect upon a reader. Clayborough has recourse to the Jungian theory of the extroverted and the introverted personalities and observes the approach of these different types to the use of dream or fantasy elements of experience (83-111). The difficulty with a psychoanalytic approach such as Clayborough's is that its practitioners tend to ignore the complexities of the perceived object as they pursue descriptions of the perception. The result is the creation of an alternative but parallel text, one which by describing the response to an influential object attempts to reproduce that object in other terms. The valorization of the psychological model--Clayborough is careful to assert that

10 Michael Steig follows Clayborough in finding the importance of the grotesque in "what actually goes on between the work and its perceiver" (254). Like Kayser, Steig uses the notion of management as a central part of his definition, "the grotesque involves the managing of the uncanny by the comic" (259). Steig draws upon Freud's work to identify the uncanny as a source of anxiety giving expression to "infantile fears, fantasies, and impulses" (258).
his hypothesis of "the innate propensities of the human mind . . . has a considerable weight of professional opinion behind it" (111)—is carried out at the expense of the evidence of a particular text, which becomes as insignificant and as interchangeable as the light bulb to which the trained rat responds in order to enjoy a pellet of food. Moreover, the understanding of such responses is severely limited in terms of their history. It seems to me that only current responses could be gauged with any kind of accuracy and that a late twentieth-century response to the grotesque in Tristram Shandy provides perhaps no information at all about how a contemporary reader of Sterne's novel might have been affected by it.

The one study of a general nature that does pay a good deal of attention to the eighteenth century is Frances Barasch's The Grotesque: A Study in Meanings. Barasch's examination of the use of the term "grotesque" and of such related words as "antic" and "gothic" in the eighteenth century is an extremely helpful source of information and one which suggests the caution with which twentieth-century conceptions of the sense of "grotesque" should be applied to the eighteenth century. I will return to her work briefly at the beginning of the following chapter; however, attending as it does to the word, Barasch's study has little
to say about the appearance of the phenomenon in the creative literature of the period.

More specialized examinations of the grotesque in the period possess their own limitations and thus open the space occupied by this study. Two substantial works on the grotesque in the eighteenth century, an unpublished dissertation by Homida Bosmajian and the untranslated Das Groteske im Englischen Roman des 18. Jahrhunderts by Christian W. Thomsen, have so far been accorded no scholarly recognition--particularly, I suspect, because both are products of a period of grotesque studies strongly influenced by Kayser and Clayborough. Bosmajian's and Thomsen's work is as a result strongly influenced by a view of the grotesque which centres upon the absurdity of individual experience and the relation of the appearance of the grotesque to that particular kind of absurdity. These older studies are of value largely because of the narrowness of their focus and the distinctive attention they give to the literature of the period as opposed to more recent studies which take an epoch to be a continuum of textuality to be broken down into discrete units of nevertheless almost infinitely cross-pollinating discourses. Both, however, warrant brief consideration.

Bosmajian's study of the grotesque in eighteenth-century literature is guided by his assertion that "the
grotesque does not dominate [in the literature of the period] but is made subservient to rational ends" (iv). He investigates the grotesque imagery of farce and pantomime, of Swift and Pope, of the Gothic novel, and of Sterne in *Tristram Shandy*. The breadth of his conception of the grotesque as applied to the literature is, however, problematic and borders on the contradictory. He draws his concept of the grotesque from Kayser, Clayborough, and Lee Byron Jennings, drawing heavily on Jennings' account of the "ludicrous demon" (26). On this view, the grotesque is bifurcated; it is:

> a specific literary or artistic device that combines the ludicrous and the demonic. Both the ludicrous and the demonic upset the familiar patterns of the world, the former by harmlessly and playfully undermining the physical order of the world and evoking laughter in the perceiver after he has realized that the undermining is harmless, the latter by invading as an undefined force the familiar world and causing fear and terror because the demonic--be it within or outside man--has no physical representation. (31)

However, it seems to me that the ludicrous as an element of the grotesque is far more amenable to management for rational ends. Its affinity with comedy objectifies the ludicrous grotesque, while the demonic and the terrible make grotesques based on them inherently subjective and far less amenable to rational control. Bosmajian establishes a polarized grid upon which he then sets about arranging the different works he discusses, identifying how they conform to certain patterns:
In each of the works discussed we found the ludicrous and the demonic aspects of the grotesque, though in varying degrees. Ludicrous playfulness dominates farce and pantomime; the ludicrous and the demonic combine to designate the ridiculousness and the danger of the satiric victim; the demonic quality tends to dominate in Gothic fiction; in Tristram Shandy the ludicrous aspect is emphasized so that man can laugh at the 'scurvy world.'

In Bosmajian's discussion of the grotesque in the Gothic novel, the strain between these two views of the grotesque becomes apparent. He argues that the Gothic grotesque is essentially demonic and is employed for the purposes of ridicule—the grotesque "characters and images act as reflectors of mistaken values. In this manner the grotesque is again subordinate to rational assumptions about the nature of the universe and human conduct" (179). He immediately goes on to differentiate the English Gothic novel from the tales of E.T.A. Hoffmann on the basis of the greater inexplicability of Hoffmann's fictional universe and the ability of Hoffmann's grotesques to "control and confound man" (179), while nevertheless acknowledging that the English Gothic is an important progenitor of the literature of the "era of romanticism" (179). Near the end of his study Bosmajian points out the potential usefulness of his method, claiming that "further studies are possible on the basis of my assumption that the nature and especially the function of the grotesque image depend on the philosophical and aesthetic assumptions that underlie a work
of art or literature" (204). Bosmajian’s examination of these assumptions is limited, but his method is significantly enlarged by subsequent studies.

The importance of understanding the contemporary sense of the grotesque in light of more recent theory is emphasized by Christian W. Thomsen. The subtitle of Thomsen’s work, "Erscheinungsformen and Funktionen"—manifestations and functions—indicates the care with which he attempts to read the grotesque in these novels in its distinctly synchronic aspect. He aims to discover

welche Züge zu einem bestimmten historischen Zeitpunkt in einem bestimmten literarischen Werk als grotesk konzipiert oder für grotesk gehalten wurden. (7)" Thomsen’s study is, on this account, ambitiously historicist—aiming to give some sense of the contemporary reception of the grotesque elements ("die Wirkungsmöglichkeit grotesker Elemente und die Bedingungen ihrer Rezeption") (8). Different novels are considered in terms of what Thomsen sees as several important varieties of the grotesque: grotesque satire (Gulliver’s Travels), the grotesque of burlesque and parody (Joseph Andrews), the grotesque of the picaresque and of [injured] humanity ("verletzten Humanität") (Smollett’s novels), and the grotesque outlook (Tristram Shandy).

"in a particular historical period, and in particular literary works, which traits were conceived as grotesque or treated as grotesque"
More recent studies have tended to bracket the grotesque in order to pursue its relation to other subjects. Michael McNiel examines the use of the grotesque in the depiction of war and soldiers in the work of Swift, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne in order to support his view of "the appropriateness of the grotesque mode for addressing the specific subjects of war and militarism" (The Grotesque Depiction of War 17). McNiel's discussion of the grotesque develops from his interest in Ruskin's conception of the grotesque as a spectrum running from instances of the terrible to the "sportive" (quoted, 19), and he emphasizes the element of play in the grotesque (21) and the use of play as a means of providing comic distance.

In her study of the masquerade in the period, Terry Castle has occasion to point out its affinities with the grotesque, especially as the masquerade is considered as an important example of the carnivalesque. The masquerade is the site of a "proliferation of incongruous, undulating, and relentlessly fantastical forms" (Masquerade and Civilization 71), of "scenes of vertiginous existential recombination" (4). Castle suggestively connects the grotesque of the masquerade with the sublime: "One might describe the masquerade spectacle, with its seething, grotesque, and paranormal forms, as a kind of chamber sublime--a condensed phantasmagoria, a bounded dreamscape of uncanny,
disorienting power" (53). However, besides being, like McNiel's, a study strictly limited in scope, Castle's has indeed little that is new to say about the grotesque.

Castle's use of the concept of carnival reminds us of Mikhail Bakhtin's influential study of the grotesque in its aspect as a function of the medieval carnival. Bakhtin manages to elide the history of the grotesque in eighteenth-century literature under the rubric of "the new bodily canon" which "presents an entirely finished, completed, strictly limited body" (Rabelais 320), and which represents a kind of authoritarian erasure of the many apparently positive attributes of the grotesque body associated with the spirit of carnival. Bakhtin is here of course being typically tendentious; the optimistic socialism underpinning his study finally misrepresents the ideological function of the grotesque. His terms, however, are evocative. The smoothed, classical body possesses "a closed individuality that does not merge with other bodies and with the world."

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12 The tendentiousness of Bakhtin's study has been noted for some time. Clark and Holquist refer to Rabelais and His World as "Bakhtin's most comprehensive critique to date of Stalinist culture" (305), as they discuss the book generally as "a critique of contemporary Soviet ideology" (309). See 305-314 for their general discussion of Bakhtin's book as an ideological statement. Stallybrass and White refer to the general thrust of Bakhtin's thoughts on the grotesque as "optimistic populism" (9). A provocative evaluation of this aspect of Bakhtin's thought is made by Morson and Emerson when they suggest that "the ailing, one-legged Bakhtin is clearly much taken by the spiritual potential of a robust 'collective body'" (449).
(320), while the grotesque body is "a body in the act of becoming. It is never finished, never completed; it is continually built, created, and builds and creates another body" (317). The grotesqueness of such a body proceeds from an emphasis on "the life of the belly and the reproductive organs" (21), and the degradation of the ideal and the spiritual by means of a transfer of emphasis. The notion of the grotesque body's subversiveness retains an attractive explanatory force and has been taken up by several commentators on the grotesque in the eighteenth century.

Like Terry Castle, Peter Stallybrass and Allon White centre their study on the idea of the carnival. Their *Politics and Poetics of Transgression* ambitiously comprehends a wide range of "ideological repertoires and cultural practices" (26) from the late Renaissance to the late twentieth century. They examine how "the underlying features of carnival operate far beyond the strict confines of popular festivity and are intrinsic to the dialectics of social classification as such" (26). The grotesque body is essential to the manner in which the carnival penetrates ("transgresses") classical society and serves as a central "grid" of social classification. In their chapter on the eighteenth century, Stallybrass and White examine the appearance of the grotesque body in the verse satire of Swift and Pope as they argue the significance of the social
space of public festival to the Augustan "labor of transduction"—the effort "to cleanse the cultural sphere of impure and messy semiotic matter" (108). Despite their penchant for dichotomizing the bourgeois and its carnivalesque "other" on a thoroughly Bakhtinian ideological map, Stallybrass and White's notion of the grotesque body as an important locus of general ideological struggle is nevertheless highly suggestive. Their elaboration of Bakhtin's distinction between the classical and grotesque bodies is particularly informative, especially in their identification of the role of the classical body in centering a wide variety of cultural practices:

... the classical body was far more than an aesthetic standard or model. It structured, from the inside as it were, the characteristically 'high' discourses of philosophy, statecraft, theology and law, as well as literature, as they emerged from the Renaissance. (22)

These contributions to Bakhtin's notion of the classical and grotesque bodies will be fully explored in the third chapter of this work.

Barbara Maria Stafford's monumental Body Criticism, though not specifically about the grotesque, provides a wealth of information about eighteenth-century responses to phenomena that are nevertheless clearly grotesque in nature. Like Castle and Stallybrass and White, she relies upon the idea of carnival to guide her thinking about the grotesque. She sets out to "uncover the complex individual drives and
broader cultural forces fueling the compulsion to find an immaterial or supernatural clarity within material or ambiguous phenomena (2) by studying how somatic phenomena were objectified by the visual and medical arts. Stafford's discussion of the grotesque in the period comes in her chapter on "Conceiving" (211-279) where she sets out to identify what the period considered monstrous or grotesque.¹³ "The grotesque," Stafford writes, "... had two major connotations during the eighteenth century. Both involved the upstart power of images to disconcert by their very looks. Both were predicated on the defiance of convention by flaunting unsuitable, dissonant, and unconnected actual mixtures" (216). The two appearances of the grotesque are as repellent pictorial combination, or "the irrational jumbling of parts" (216-17), and as "mental manglings" (220), such things as trivial language games which are based on "repellent and indistinct conceptual

¹³ The conception of the monstrous is also the focus of Dennis Todd's recent Imagining Monsters (1995). Todd examines the role of the imagination in the perception of the monstrous during the period. "The imagination," writes Todd, "precisely because it was an intermediary between the material and immaterial realms, preserved a comfortable distinction between the body and the mind" (63). However, the imagination's supposed power to shape the fetus—a power witnessed by public credulity in the face of Mary Toft's claims to have given birth to seventeen rabbits—also "fudged the very line it pretended to draw between the body and the mind and suggested that the one might easily collapse into the other" (63). Problems of grotesque theory, however, are outside the compass of Todd's interesting book.
multiplicity" (220) and such art forms as metaphysical poetry and opera (225). The Bakhtinian underpinnings of her argument are made clear when she comes to summarize the effects of the grotesque:

The grotesque . . . pictured [the] disunited condition at its point of maximum separation from, and greatest distance between, radically disparate parts. This sort of symbol, denoting distraction not abstraction, configured the plight of the outsider. It indiscriminately embraced--without correcting or transforming them--a carnival of highwaymen, ventriloquists, enthusiasts, 'old Raree show' exhibits, mutilated, handicapped, or diseased performers, and even eccentric painters. The grotesque was an encyclopedia of actual but unreal bambochades. They appeared to be more specimens in a freak show than ordinary people. Yet these contradictory perceptual bundles gave aesthetic expression to experiences that otherwise would have received none. Lowly jeux d'esprit contravened social rules and proprieties. Consequently, they provided a framework for those bizarre, eccentric, confused, absurd, disaffected, distorted, and sick characters and unamalgamated elements that lay beyond the pale of system. (276)

It is an evocative passage that attempts to convince by helpfully intruding a plethora of suggestive language ("bizarre, eccentric, confused, absurd, disaffected, distorted") between the phenomena and the interpreter, language that ultimately forces the point the passage is trying to make. Later, Stafford writes, "Chaotic mixture allowed the low to assume equal status with the high and threatened to crowd the latter out of existence" (279). The premises of the argument are clearly Bakhtinian, relying on the idea of the grotesque's characteristically subversive
movement under the auspices of an unlocalized carnival spirit.

The currency of this habit of perceiving the grotesque as positively inimical to principles of established order is borne out, for example, by Joanne Lewis when she says of Lismahago in Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* that he functions as "an emblem of unspoken subversions present in Smollett and present in the age" (406). It seems to be taken for granted that the appearance of the grotesque is dynamic and transformative, as if the enthusiasm of such a passages as the following taken from *Rabelais and His World* were literally contagious:

> The unfinished and open body (dying, bringing forth and being born) is not separated from the world by clearly defined boundaries; it is blended with the world, with animals, with objects. It is cosmic, it represents the entire material bodily world in all its elements. It is an incarnation of this world at the absolute lower stratum, as the swallowing up and generating principle, as the bodily grave and bosom, as a field which has been sown and in which shoots are preparing to sprout. (26-7)

Certainly Stallybrass and White give pause to unrestrained acceptance of this kind of fervour when they point out that Bakhtin's view of carnival is "nostalgic and over-optimistic" (18) and that, instead of involving an endless effervescence of subversive movement, carnival is always
licensed and controlled from above (19). The authors do not, however, seek to overturn the idea but to broaden its explanatory effectiveness—they consider carnival "as one instance of a generalized economy of transgression and of the recoding of high/low relations across the whole social structure" (19). Nevertheless, when one considers the role of such characters as Mrs. Slipslop or Lismahago in locating and elaborating dominant structures of order, the claims of carnival’s transgressive energies become problematic.

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As I have been suggesting, the Bakhtinian idea of the carnival and of the subversive nature of the grotesque both as this idea is raised in Rabelais and His World and as it is expanded by Stallybrass and White has come to predominate in critical and theoretical discussions of the significance of the grotesque in this period. However, in his erudite examination of the concept of carnival, Bakhtin creates an ideologically charged revolutionary drama that is so manifestly tendentious as to be suspect as a definitive explanatory model. In the case of each of the three novels to be discussed, the regularizing thrust of the comic mode routinely contains the appearance of the grotesque within

14 Terry Eagleton long ago commented that "carnival is so vivaciously celebrated that the necessary political criticism is too easy to make. Carnival, after all, is a licensed affair in every sense . . ." (148). Roger Sales has made a similar observation (169).
the novel's dominant values. In the Preface to Joseph Andrews, Fielding writes that the subject matter of comedy should be confined "strictly to nature", suggesting the comic author's self-conscious fidelity to the stability and regularity not only of things but of values as well. The significance of Mrs. Slipslop's comic deformity is circumscribed by the representation of normalized and idealized sexuality in the characters of, respectively, Betty the chambermaid and Fanny Goodwill. Even in Tristram Shandy, a novel in which the normalizing thrust of the comic mode exists by such tenuous implication as to be nearly, and problematically absent, the grotesquing of the sexual sphere, plainly evident in that triumvirate of botched sexuality, Toby, Tristram, and Walter, delineates the ineffectiveness of these three characters' fantastic intellectual gambols. These facts suggest the applicability of terms Bakhtin embeds within the carnivalesque weltanschauung: the grotesque and the classical bodies.

My purpose in this thesis is twofold. Its primary purpose is to investigate the nature of a rhetorical structure concerned with the relation of the grotesque to the classical body. The existence of this structure is dependent on the priority accorded the mind over the body in the intellectual and spiritual culture of the period. It is my view that it is in courtesy literature and in particular
examples of devotional literature similar to courtesy literature that this rhetorical structure is clearly and extensively employed. Therefore, in the third chapter, I will examine a range of courtesy and devotional literature within the context of eighteenth-century determinations of the body's worth in order to establish the precise nature of the relationship between the classical and the grotesque bodies. In each of the succeeding three chapters I will examine in turn Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, Smollett's *Humphry Clinker*, and Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* with a view to investigating the various transformations this rhetorical structure undergoes as it is taken up for the purposes of fictional narrative. The secondary purpose of the thesis will be to suggest an alternative method of employing Bakhtin's influential account of the grotesque body. As I hope to show in my discussions of these three novels, the force of normative values bears heavily on these novelists' manner of representing reality. In the terms I intend to discuss, the appearance of the grotesque continually reaffirms the persistence of more permanent values. I have spent much of this introductory chapter critiquing various accounts of the grotesque in the eighteenth century. Before turning to courtesy literature and the novels, therefore, I would like to give some account of the nature of the grotesque in which I am interested.
Frances Barasch has done a great service in undertaking a careful examination of the term "grotesque" and its equivalents in the eighteenth century. Barasch notes that the term itself is used throughout the eighteenth century to describe just that type of art derived from the Roman frescoes copied by Raphael (107) (see fig.1, ch.1). In literary criticism, the term retained its association with descriptions of visual ornament, "the frivolous, pagan sort of ornament whose essential qualities were disorder and irregularity" (118), and tended to appear in comparisons between aspects of visual art and literature. Barasch does, however, point out that both hovering near the use of the word "grotesque" and dealing in aspects of what we now tend to associate with the grotesque generally--"the incongruous, and, especially, the deformed" (95)--were the burlesque and the farce (95, 118-134). Nevertheless, here, whether it is Boileau commenting on Ronsard’s poetry (120), or Dryden on farce (124-5), "grotesque" describes not content but manner of composition, and by doing so maintains its initial association with a particular visual style. Johnson’s definition in the 1755 Dictionary is representative of the persistent association of "grotesque" with certain aspects of visual art.
Despite, however, the comparative narrowness of the eighteenth-century's application of the word "grotesque", the period did nevertheless have means of describing the grotesque in other terms. In the preface to A Parallel Betwixt Painting and Poetry (1695), Dryden's translation of du Fresnoy's De arte graphica, Dryden writes of comedy in a manner which connects the visual grotesque to the kind of representations common to "lower" modes of comedy:

...as comedy is a representation of human life in inferior persons, and low subjects, and by that means creeps into the nature of poetry, and is a kind of juniper, a shrub belonging to the species of cedar, so is the painting of clowns, the representation of a Dutch kermis...a kind of picture which belongs to nature but of the lowest form. Such is a lazar in comparison to a Venus: both are drawn in human figures; they have faces alike, but not like faces. There is yet a lower sort of poetry and painting, which is out of nature; for a farce is that in poetry, which grotesque is in a picture. (II.189-90)

This connection of the literary farce with the visual grotesque is modified slightly by Fielding in the Preface to Joseph Andrews. According to Fielding, burlesque "is ever the Exhibition of what is monstrous and unnatural", and it occasions delight by its "surprizing Absurdity, as in appropriating the Manners of the highest to the lowest" (4). Moreover, the burlesque stands in the same relation to writing as "caricatura" does to painting. The monstrous being especially visual, painting is better suited to its depiction, while burlesque in writing exists in the portrayal of the "Ridiculous" (6), which "falls within [the]
Province" (7) of Fielding's method in Joseph Andrews.

Writing a decade and a half before Fielding, Francis Hutcheson provides a closer analysis of what Fielding refers to as "surprising absurdity". In his Reflections upon Laughter (1725), Hutcheson writes,

Again, any little accident to which we have joined the idea of meanness, befalling a person of great gravity, ability, dignity, is a matter of laughter, for the very same reason; thus the strange contortions of the body in a fall, the dirtying of a decent dress, the natural functions which we study to conceal from sight, are matter of laughter when they occur in persons of whom we have high ideas. Nay, the very human form has the ideas of dignity so generally joined with it, that even in ordinary persons such mean accidents are matter of jest; but still the jest is increased by the dignity, gravity, or modesty of the person, which shows that it is this contrast, or opposition of ideas of dignity and meanness, which is the occasion of laughter.

(II.110)

And again, Fielding's own discussion catches at this sense of comic contrast in the Preface when he asserts that hypocrisy is more ridiculous than vanity because "to discover any one to be the exact Reverse of what he affects, is more surprizing, and consequently more ridiculous, than to find him a little deficient in the Quality he desires the Reputation of" (11). This idea of ludicrous juxtaposition is the basis of the grotesques in the novels under consideration.

The kinds of grotesques which are of interest, grotesque bodies and the grotesque incidents in which they become involved, are alike in that they share various types
of "invasions" or transformations of the human body in a generally comedic atmosphere. That element of the grotesque so strongly associated with it in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the fearful, the terrible, the demonic, is almost entirely absent. As was pointed out in the preceding chapter, it is the exaggeration of the fearful elements of the grotesque that distinguishes the use of the grotesque in the gothic novel from its use in the comic novel. The presence of the fearful encourages a less critical and more empathetic response than does the comic, which tends to distance the sympathies of the reader from the activities of a particular character. The different ways in which Fielding dramatizes attacks on Parson Adams and on Fanny in Joseph Andrews might be considered in this regard. Nevertheless, grotesques such as Mrs. Slipslop, or Lismahago, or such incidents as the arrangement of Trim's body before the sermon on conscience do indeed show affinities with the visual grotesque. These different grotesques show the kind of fancifulness and incongruity of composition that the eighteenth century associated with the grotesque ornament. Indeed, they may be regarded, as so many grotesque characters in literature may be regarded, as distant offspring of the curious creatures described by Horace at the beginning of the Ars Poetica:

If in a Picture (Piso) you should see,  
A Handsome Woman with a Fishes Tail,
Plainly, this is an image that partakes more closely in the innocuous whimsy of the arabesque than the threatening distortions that come to typify the grotesque from the late eighteenth century forward (Kayser writes that the arabesque "avails itself of patterns composed of more realistic shoots, leaves, and blossoms, to which animal forms are occasionally added" (22)). But this grotesque "portraiture" is only a single aspect of the manner in which these characters are grotesque. They are also grotesque by virtue of their activity in narratives. They are involved in grotesque incidents and therefore bring into play more diverse elements than may be identified in a single portrait with its melange of static components. The functioning of these characters in an extensively particularized fictional environment means that the ways in which they are grotesque exist always in relation to other objects and actions. Thus, while simple portraits of Parson Adams, Lismahago, and Tristram Shandy would reveal a host of similarities among the three characters--their unusual physicality and their clownishness, for example--these same characters, considered as active in their respective environments, are grotesque in very different ways.
The kinds of grotesques I have in mind are those which appear in the following passages. The description of Mrs. Slipslop from *Joseph Andrews* is familiar:

She was not at this time remarkably handsome; being very short, and rather too corpulent in body, and somewhat red, with the Addition of Pimples in the Face. Her Nose was likewise rather too large, and her Eyes too little; nor did she resemble a Cow so much in her Breath, as in two brown Globes which she carried before her; one of her Legs was also a little shorter than the other, which occasioned her to limp as she walked.

(I.vi.32)

Later in the novel, "this fair Creature", as Fielding calls her, comes to blows with Abraham Adams, after Adams has mistaken the effeminate fop Didapper for a ravished young woman, and Slipslop for his ravisher:

[Adams] made directly to the Bed in the dark, where laying hold of the Beau's [Didapper's] Skin (for Slipslop had torn his Shirt almost off) and finding his Skin extremely soft, and hearing him in a low voice begging Slipslop to let him go, he no longer doubted but this was the young Woman in danger of ravishing, and immediately falling on the Bed, and laying hold on Slipslop's Chin, where he found a rough Beard, his Belief was confirmed; he therefore rescued the Beau, who presently made his Escape, and then turning towards Slipslop, receiv'd such a Cuff on his Chops, that his Wrath kindling instantly, he offered to return the Favour so stoutly, that had poor Slipslop received the Fist, which in the dark passed by her and fell on the Pillow, she would most probably have given up the Ghost.--Adams, missing his Blow, fell directly on Slipslop, who cuffed and scratched as well as she could; nor was he behind-hand with her, in his Endeavours, but happily the Darkness of the Night befriended her--She then cry'd she was a Woman; but Adams answered she was rather the Devil, and if she was, he would grapple with him; and being again irritated by another Stroke on his Chops, he gave her such a Remembrance in the Guts, that she began to roar loud enough to be heard all over the House(IV.xiv.331-2)
From Smollett’s *Humphry Clinker* comes the portrait of the termagant Tabitha Bramble, Matthew’s absurd sister:

Mrs. Tabitha Bramble is a maiden of forty-five. In her person, she is tall, raw-boned, awkward, flat-chested, and stooping: her complexion is sallow and freckled; her eyes are not grey, but greenish, like those of a cat, and generally inflamed; her hair is of a sandy, or rather dusty hue; her forehead low; her nose long, sharp, and, towards the extremity, always red in cool weather; her lips skinny, her mouth extensive, her teeth straggling and loose, of various colours and conformation; and her long neck shrivelled into a thousand wrinkles . . . (Jery, May 6, 58-9)

In Bath, Jery investigates a disturbance over the family’s lodgings:

Finding the room-door open, I entered without ceremony, and perceived an object, which I cannot now recollect without laughing to excess—It was a dancing-master, with his scholar, in the act of teaching. The master was blind of one eye, and lame of one foot, and led about the room his pupil; who seemed to be about the age of three-score, stooped mortally, was tall, raw-boned, hard-favoured, with a woollen night-cap on his head; and he had stript off his coat, that he might be more nimble in his motions . . . (Jery, April 24, 30)

Sterne’s Tristram Shandy is perhaps the most grotesque figure in the novel, suffering a variety of deforming injuries very early in his life:

In bringing him [Tristram] into the world with his vile instruments, he has crush’d his nose, Susannah says, as flat as a pancake to his face, and he is making a false bridge with a piece of cotton and a thin piece of

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whalebone out of Susannah's stays, to raise it up. (III.xxvii; I:253)

He is accidentally circumcised when urged to urinate out of a window:

I was five years old.----Susannah did not consider that nothing was well hung in our family,----so slap came the sash down like lightening upon us;--Nothing is left,--cried Susannah,--nothing is left--for me, but to run my country.---- (V.xvii; I:449-50)

The appearance of the grotesque in these passages is doubly significant. First of all, the grotesque that appears in them involves some form of exaggerated appearance or of extraordinary or extravagant behaviour. It is of course typical of the grotesque that its forms depart from the normal, but in the case of each of these passages the different kinds of grotesque moments are concerned with appearance and conduct. The descriptions of Mrs. Slipslop and Tabitha Bramble, by indulging in the excesses of caricature, emphasize the degree to which these characters are extraordinary. Their ugliness involves both exaggeration and ridiculous transformation, effected by means of metaphors connecting them with different animals. Similarly, Parson Adams' misadventure involves him in distinctly ridiculous activity. The instances of the grotesque taken from Sterne are clearly different from the

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grotesque identified in Fielding and Smollett. The
grotesque transformation that Sterne repeatedly effects
involves the confusion of sexuality with pain and wounding.
The widow Wadman is interested in nothing so much as "the
monstrous wound upon [Toby’s] groin" (VIII.xxviii; II:713).
In Tristram Shandy, sexual desire seems to wander almost
aimlessly from one shattered body to the next, seeking
fulfilment. In this respect, Sterne’s novel shares the
interest the other novels have in forms of physical
apotheosis—each of these novels seems to employ variations
of the grotesque body in order to express ideas about normal
bodies, or normal physical life.

Secondly, the grotesque in the quoted passages is
significant for the fact that it serves particular
rhetorical purposes. The descriptions of Mrs. Slipslop and
Tabitha Bramble direct the reader’s evaluation of their
worth in the narratives in which they respectively appear
and are contextualized by descriptions of Fanny Goodwill as
a "lovely young creature" (IV.xvi.297) and of Lydia Melford
as, so declares Charles Dennison in Smollett’s novel, "one
of the most lovely creatures I have ever beheld" (Matthew,
October 11, 314). Similarly, the detailed disasters which
befall Tristram clarify the character of a sexuality that is
ultimately placed against the joyful dance into which the
ailing traveller is led by the uninhibited Nannette
(VII.xliii) in the fields of France. The pattern of each of these grotesques evokes Bakhtin’s distinction between the classical and the grotesque bodies and suggests something important about the grotesque. Certainly, one does not need to agree with Bakhtin’s distinctive rhetoric of subversion in order to see that the sense of the classical and grotesque bodies is dialectical. The full sense of either one depends on the nature of the other. In its appearances, the grotesque is not an isolated object; it is, rather, one part of meaningful structure. Its character takes its significance from its involvement with other elements of the texts in which it appears.

It is the "constructedness" of the grotesque that makes it both intriguing as an object and instructive as a complex of signification. Quite simply, the grotesque can be disassembled and read. Harpham’s claim that the use of the word grotesque indicates that "our understanding is unsatisfied", while an adequate description of a response to a set of objects, in no way describes the objects themselves. Iser speaks of the "prestructuring of the potential meaning by the text" (Implied Reader xii) -- a text employs certain represented objects in order to guide the reader to a certain response: "Although the text may well incorporate the social norms and values of its possible readers, its function is not merely to present such data,
but, in fact, to use them in order to secure its uptake. In other words, it offers guidance as to what is to be produced, and therefore cannot itself be the product." (Act of Reading 107). Elsewhere, he distinguishes between the artistic (the manner in which it is constructed) and the aesthetic aspects (the responses the text initiates) of a text (Implied Reader 274). In confining itself to the aesthetic aspects of a text, a great deal of grotesque theory has tended to ignore the question of signification raised by the artistic aspects of the grotesque object itself—that is, to the question of its composition.

On what, in The Act of Reading, he calls the "repertoire", the content and structure of the units of meaning in a literary work, Iser writes,

The repertoire consists of all the familiar territory within the text. This may be in the form of references to earlier works, or to social and historical norms, or to the whole culture from which the text has emerged. . . The manner in which conventions, norms, and traditions take their place in the literary repertoire varies considerably, but they are always in some way reduced or modified, as they have been removed from their original context and function. In the literary text they thus become capable of new connections, but at the same time the old connections are still present, at least to a certain degree (and may themselves appear in a new light); indeed, their original context must remain sufficiently implicit to act as a background to offset their new significance. Thus the repertoire incorporates both the origin and the transformation of its elements, and the individuality of the text will largely depend on the extent to which their identity is changed. (69)
The grotesque represents a signal moment in the writer's utilization of his repertoire--an instant of jarring significations, compelling a unique consideration of not only curiously arranged objects but of the morals, philosophies, and other such systems which are implied by these objects and their interrelations. Iser points to the fact that the repertoire is a determined structure, the result of a process of selection--"and the question arises as to what principles govern this selection, which after all cannot be purely arbitrary" (70). The grotesque object or action is in this respect, then, no different from other objects in a text. It is to be considered as neither isolated, nor in some way estranged from the narrative context. As part of the logic of the narrative in which it occurs, the grotesque comes into being as a matter of course, persists, and does or does not cease to exist. The grotesque is only one among many ways in which a text can be said to mean.

The claim, however, that the grotesque functions as meaning seems an ill-considered contradiction of many definitions of the grotesque. The grotesque does not make meaning, but confuses it. "The various forms of the grotesque," writes Kayser, "are the most obvious and pronounced contradictions of any kind of rationalism and any systematic use of thought" (188). However, if the grotesque
is one among many devices which a writer employs in order to carry the force of his narrative, then the grotesque—however perplexing it may be taken solely on its own terms—carries a signifying function that operates relative to the other structures of the text. Harpham says that, "resisting closure, the grotesque impales us on the present moment, emptying the past and forestalling the future* (16). It is a "gap" (15), yes, but one supported on all sides by context and content. Harpham’s invocation of the sense of the gap calls to mind Iser’s concept of the gap: "whenever the flow [of the narrative] is interrupted and we are led off in unexpected directions, the opportunity is given us to bring into play our own faculty for establishing connections—for filling in the gaps left by the text itself" (Implied Reader 280). The gap, according to Iser, must be filled by the reader’s act of comprehension (Act of Reading 181-2). Clearly, however, this act of comprehension must take up meanings already in the text, the gatherings of objects and their relations that are already present. In this respect the grotesque in not so much a gap as it is a focus of multifarious determinations. Dealing as it does largely in forms of contradiction, the grotesque represents an intensification of signification that draws upon disparate elements within the text. In the grotesque portrait of Mrs. Slipslop, the overriding tension of the passage is between
her nearly monstrous appearance and ideals embodied elsewhere in the text. It is a tension evidenced in the narrator’s ironic "this fair Creature had long cast the Eyes of Affection on Joseph", after he has described her as short, fat, limping, and resembling a cow (I.vi.32). The energy of Mrs. Slipslop’s untoward desire is ridiculously mired in what seems to constitute a bestial parody of maternal placidity--"the Allurements of her native Charms", indeed. The chaotic exaggeration draws ideals of appearance and desire into the text--Slipslop’s grotesquerie is the mark of a constitutive unfitness to the role she attempts to assume. The ideals that she ridiculously violates are embodied immediately in the person of Joseph Andrews and ultimately in his exemplarily virtuous love-object, Fanny.

If Mrs. Jewkes from Richardson’s Pamela is taken as another instance of the type represented by Mrs. Slipslop, it is immediately apparent how the grotesquerie of Mrs. Slipslop makes her a more profusely meaning-full character than Mrs. Jewkes. Certainly Mrs. Jewkes is a grotesque capable of a more significant range of action, but the range of Mrs. Slipslop’s activity allows Fielding to bestow upon his character a boisterousness that Richardson, considering the tone of his novel, cannot indulge. Mrs. Jewkes is described as

a broad, squat, pursy, fat thing, quite ugly, if any thing human can be so called; about forty years old.
She has a huge hand, and an arm as thick as my waist, I believe. Her nose is flat and crooked, and her brows grow down over her eyes; a dead spiteful, grey, goggling eye, to be sure she has. And her face is flat and broad; and as to colour, looks like as if it had been pickled a month in saltpetre...

This description emphasizes the grotesque, but is in a sense merely emblematic. Mrs. Jewkes is the demonic jailer--John Arnold will shortly explicitly refer to Mrs. Jewkes as a "devil" (122)--with strong associations with rough physical power and death. Her literary ancestry would include not only the witches of folk tales but Redcrosse's jailer Orgoglio in Spenser's Faerie Queene. Her presence is heavily tinged with allegory--she allows Pamela to fish in the garden pond, and encourages her to "play it" after Pamela hooks a fish (134). Mrs. Slipslop, on the other hand is a more clearly farcical character--the butt of Fielding's satire and a dramatic example of the ridiculousness of that affectation which he writes of in his Preface. The grotesqueness of Mrs. Jewkes emphasizes her potential association with the terrible and arouses the reader's apprehension; that of Mrs. Slipslop, especially as it is meant to contrast with the appearance and virtues of Fanny Goodwill, emphasizes how she is absurd and provokes the reader's ridicule.

The accretion of the grotesque about a single character or dramatic incident clearly calls into play a wider range of meanings than are present within the immediately
represented moment. Most definitions of the grotesque do indeed depend on this semantic complexity as they grapple with ways of expressing a sense of what the grotesque is. Hence Kayser's definition of the grotesque as "an attempt to invoke and subdue the demonic aspects of the world" straddles a wide range of semantic units--how are the actions of invoking and subduing to be accomplished; what sorts of representations accompany them; which demonic aspects; and, not to be gratuitous, what world? Its force resting on a point of incompatibility, the grotesque is nevertheless an image or action that draws upon an extensive range of particulars. What Iser refers to very generally as the "repertoire" of a text, Bakhtin examines more rigorously and gives the name heteroglossia. Most importantly for Bakhtin, heteroglossia is the welter of languages which make up the continuum of lived experience--"the fleeting language of a day, of an epoch, a social group, a school, and so forth" ("Discourse in the Novel" 272); and he is able to define a novel as "a diversity of social speech types" (263). This heteroglossia is fundamentally rooted in objects, for it is around and about objects that discourse always moves (277). The object exists in a "complex play of light and shadow" and is marked by "a dialogic interaction . . . between various aspects of its socio-verbal intelligibility" (277). This dialogism, founded in the
social existence of the object and inescapably taken up by the word that pronounces the object, finds its way into the artistic representation—"an 'image' of the object, may be penetrated by this dialogic play of verbal intentions that meet and are interwoven in it; such an image need not stifle these forces, but on the contrary may activate and organize them" (277). But the activity of the heteroglossia in the literary work is not inexorable and unmanageable; rather, the art of the writer lies in the force of his own mind moving through the heteroglossia, creating "an image that has finished contours, an image completely shot through with dialogized overtones" (278-9).

The idea of heteroglossia, it would appear, has immediate application to the composition of the grotesque. The grotesque is not simply a collection of objects strangely combined. In his Le Monstre dans l'Art Occidental: un Problème Esthétique, Gilbert Lascault writes at some length of the constructed nature of the monster. What he has to say about the monster is equally useful to an examination of the grotesque because the monstrous is a subset of the grotesque (Kayser, 181). "Le monstreux," writes Lascault, "est un discours. La finalité, le sens, la vérité de chaque forme monstreuse seraient constitués par ce
qu'elle veut dire" (267). Lascault's subject is the monster in visual art, but the fact that the monster is considered as discourse points clearly to the latent discursivity of the monstrous and therefore the grotesque in literature. The grotesque image may be "spread out" under examination--"à la synchronie de l'image se substitue la diachronie d'une histoire" (348). In this light, that is, considering the complex discursivity inherent in the grotesque, Kayser's catalogue of the characteristically grotesque objects, "snakes, owls, toads, spiders" (182), may be seen to be helpful only in the way a map is helpful, for it is an extreme complication of experience to go from a street name on a map into the street itself, and to find the name an empty euphemism, masking a dizzying mass of objects and relationships. And certainly the heteroglossaic nature of the grotesque is understood, or at least suspected by its theorists: "a confusion of type" (6) and "knotting the alien whole with more or less familiar parts" (5) writes Harpham. Where else can the sense of alienation and confusion rest but in social determinations? The alien can only be defined in terms of the familiar; and what is familiar or typical is

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3 "The monstrous is a discourse. The purpose, the sense, the truth of each monstrous form would have to be constituted by what it means."

4 "for the synchrony of the image is substituted the diachrony of a history"
not something innate, given for all time, but resting on specific conditions constitutive of a time and a place. It is on this basis that Bakhtin is able to criticize Kayser for confining his examination of the grotesque to the twentieth century. And it is on this basis that we may find Bakhtin's own generalizations about the grotesque, so firmly rooted in his study of Rabelais, constricting. To determine the grotesque to be some constant thing is to fail to see the intimate connections between it and its milieu. As Bakhtin himself writes,

Discourse lives, at it were, beyond itself, in a living impulse toward the object; if we detach ourselves completely from this impulse all we have left is the naked corpse of the word, from which we learn nothing at all about the social situation or the fate of a given word in life. To study the word as such, ignoring the impulse that reaches out beyond it, is just as senseless as to study psychological experience outside the context of that real life toward which it was directed and by which it is determined.

(292, Bakhtin's emphasis)

Because the grotesque is an instrument in a writer's repertoire, the result of the selection and stylization of certain objects; because the grotesque is an instant of intense dialogization in which the heteroglossia of a social milieu --not simply the objectified discourses themselves, but the objects of those discourses in their connection with language--are placed in a dramatic confrontation, it must be seen not as a discrete thing, but as the end result of a train of experiences and developments. The questions
provoked by the grotesque are not "what is it?" or "what responses does it create?", but rather, "why are these objects chosen?", "where do they originate?", "why do these things happen?" The point of interest is not in a discrete object shorn of context, but in a moment in a continuum, laden with multifarious determinations.

In her "The Grotesque: Archeology of an Anti-Code" (the theoretical debts of which are clearly recognized by both its title and its epigraphical quotation from Foucault's *Archeology of Knowledge*), Nadia Khouri writes "What is specifically significant in the study of the grotesque . . . is not, strictly speaking, an image with certain components which identify it as 'grotesque' . . . but the ideological process which selects and joins [the elements of the grotesque image]" (13). For the most part, Khouri's interest is in what the grotesque does, in how it is used as an instrument or "a viable means for subversive socio-aesthetic designs" (10). She distinguishes between two different types of grotesque in a manner which relates them to their milieu; there is the "grotesque of continuity which positively integrates rational and sub-rational" and "a grotesque of discontinuity which mingles material elements only to stress their disconnectedness" (16). The grotesque, therefore, "denotes a specific attitude which has been set within a vertical system of values" (6). But the idea that
the grotesque does something requires a knowledge of the 
networks in which it operates. Khouri generalizes 
extravagantly when she claims that the use of the grotesque 
in the eighteenth century was "rooted in an attitude of 
facetious teasing in middle- and upper-class ideology" (9), 
but clearly the ability to affirm or deny her claim requires 
an understanding of facts quite other than the grotesque 
object itself. Individual grotesques have distinctive 
ideological determinants which can be the subject of an 
archaieological investigation. Foucault identifies what he 
calls the "discursive constellation" (66) as that body of 
other types of discourse with which a particular discourse 
exists in certain relations (an idea not much different from 
Bakhtin’s "heteroglossia"), and it is in certain stars in 
this constellation, places into which the artistic grotesque 
reaches, that our interest lies when we seek to understand 
the curious figures and strange activities in the novels of 
Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne. 

As I pointed out earlier in this chapter, the 
grotesques that I am interested in are each in their way 
connected with aspects of human behaviour, and with the 
relation of that behaviour to an ideal, or at least an 
established norm. In the next chapter but one, I will be 
discussing the character of Parson Adams at some length. In 
one episode (III.ii.163) Fielding is careful to distinguish
between the quality of Adams' physical activity and the quality of Joseph and Fanny's activity in the same circumstances. Encountering a hill, Adams falls down its length while the young couple descend carefully and decorously. The grotesque aspects of Abraham Adams' behaviour occur against a norm of elegance and reserve established and consistently asserted by Joseph and Fanny. Similarly, the extravagances of Tabitha Bramble and Win Jenkins' behaviour in *Humphry Clinker* exist in contrast to the simple reserve practised by Lydia Melford. Finally, the elaborately detailed physical existences of such characters as Walter Shandy and Corporal Trim, in which the body's activity is represented as a veritable morass of particularity, stand against the kind of exuberant, free dance that coincides with Tristram's joyful encounter with the desirable country girl, Nannette (VII.xliii). The use of the grotesque in these instances rests on a particular evaluation of the acceptable range of physical activity. The evocation of the grotesque, that is, takes its force from outside the fictions in which it occurs. I have argued in this chapter, drawing in particular on elements of the work of Lascault, Bakhtin, and Khouri, that the grotesque is of interest because its constructed nature points beyond its immediate occurrence to terms of reference occurring
elsewhere in the cultural continuum. In the following chapter, I will explore those references in some detail.
Chapter Three

The Courteous Body

The human body as it exists in society is hardly a stable object; it is offered up to the observer's inspection as a complex of constructions.¹ The confidence with which Fielding declares, "I question not but several of my Readers will know the Lawyer in the Stage-Coach, the Moment they hear his Voice" (III.i.188), is the confidence of one who represents an object whose outlines have been already set in place by prerogatives both assumed by an individual living in a particular fashion in a society and bestowed by that society upon that individual as a matter of custom. Certainly the spleen Fielding vents upon lawyers in general determines the manner in which he will represent a lawyer, but nevertheless actual habits of speech, gesture, and dress predetermine the forms of Fielding's determinations.

¹ The bibliography of body-related studies is vast and continually growing. Here, however, I list only those books which have directly assisted me in focusing my thinking about the representation of the grotesque body. Among the general and most suggestive studies are to be found Bryan Turner's The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Theory, the first volume, The History of Manners, of Norbert Elias' The Civilizing Process, and Erving Goffman's The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. And of the specialized studies, there are Carol Houlihan Flynn's The Body in Swift and Defoe, Body and Text in the Eighteenth Century, Veronica Kelly and Dorothea von Mücke eds., and of course Barbara Maria Stafford’s monumental Body Criticism. I refer those seeking a more complete bibliography, I refer them to the Introduction of Marie Mulvey Roberts and Roy Porter’s Literature and Medicine During the Eighteenth-Century, 19n.; and Michel Feher, Fragments for a History of the Human Body, vol. 3, 470-554.
Fielding is speaking satirically about a certain type of person, but the idea that an individual is to an extent literally shaped by his calling had currency in the period. In his Treatise of Human Nature, Hume, who will be mentioned again later, writes that "the different stations of life influence the whole fabric, external and internal" (II.iii.402). As will be shortly seen, this kind of thinking had an enormous effect on the relations between the different social orders and was particularly important to the production of courtesy literature. Latterly, twentieth-century sociologists have made very similar observations about the fortunes of the body in social space. Bryan Turner writes that "the biological presence [of human beings] is socially constructed and constituted by communal practises" (227). And Erving Goffman sees the "social establishment" as a closed system, "any place surrounded by fixed barriers to perception in which a particular kind of activity regularly takes place" (238). The individual’s behaviour is then to a great extent determined by both his place in such an establishment and his ambitions within it. But it is clear that it is not simply Goffman’s discrete "establishments" which produce and perpetuate determined modes of individual behaviour. A society itself, as it exists in the discourse of its participants and its commentators, presents these several perspectives.
But certainly the reliance of discursive representations of the body upon the body’s social formation is not peculiar to artistic presentations. Foucault’s "discursive constellation" points to the fact of interrelationships between different kinds of discourses. Since the grotesque body in the novels I am examining appears in varying relation to norms explicitly elaborated in the literature of courtesy, it would be useful to examine the appearance of the body in the literature of courtesy and to give some account of the relation of the well-mannered body to other varieties of discourse. The well-mannered body is not after all sui generis, but is an object whose significance is imposed upon it by other factors. When Fielding and Smollett reach, as it were, through the body of the grotesque toward the orderly body of the ideal protagonist they are not merely interested in elaborating a shallow, opportunistic ethic of empty courtesy--the kind of moral duplicity with which Johnson arraigns Chesterfield, whose Letters, Johnson charged, taught, "the morals of a whore, and the manners of a dancing-master" (Life, 188); rather the well-mannered body is at the centre of a sphere of felicitous influence that touches a society in many different ways.
Later in this chapter, I will explore the applicability of Bakhtin's conception of the classical body to the well-mannered body. Stallybrass and White argue that the classical body was far more than an aesthetic standard or model. It structured, from the inside as it were, the characteristically 'high' discourses of philosophy, statecraft, theology and law, as well as literature, as they emerged from the Renaissance. In the classical discursive body were encoded those regulated systems which were closed, homogeneous, monumental, centred and symmetrical. (22)

For our purposes, the scope of the classical body's influence is not quite so inclusive as outlined here by Stallybrass and White. Instead, the classical body stands at the centre of immediately significant values. Jery Melford's awe in the face of George Dennison's attainments typically expresses the conflation of manners and morals--"George Dennison is, without all question, one of the most accomplished young fellows in England. His person is at once elegant and manly, and his understanding highly cultivated. Tho' his spirit is lofty, his heart is kind" (October 14, 318)---and one of the more important lessons of Joseph Andrews is that "a good man . . . is a standing lesson to all his acquaintance" (I.i.13). Our examination of courtesy literature must also, therefore, encompass discourse where the moral status of the body is foregrounded. In the chapter which follows I will be examining the representation of the body in the literature of courtesy. This examination will also give some attention
to the representation of the body in the discourse of devotion, which bears, as we will see, an interesting relation to the literature of courtesy. Then, in order to illuminate the treatment of the grotesque body in the literatures of courtesy and devotion, I will give an account of the general intellectual conception of the grotesque body in the period. I will conclude by making some theoretical observations on the relation of the grotesque body to the ideal body in the period. These observations will take their support from Bakhtin's suggestive distinction between what he calls the classical and the grotesque bodies.²

² The exclusion of the literature of medicine from this survey is intentional. While it is true that consideration of the body often centres upon its manifestation as an object of medical attention (cf. Stafford's Body Criticism), the representation of the body in medical literature is irrelevant to our study. The primary reason for this exclusion is that the representation of the body in the medical literature of the period is largely descriptive--William Buchan writes in his Domestic Medicine (London, 1792) that he intends "to give a full and accurate description of each particular disease as it occurs" (135); and William Cullen provides ten pages of careful description of the appearance and course of "an intermittent fever" (First Lines of the Practice of Physic (London [n.d.])). The representation of the body in such literature is carried out within the context of the empirical verification of particular facts, and their relation to a norm of bodily health. The representation of the body in medical literature thus takes place entirely within the world of the actual physical body itself. The representation of the body in devotional literature and courtesy literature, as I will show, is conducted largely for the purposes of elaborating other truths (the primacy of the intellect, the aggrandizement of the spiritual self, or the desirability of socially conformable conduct); such representation is dialectical and dramatic, and it seeks ultimately to establish the body in relation to realities determined not
One of the most committed writers of courtesy literature of the period is Henry Fielding himself. The Preface to *Joseph Andrews*, with its analysis of affectation and its invocation of Jean Baptiste Morvan de Bellegarde is a reflection of Fielding's interest in conduct literature during this period, an interest more clearly evident in several texts explicitly concerned with conduct—the "Essay on Conversation" and "Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men" (1743) and in the Covent Garden Journal 55 and 56 (July 18 and 25, 1752). His concern for the importance of good manners continues until the end of his life—the notorious example of Fielding's disgust with the absence of good manners in society is in *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* when, bloated by dropsy, he has to be carried aboard the ship at Redriffe and is made to suffer "all manner of insults and jests" from the onlookers. He writes: "It may be said, that this barbarous custom is peculiar to the English, and of them only to the lowest degree...and never shews itself in men who are polish'd and refined" by the destiny of the body but of society as a whole.

A full account of the philosophy and practice of medicine in this period can be found in the work of Lester King, particularly *The Medical World of the Eighteenth Century* and *The Philosophy of Medicine: The Early Eighteenth Century*. And for those interested in pursuing the relation of literature to medicine, *Literature and Medicine During the Eighteenth Century* will be found to be a good introduction to the topic.
Fielding's attention to the relation of character to appearance exemplifies Terry Eagleton's observation that eighteenth-century manners was concerned with that "meticulous disciplining of the body which converts morality to style" (The Ideology of the Aesthetic 41). Fielding writes in the "Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men" that the universal sway of self-interest has given rise to deceit in all quarters, with the result that "the whole World [has become] a vast Masquerade, where the greatest Part appear disguised under false Vizors" (283). However, such deceit "rarely escapes the Discovery of an accurate Observer; for Nature, which unwillingly submits to the Imposture, is ever endeavouring to peep forth and shew herself" (155). For Fielding, the stigmata of morality have a strong basis in the nature of the different social classes. The proud man "is a Composition made up of those odious contemptible Qualities, Pride, Folly, 

3 In Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness; Moral Discourse and Cultural Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century England, Lawrence Klein writes that "politeness" was a refined sociability, bringing aesthetic concerns into close contiguity with ethical ones" (Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness, 4). The opening section of Klein's work presents a lucid analysis of the status of courtesy in eighteenth-century society (see also Klein's "The Third Earl of Shaftesbury and the Progress of Politeness" and "Liberty, Manners, and Politeness in Early Eighteenth-Century England"). Joyce Hemlow has pointed out that a lack of good manners "would annul every other good quality, including principles, solid worth, merit, learning, and all. This was not the age of the rough diamond" (733).
Arrogance, Insolence, and Ill-nature" ("Essay on Conversation", 137); and, "the lowest and meanest of our Species are the most strongly addicted to this Vice. . . It visits Ale-Houses and Gin-Shops, and whistles in the empty Heads of Fidlers, Mountebanks, and Dancing-Masters" (138).

The class-consciousness of Fielding's prescriptions is not unusual; the literature of courtesy is a preeminently class-conscious discourse. John Mason long ago described the courtesy book as "a work which discusses the types of human conduct as class ideals" (291). Mediated through the prescriptions of courtesy literature, behaviour is shaped to ideal conceptions: "At its most aggressively synthetic, the language of politeness sought to impose general order over large tracts of human experience, bringing its various referents into one interpretive scheme. The premises, criteria and standards of that scheme can be most easily grasped as expressions of an idealized vision of

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4 In the last decade or so, attention to courtesy literature in the period has shifted toward the relation of that literature to women's experience and to the depiction of women in the novel. Joyce Hemlow's early piece on courtesy and the writing of Fanny Burney stands at the head of this vein of scholarly endeavour, and her initial work has been significantly supplemented by Mary Poovey (The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, and Jane Austen; see Chapter 2, "The Proper Lady"); Nancy Armstrong (Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel; see particularly 61-69); and The Ideology of Conduct. Women's conduct literature, it is argued, constructs female subjectivity through the regulation of sexual desire.
human intercourse" (Klein, "Liberty" 587 (my emphasis)). As Michael Curtin writes, "typically the genre concerned itself with the advocacy of ideals of character, accomplishments, habits, manners, and morals--in short, the art of living in society" (395). The origins of the genre are in the sixteenth century. Della Casa's influential Galateo, which will be examined more closely in the following pages, appeared in 1558. Writing on Elizabethan courtesy theory, Frank Whigham observes that courtesy theory was first "promulgated by the elite as a gesture of exclusion . . . [and] then reread, rewritten, and reemployed by mobile base readers to serve their own social aggressions" (5-6).

Courtesy theory codified what Jürgen Habermas has called the "publicness of representation" (7)--the expression of royalty through costume and ceremony. Habermas speaks of this representation making "something invisible visible through the public presence of the person of the lord" (7). In the eighteenth century this same "publicness of representation" was practised by the landed gentry. E.P. Thompson speaks of the "studied and elaborate hegemonic style" in which the gentry were schooled and in the practice of which they carried out their lives. "Their appearances," he writes, "have much of the studied self-consciousness of public theatre . . . the elaboration of wig and powder, ornamented clothing and canes, and even the rehearsed
patrician gestures and the hauteur of bearing and expression, all were designed to exhibit authority to the plebs and to exact from them deference" (389). It was a theatricality whose influence was felt in other ways than simply power. J.C.D. Clark tells us that "the ideal of the gentleman exercised an intellectual ascendancy. Both patricians and plebians subscribed to it" (92).

Pointing to the growth of what she calls "social wariness" as impetus for the effulgence of the civility book in the period, Esther Aresty has described courtesy literature as part of the machinery of "social vigilance." The need for that wariness and vigilance was arising from an increased restlessness within the ranks. Certainly Hume might reason comfortably that "the cohesion of the parts of matter arises from the natural and necessary principles, whatever difficulty we may find in explaining them"; that "human society is founded on like principles"; and that:

The skin, pores, muscles, and nerves of a day-labourer are different from those of a man of quality: So are his sentiments, actions and manners. The different stations of life influence the whole fabric, external and internal; and these different stations arise necessarily, because uniformly, from the necessary and uniform principles of human nature. (II.iii.402)

However the changing pattern of responsibilities and deserts in the period necessitated a critique of the notion of natural prerogatives. Mr. Seeland's assertion of his status in Steele's Conscious Lovers (1722) might be recalled:
Sir, as much as a cit as you take me for, I know the town and the world: and give me leave to say that we merchants are a species of gentry that have grown into the world in this last century, and are as honourable, and almost as useful, as you landed folks that have always thought yourselves so much above us. (IV.ii).

It is a passage that Peter Earle quotes to good effect in his discussion of the development of "the middle station" during this time when "the distinction between 'the upper part of mankind' and the middle station was becoming increasingly confused" (8). Parson Primrose's panegyricon to the middle orders in The Vicar of Wakefield (1766) is also noteworthy in this context:

there must still be a large number of the people without the sphere of the opulent man's influence, namely, that order of men which subsists between the very rich and the very rabble; those men are possest of too large fortunes to submit to the neighbouring man in power, and yet are too poor to set up for tyranny themselves. In this middle order of mankind are generally found all the arts, wisdom, and virtues of society. This order alone is known to be the true preserver of freedom, and may be called the People.

(97-98)

Particularly in light of Primrose's rhetoric, Whigham's remark that courtesy literature served the "social aggressions" of classes marginalized by the elite is entirely apropos in the eighteenth century. Earle writes that "some sort of middle-class culture had long existed, closely allied to the dominant culture of the gentry and

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5 Earle takes the phrase "middle station" from Defoe (3). For a good account of the shifting vocabulary of social analysis in the period see Corfield.
aristocracy but, in our period, this culture was transformed by the ambition and thirst for knowledge of the middle station. This group was almost universally literate and their demand for self-improvement was eagerly met by the publishers" (10). The courtesy book answered one aspect of this demand. In truth, the literature of courtesy elided the distinction between the intractable order of what Hume calls "the different stations of life" and the apparently universal accessibility of upward mobility by submitting all ranks to an ideal conception of physical comportment. Curtin observes that the courtesy writers "described an inclusive sociability that sought to create temporary harmonies between divergent interests and opinions by the inculcation of polite, aesthetic, and useful norms of commingling" (414). The standard remained, however, as E.P. Thompson and J.C.D. Clark make clear, undeniably patrician. The discipline of the body inculcated by conduct literature particularly as it shaped the body for society aimed to define the visible characteristics of social status. Significantly, the body may thus be viewed as an important site over or through which the communication of ideology takes place (Terry Eagleton defines ideology as "a relatively coherent set of 'discourses' of values, representations and beliefs which . . . reflect the experiential relations of individual subjects to their
social conditions" (Criticism and Ideology 54). The body exists in discourse—and most clearly in the discourse of courtesy literature—as an expression of the ideological control of social facts.7

Jean Baptiste Morvan de Bellegarde writes:

'Tis not an extravagant and gross Ridicule that is the Business of these Reflexions, but that nice one that most polite People sometimes fall into without perceiving it. It often happens, that those very Things they pride themselves in, and affect to distinguish themselves by, expose them to Contempt and Raillery, because they can't conceal a foolish Vanity in their Ways, or an unreasonable Desire of pleasing and out-doing all the world. (Advertisement)

Bellegarde's Reflexions on Ridicule (Paris 1696, London 1706-7) is a conduct book whose emphasis is upon identifying those various behaviours which might invite ridicule. Bellegarde's "Art of Living" (I:2) is an art constituted by the felicitous union of manners and morals, and an art the

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6 Definitions of ideology are innumerable, cf. Eagleton, Criticism and Ideology 54-63; his recent Ideology, An Introduction 1-31; and Raymond Williams, Marxism and Literature 55-71. Courtesy literature is clearly an ideologically enriched discourse, devoted as it is to the regulation of the behaviour of an influential social group. The problematic relation of the individual to ideology is discussed in both Eagleton’s Ideology and William’s Marxism and Literature.

7 Lawrence Klein writes that "[t]hough the language of politeness was manifestly not a political language in the conventional sense but rather a language of social and cultural description and evaluation, yet it was politicized and then used to support and clarify political predilections" (*Liberty* 589).
practice of which is a guard against ridicule (I:2). Chesterfield recommends another of what was at the time considered one of Bellegarde's works, "a very pretty little French book," L'Art de plaider dans la Conversation, in a letter to his son (Bath, 29 September O.S. 1746, 775). Chesterfield's interest in Bellegarde is not surprising, intent as he is upon communicating the practice and use of good manners to his son. He writes in the same letter, "the desire of pleasing is at least half the art of doing it; the rest depends only upon the manner, which attention, observation, and frequenting good company will teach" (775).

Nor is Fielding's mention of Bellegarde in the Covent Garden Journal entirely unexpected, in view of his earlier mention of the courtesy writer in the Preface to Joseph Andrews. In numbers 55 and 56 (July 18 and 25, 1752, respectively), Fielding alludes to the "judicious" (no. 55, 300) and the "ingenious" (no. 56, 302) Abbé Bellegarde as he examines the relation of humour to good breeding. In the Preface to Joseph Andrews (1742) Fielding cites him as an authority on

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8 Fielding speaks in similar terms of good breeding as "the art of pleasing, or contributing as much as possible to the ease and happiness of those with whom you converse" in the "Essay on Conversation" (249).

9 Despite the commonplace eighteenth-century association of Bellegarde's name with L'Art..., twentieth-century scholarship has since concluded that the attribution was incorrect. John Mason attributes the book to Pierre d'Ortigue de Vaumorière (264).
the sources of ridicule, in a paragraph which alludes to Aristotle’s failure to define the ridiculous. Fielding finds Bellegarde an inadequate guide because he feels Bellegarde has failed to resolve upon a single source of the ridiculous. But while this is Fielding’s goal, it is not Bellegarde’s. His *Reflexions upon Ridicule* is not a critical dissertation on aspects of comedy; it aims rather to identify and promote a pleasing manner of acting.\(^\text{10}\)

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\(^{10}\) In using the term "acting" here, I am purposefully recalling E.P. Thompson’s invocation of the idea of theatre to describe the deliberate cultivation of decorous public behaviour. There is of course a significant body of literature devoted to "acting", taken literally. Whereas conduct books are careful to determine correct modes of social performance, acting manuals are as careful to determine correct modes of theatrical performance. Instructions for comic actors do of course recommend extravagant behaviour. John Hill writes, 

The performer in tragedy ought always to present himself before us in the most advantageous manner, and under the most graceful figure he can. But this is far from being the case in every part of comedy; he is there very frequently to exhibit himself in the least pleasing light, and ‘tis often his chief business to make himself as foolish, as extravagant, and absurd as he can. (*The Actor* (1750), 269)

Further, rather than being bound to the behaviour of a particular group, the comic actor, in order to understand the kinds of characters he portrays, must be a kind of social amphibian. Garrick advises that the comic actor move freely and observantly through society and "be introduced into the World, be conversant with Humours of every Kind" (*An Essay on Acting* (1744), 10). For further discussions of acting in the eighteenth century, see Alan Hughes, "Art and Eighteenth-Century Acting Style"; Joseph R. Roach, *The Player’s Passion, Studies in the Science of Acting*; and George Taylor, "‘The Just Delineation of the Passions’: Theories of Acting in the Age of Garrick."
Appropriate social intercourse involves the conscious adoption of certain modes of behaviour. The failure to gain or maintain reputation does not immediately result in a diminution of real status; rather, such failure is chiefly a failure in a species of performance where the sign of censure is the laughter of an audience. And for Bellegarde, the proper "Art of Living" is founded on properly moral behaviour; the body is effectively disciplined by due attention to general qualities of behaviour and not by attention to details of physical activity. Thus the first volume of the Reflexions deals with, for example, bad taste, indiscretion, and vanity, while the second volume, which concerns itself with "Politeness of Manners", discusses variously such things as "modest Sentiments", Moderation and Disinterestedness", and "Sincerity". And Bellegarde writes in the Advertisement to the second volume, "I should think a Man had acquired a Virtue, when he had avoided all the Imperfections repugnant to it."

It is in his examination of the dangers of affectation that Bellegarde shows the extent to which a person’s moral nature animates his physical nature. Affectation involves transgressions both of nature ("stick to Nature if you desire to please, for whatever is fictitious and affected, is always insipid and distasteful" (59)) and of class ("Tis a very common Temptation for the Citizens to desire to keep
a Commerce with Retainers to the court, to mingle in their 
Assignations, to copy them, and study their Language and 
their Ways" (72)). Affectation is unacceptable because it 
is a performance that attempts to subvert the natural order 
of things. Bellegarde’s analysis of affectation lays bare 
his view of the essential determinism upon which society is 
based, and in doing so reveals that social performance is 
much less an art than it is a necessary and profound 
inscription of the natural order on what are otherwise 
unrelated and dangerously self-interested individuals—
"Persons of noble Blood are more easy, sociable and 
affected, than others rais’d from the Dunghil [sic] by their 
own Skill or Chance; that Air of Greatness they assume, 
prevents not our discovering them through their borrow’d 
Outside" (72-3). But while affectation is dangerous because 
it attempts to provide a cover for outrageous social 
manoeuvre, it nevertheless makes itself manifest by 
literally deforming those who practice it:

Affectation is the falsification of the whole Person, 
which deviates from all that is Natural, whereby it 
might please, to put on an ascititious Ayre, 
wherewithal to become ridiculous. It is the Effect of 
a corrupt Taste, of an extravagant Imagination, of an 
immmoderate and mistaken Desire of pleasing and 
distinguishing one’s Self. The other Vices are 
confin’d within certain Bounds, and have a particular 
Object, but Affectation diffuses itself over the whole 
Man, and infects the good Qualities both of Body and 
Mind. People corrupted with this Vice, have nothing 
natural in their Way of Talking, Walking, Dressing, 
turning their Eyes or Head, these are Motions unknown 
to other Men. (58)
Here the body is presented as an aspect of the whole person, and affectation "diffuses itself over the whole Man."

It is easy to see why conduct presented in this manner would have special interest for a novelist like Fielding who is intent upon making his characters expressive of particular values--to present "the example of the good man", as I mentioned above, is one Joseph Andrew's chief functions. Bellegarde's explanation of his method sounds very much like a literary defense of mimesis in the service of instruction: "the Picture of the Vices here criticiz'd will serve for a Rule to amend them: A Man that feels himself smitten in his weak Part, and sees himself painted to the Life, immediately conceives a secret Spleen against the Author, in this resembling a deform'd woman when you shew her the Glass" (Advertisement). Fielding, for his part, asserts that the purpose of his portrait of a lawyer is "to hold the glass to thousands in their closets, that they may contemplate their deformity" (III.i.159). The Reflexions thus consist of dozens of portraits presented to illustrate the various infractions of polite behaviour.

There is Emelia given to affecting "far-fetch'd Expressions" (59); Celadon who shares the stage-coach with the narrator and tires him with his endless talk of his personal affairs (43); and the antiquated coquette, Belisa (146).
Bellegarde's portraits are directly influenced by the character writing of his compatriot, Jean de La Bruyère. La Bruyère's model is the Greek philosopher Theophrastus, whose Characters (c. 4th century BC) constitutes the well-spring of all subsequent character writing. La Bruyère translated Theophrastus' work as The Moral Characters, which his English translators appended to the fifth edition of La Bruyère's own Characters: or, the Manners of the Age (London, 1709). Theophrastus' portraits are briefer than those of La Bruyère, and lack the dramatic qualities which bring such interest to La Bruyère's work. The Greek writes of such types as the dissembler, the flatterer, the rustic, and the villain. Significantly, however, Theophrastus' purpose is to provide pointed examples for his readers' instruction. He writes, "Posterity will be advantaged by leaving them such Remains as these, which they may set before them as Examples, what Persons to choose to be familiar and conversant with, by a noble emulation of whose Virtues they may become great Men" (The Moral Characters of Theophrastus (1707), 2). In La Bruyère's hands, however,

11 For a brief account of the relation of the "character" to courtesy literature see Benjamin Boyce, The Theophrastan Character in England to 1642 77-80. For an examination of La Bruyere's influence on one aspect of eighteenth-century literature, see Margaret Turner's "The Influence of La Bruyère' on the Tatler and the Spectator." In his Literary Portraits in the Novels of Henry Fielding, Sean Shesgreen points out Fielding's dependence on this tradition.
the didactic purpose of the character sketch seems almost completely overborne by his readers' appreciation of them as pure entertainment. He notes in his fifth edition that, "few have read [his Characters] with any other intent, than for the sake of Reading" (3). Nevertheless, La Bruyère's intention is no different than Theophrastus'; by means of his characters, he aims to direct his readers to virtue: "The World may here view the Picture I have drawn of it from Nature, and if I have hit on any defects, which it agrees with me to be such, it may at leisure correct them" (1). In fact, as Peter France points out in his Politeness and Its Discontents, La Bruyère's book may indeed be considered a kind of manual of politeness (65). Indeed types that will be later echoed in Bellegarde's work are encountered in some of La Bruyère's characters. There is, for example, something of Bellegarde's miser Phylargyrus in the Chrysippus who after labouring his whole life to be rich, is now extraordinarily wealthy, and despite his great age, "employs the rest of his time in labouring to be richer" (111). But unlike the characters that appear in the work of the conduct book writers, La Bruyère's characters often seem completely unattached to any moral lesson. The absent-minded Menalcas is a wonderful example of La Bruyère's talent for the comic portrait. Menalcas' is one of longest sketches in the book, La Bruyère lavishing eight pages on
his creation. Menalcas first appears at the beginning of the day as he leaves his house, "Menalcas goes down Stairs, opens the door to go out, shuts it; he perceives that his Nightcap is still on; and examining himself a little better, finds but one half of his Face shav’d, his Sword on his Right side, his Stockings hanging over his Heels, and his Shirt out of his Breeches" (208). Subsequently, Menalcas falls over a blind man in the street (209); takes the wrong coach home to the wrong house (210); contracts a marriage in the morning that he forgets by the evening (210); kneels on a man in church, thinking him "a Desk and cushion" (210); and when gambling, drinks the dice from their box and throws his drinking water on the gaming table (211). This is all farce, and Menalcas certainly bears a stronger relation to Fielding’s Parson Adams, for instance, than any of Bellegarde’s characters; but it is important to notice how firmly in the stream of explicitly moral and didactic literature La Bruyère’s work is. In effect, the spectacle of the body in farcical motion is contained by the explicitly elaborated moral purpose. In the case of La Bruyère this containment tends to be diminished by the attention lavished by the writer on the character itself. However, in the books of civility, particularly in the kind of character-based courtesy literature written by Bellegarde, the didactic potential of the character is fully
realized. Not only is the didactic purpose conscientiously explicated, but the characters are more rigorously contained within their determining moral framework (consider the manner in which Bellegarde treats affectation), and the spectacle of the outrageous body is carefully circumscribed.

As I have been showing, the concern for the moral and physical disposition of the whole man results in a species of courtesy writing whose form is derived from the kind of character writing practiced by La Bruyère. Another strand of courtesy literature is represented by the Galateo (1558; English translation 1703) by the Italian Giovanni Della Casa. This work is notable for our purposes because of the fun Tristram has with it. The Galateo is introduced when Tristram is discussing Walter's troubles with the

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12 The use of portraits is also practised by François-Vincent Toussaint in his Manners (trans. 1752). Like Bellegarde, Toussaint's interest lies not in the fine details of polite behaviour, but in a larger arena, "I describe the manners of men, both as they really are, and as they ought to be" (Preface iv). Manners he defines as "conduct regulated by the knowledge and love of VIRTUE" (2). Moral prerequisites thus shape the whole man, and the incitement to good manners is accomplished by means of the portrait in which the dramatic representation of a particular vice serves as a mirror of men as they actually conduct themselves in the real world.

13 Aresty observes that the Galateo ranks with Castiglione's Courtier "as one of the most durable works of polite behaviour" (68) and has found that early nineteenth-century Americans were still printing it. Mason detects Della Casa's influence in a variety of English conduct books throughout the period, as well as in Chesterfield's maxims to his son (253-290).
Tristra-pedia (V.xvi.299-300). "His Grace of Benevento spent near forty years of his life [writing the Galateo]," Tristram writes, "and when the thing came out, it was not of above half the size or thickness of a Rider's Almanack" (V.xvi; I:446).14 Quite unlike Bellegarde's lengthy treatise on manners, Della Casa's book is a brief and detailed account of the forms of proper behaviour. As John Mason critically observes, the Galateo is primarily concerned with the "petty details of human conduct" (39).

The aim of the Galateo is to inculcate that conduct necessary "for gaining the Reputation of a Person well-bred"; and its author writes that the practise of such conduct is justified as being "either a real Vertue, or, at least, so like to Vertue, that it may be justly reckoned as near of kin to it" (2). Conduct valorizes the theatrics of status-seeking by regarding them as a fundamentally moral activity. Good manners are additionally laudable because they have an important aesthetic value, they "are such as please our Senses" (123). In this good manners satisfy mankind's natural inclination for "Beauty, or prettiness, as on the other hand they abhor everything that is monstrous or deformed" (124). Bagleton, as I pointed out earlier, claims manners converted "morality to style" in the period. But

14 For a full account of Sterne's use of the Galateo, see chapter 6, below.
clearly, morality is style and is to a certain extent merely the temporal afterthought of a distinctly secular enterprise—the body is disciplined to gain entrance to one of the many rooms not in God’s house but in Lord X’s. Conduct is most importantly, as Bagleton recognizes, "political order lived out on the body" (37). However, as profound an enterprise as this makes the regulation of conduct appear, the particulars of such regulation are considerably more mundane.

"It is no decent Custom to handle any part of our Body before Company" (8), writes Della Casa in a long section of the Galeto devoted to the details of physical comportment. There follow strictures against singing (9), coughing, sneezing, and yawning (10), clearing one’s throat, and examining the contents of one’s handkerchief (12), and smelling the drink or food either of one’s own or of another’s "lest any one should fancy something might drop from" the nose (13). What these rules point to is the importance of maintaining what Goffman refers to as the "expressive mask" (121), where such a mask functions most significantly to suppress signs of the body in its rather unpleasantly full material being. But it must be remembered that this "suppression" also aims to replace the involuntarily and unaesthetically human with the voluntarily aesthetic object—Della Casa warns his reader not to loll
when standing but to hold his body in an upright position (25). And a man is to please not only in his figure but in his language as well, "it is the part of a Gentleman, to abstain diligently from filthy undecent words" (99). A pleasingly carried figure, a graceful, discreet bearing in company, and a modest discourse are desirable because they distinguish the gentleman from the commoner. To fail to be pleasing is not merely vicious, it is clownish and marks one as outside the class of gentlemen. As it prescribes the proper carriage of a gentleman in movement, the Galateo makes this point explicit: "A Gentleman ought not to run or walk too fast in the streets, lest he be taken for one going upon an Errand rather than a person of Quality" (135); nor should a man walk with too large steps or hang his hands as he moves "like a Changling, nor swing [his] Arms backward and forward, as a Countryman does when he Sows Corn" (135). The ideological antithesis is quite explicit: the gentleman acts in such a way as to give pleasure to those whose company he shares. This aesthetic self-discipline solidifies both his class standing and moral value; those who do not practice to conduct themselves in this manner do not give pleasure, are less virtuous, and are obviously to
be associated with those classes which toil and sweat and sneeze with unabashed openness.15

More explicitly than Bellegarde in his Reflexions, Della Casa promotes a version of courtesy that stresses the body's usefulness as an instrument of social manoeuvre. Jery Melford in Humphry Clinker observes that Mr. Barton has been transformed from "a careless indolent sloven" by the zealous pursuit of political favour into a "busy talkative politician . . . and a ceremonious courtier in his manners" (Jery, June 2, 94).16 Mr. Barton pursues the particular discipline of the body to the point of being mildly ridiculous. His intellectual shallowness and personal fastidiousness result in a calculated attention to the kind of usefully inoffensive behaviour recommended by Della Casa. He invites ridicule because his courtly manner derogates from his authenticity as a human. Klein has pointed out that moralists of the period worried that the cultivation of "social theatrics" came into conflict with personal

15 The Galateo's influence in the eighteenth century is plainly evident in Adam Petrie's Rules of Good Deportment, or of Good Breeding (1720). While Mason points out that the sobriquet the "Scottish Chesterfield" was sometimes attached to Petrie (268), he seems to have missed a more concrete connection between Petrie and the courtesy literature of the period. For in his Rules, Adam Petrie can be found copying almost word for word the 1703 English translation of the Galateo, repeating its strictures against buffoonery (60), proper posture (58-9), and running in the streets (6).

16 For more on Mr. Barton, see chapter 5, below.
sincerity ("The Third Earl" 96-7), and something of this conflict is behind Jery and Matthew’s aspersions of Barton’s rationality (Jery, June 2, 94; Matthew June 2, 100). Jery’s observation that the "fumes of faction . . . pervert the organs of sense" (94) also catches at the physical transformation caused by affectation elaborated upon by Bellegarde. What seems to be occurring is an unsettling inversion of significance—the moral self is made to take second place to the disposition of the body in social space for the purposes of unameliorated self-aggrandizement.

In addition to the problem of sincerity, further difficulties with politeness came from its association with luxury and indolence (Klein, "Liberty" 594-6). In both cases politeness militates against moral and political authenticity by exaggerating the relevance of the body to the individual’s status as a moral and political being. The fact that Smollett chooses to make the romantically inclined Barton wholly ineffective may be read in part as a comment on Barton’s misapplication of his physical energy. Politeness degrades authenticity by reorienting it along the axis of the body—politeness subjugates the ideal to the immediate and the particular. It is a lament of Sterne’s Tristram Shandy that captures the unequal terms on which that subjugation takes place: "our minds shine not through the body, but are wrapt up here in a dark covering of
uncrystalized flesh and blood" (I.xxxiii; I:83). The relation of mind to body is circumstantial. It is in his mind and moral nature that man bears the image of God; as Sterne writes elsewhere of man's body, "the sensitive and corporeal part of [man] . . . could bear no resemblance with a pure and infinite spirit" (Sermons, I.7, 82).

The discomfort with the life of the body that underlies the distrust of the self-conscious pursuit of courtesy surfaces as a central feature in certain works of devotion. The correspondence between the literatures of devotion and courtesy has been pointed out by several commentators. Nancy Armstrong observes that the conduct book for women "was a hybrid form that combined materials from earlier devotional manuals and books of manners ostensibly written for aristocratic women" (Desire 66). And in his introduction to Jeremy Taylor's Holy Living, P.G. Stanwood points out that Taylor's work is indeed sometimes connected with the tradition of post-Renaissance conduct literature (xxxiv). The points of similarity between the methods of Bellegarde and William Law, for example, are illuminating. The difference, of course, rests in the fact that the literature of devotion does not view the body as a medium
for a complex aesthetic expression, but rather as an object of mortification.\textsuperscript{17}

In \textit{A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life} (1728), Law uses the "character type" as an instrument of moral instruction. After his portrait of the restless Flatus, Law writes:

I have been thus circumstantial in so many foolish particulars of this kind of life, because I hope that every particular folly that you here see will naturally turn itself into an argument for the wisdom and happiness of a religious life . . . characters of this kind [i.e. Flatus], the more folly and ridicule they have in them, provided that they be but natural, are most useful to correct our minds; and therefore are nowhere more proper than in books of devotion and practical piety. (137)

This is a very strong echo of Bellegarde's \textit{Reflexions}--"the Picture of the Vices here criticiz'd will serve for a rule to amend them" (Advertisement)--which had first been translated into English in 1706. But the similarity of method and moral emphasis does not translate into a similarity of temper. Bellegarde is chiefly concerned with agreeable social performance as an end in itself. The individual is being instructed on how to avoid public ridicule, or, after the Galateo, how to conduct himself

\textsuperscript{17} Stanwood's introduction to his edition of Taylor's \textit{Holy Living} includes a brief but useful survey of the devotional tradition (xxxii-xxxviii). A similar survey is found in Erwin Paul Rudolph's critical biography of William Law (1980), 24-54. The standard study of devotional literature remains Helen C. White's \textit{English Devotional Literature [Prose] 1600-1640} (1931).
pleasingly in public life. Individuals are thus represented as social beings; society is their milieu ("Men are made for Society" (2)), and it is society’s natural rules that govern their behaviour. Law, on the other hand, would surely hold that men are made for God, and thus the transgressors in Law’s portraits are not laughable, but damnable. The things of this earth clot one’s spirituality. The difference between Bellegarde and Law may be seen in their sharply contrasting portraits of moneyed men near the end of their lives. Bellegarde portrays an aged miser who is absurd because his lust to put away money prevents him from living fully in society. His Phylargyrus "is old and has no Children; no body pays any Court to him, nor has he any Affection for any body, or any Acquaintance; and yet he every where enlarges his Income and raises his Rents: He’s ill lodg’d, and as bad cloath’d, and sees not a fire all the Winter; he spunges upon his Neighbours, to save the Charge of a dinner" (192). Law portrays a grotesque consumptive:

Imagine to yourself some person in a consumption, or any other lingering distemper that was incurable. If you were to see such a man wholly intent upon doing everything in the spirit of religion, making the wisest use of all his, time, fortune, and abilities . . . you would certainly commend his prudence, you would say that he had taken the right method to make himself as joyful and happy as any one can be in a state of such infirmity.

On the other hand, if you should see the same person, with trembling hands, short breath, thin jaws, and hollow eyes, wholly intent upon business and bargains, as long as he could speak; if you should see him pleased with fine clothes, when he could scarce stand
to be dressed, and laying out his money in horses and
dogs, rather than purchase the prayers of the poor for
his soul, which was so soon to be separated from his
body; you would certainly condemn him as a weak, silly
man. (158)

Bellegarde's miser is merely old and poorly clothed. His
viciousness is the cause of a general, sad disorder. Law's
old man is a thoroughly grotesque reprobate. But Law is not
aiming to provoke ridicule, he is inciting horror. The
grotesque spectacle of the diseased body as it engages in a
travesty of vital worldliness is the primary means of
producing this horror. Significantly, the body of the
religiously inclined consumptive is not represented. While
the conduct manual grotesques the body in order to better
recommend proper physical comportment, the devotional manual
grotesques the body in order to demonstrate its essential
unworthiness and the contrasting worth of the existence
devoted to the claims of the spirit.

This difference is nowhere so evident as it is in
Jeremy Taylor's Holy Living. More obviously than Law's
work, Taylor's Holy Living exhibits devotional literature's
similarities with the literature of courtesy. Taylor's
remarks upon "singular and affected walking, proud, nice and
ridiculous gestures of body, painting and lascivious
dressings" (105) bear direct comparison with Adam Petrie's
censure of "curious Adorning" (5) in his Rules of Good
Deportment. But surely the aims are emphatically different,
with the result that Taylor's strictures against particular kinds of behaviour come closer to the rigours of mortification than they do simple politeness. Taylor writes:

...as every man is wholly Gods [sic] own portion by the title of creation: so all our labours and care, all our powers and faculties must be wholly employed in the service of God, even all the dayes of our life, that this life being ended, we may live with him for ever.

(17)

The result is a much more rigorous form of self-discipline:

Christian sobriety is all that duly concerns our selves in the matter of meat and drink and pleasures and thoughts, and it hath within it, the duties of 1. Temperance. 2. Chastity. 3. Humility. 4. Modesty. 5. Content.

It is a using severity, denial, and frustration, of our appetite when it growes unreasonable in any of these instances.

(60)

Not for Taylor the Galateo's "pretiness" (124) as a spring of good conduct. The representation of the body in Taylor, as with Law, tends toward the unpleasant. Here is Taylor's systematic denigration of the body and its attributes under his discussion of pride:

1. Our Body is weak and impure, sending out more uncleannesses from its several sinks than could be endured if they were not necessary and natural: and we are forced to passe that through our mouths, which as soon as we see upon the ground, we loathe like rottennesse and vomiting.

2. Our strength is inferiour to that of many Beasts, and our infirmities so many that we are forced to dresse and tend Horses and Asses, that they may help our needs and relieve our wants.

3. Our beauty is in colour inferiour to many flowers, and in proportion of parts it is better than nothing.

(87)
Della Casa and Petrie are very careful about specifying the many ways in which acts like sneezing and coughing are to be dealt with. For them the body is simply a potentially unruly element of the entire individual; one needs to exercise a certain amount of discretion in how one goes about putting things into and taking things out of it. And if one is to attempt to characterize their manner of describing such actions, one can do no better than Eagleton's "meticulous" (41). That these activities must be regulated is dealt with more or less as a matter of course, as one might recommend arranging furniture in order to move around a room with greater ease. But for Taylor, the body does not possess this kind of vaguely troublesome neutrality. In his text, the body is made fundamentally repugnant--its inferior nature presents an obstacle to the "service of God". Moreover, for the conduct book writers, the body is a thing that is to be manipulated in relation to society, the means by which the self achieves its aggrandizing integration with the world around it. For Taylor, the self views the body from a remove, with a barely concealed sense of revulsion. Rather than being the means by which the self solidifies its attachment to its surroundings, the body in almost every respect is the means by which man is estranged from his surroundings, from the animal as well as the vegetable world.
The body as the agent of man's estrangement is clearly an antithetical conception to Bellegarde's concern with the relation of behaviour to the "Art of Living". Yet both attempts to organize the life of the body are of a piece with Locke's observation in An Essay Concerning Human Understanding that "the infinite wise Author of our being, [has] given us power over several parts of our bodies to move or keep them at rest as we see fit" (II.vii.sec 3) and his assertion that:

The primary ideas we have peculiar to body, as contradistinguished to spirit, are the cohesion of solid, and consequently separable, parts, and a power of communicating motion by impulse. (II.xxiii.sec 17).

Hobbes' account of the body's empty instrumentality is even more reductive: "For what," he writes, "is the Heart, but a Spring; and the Nerves, but so many Strings; and the Joynts, but so many Wheeles, giving motion to the whole Body" (Leviathan 9). The manner in which the mind's power over the body's nearly passive material components is exercised differs in devotional and courtesy literature according to the differing orientations of human experience being elaborated. In the case of the devotional manual, the emphasis is upon man as a spiritual being, and the discipline of the body aims at a veritable erasure of its material prominence, an erasure accomplished both by means of representations of its repellent nature and by the recommendation of virtues of sobriety, humility, and
chastity each of which effaces the body's spontaneous life, with a view to preparing the soul for its reception in heaven. In the case of the conduct manual, the emphasis is upon man as a social being, and the discipline thus aims at identifying the marks of class status, signified largely by the appearance and carriage of the body, with a view to instilling a beneficent conformity. Terry Eagleton speaks of the aestheticized body, "living with all the instinctual rightness of an artefact" (41). The eighteenth-century view of the body inflicts an unremitting self-consciousness on the individual and imposes a perpetual work of self-construction attended by the dread that at any moment the nearly independent body will assert itself in ways at once immoral and disgusting.

The particularized physical discipline promulgated by the literature of courtesy reflects a general estimate of the body's marginality, of the fact that the body assumes value and significance only insofar as it is shaped to uses that erase its peculiarly private and offensive existence. Courtesy literature for all its difference from the intense metaphysical anxiety evinced in devotional literature's treatment of the body, nevertheless shares that discomfort with what I would characterize as the extravagant, spontaneous life of the body, and in its pages the literature of courtesy leaves a memorable record of the
body's unauthorized life. The record of this discomfort, particularly in the literature of courtesy, can be regarded as profoundly paradoxical. For coincident with the prescription of proper bodily attitude and conduct is the representation and dramatization of the ugly, the deformed, and disgusting private body. Bellegarde's *Reflexions* is largely a collection of obnoxious individuals whose variety of social trespass is represented as some mode of physical excess. And Della Casa's and Petrie's recommendations for proper social intercourse are framed as litanies of sneezing, coughing, smelling, ogling, belching, pushing, shoving, and swearing. The fact is that the regulation of the disciplined body can simply not take place without the invocation of its grossness, as if the body must be excoriated for its innate metaphysical insufficiency. In aesthetic abstraction, this dependency appears as the necessary contrast of the beautiful with the ugly or deformed. It will be recalled that Della Casa's rules for conduct are explicitly founded on the idea that pleasurable conduct is based upon man's taste for beauty and abhorrence of the "monstrous and deformed" (124).

"'Tis mind alone which forms. All which is void of mind is horrid, and matter formless is deformity itself"

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18 Carol Houlihan Flynn refers to the body in a similar context as "matter in the way" (1).
Shaftesbury articulates nature's organic order—an order that is, when healthy and regular, also beautiful. It is through derogations from health and disruptions of regularity that deformity is introduced. Shaftesbury sees a failure in the operation of social affection (the inclination of a person "to seek the familiarity and friendship of his fellows" (Essay Concerning Virtue and Merit, I.315)) as analogous to real physical monstrosity (314). And he writes this of the constitution of the whole man: "The inside work is fitted to the outward action and performance. So that where habits or affections are dislodged, misplaced, or changed, where those belonging to one species are intermixed with those belonging to another, there must of necessity be confusion and disturbance within" (Essay Concerning Virtue and Merit, I.315). This account of the disruption of natural proportion and uniformity is based on Shaftesbury's explicit elaboration of suggestions that are implicit in both Della Casa's and Bellegarde's work. Indeed, as Klein points out, issues of breeding and philosophy are intimately connected in Shaftesbury's thought: "for Shaftesbury, discussion of philosophy was inextricable from matters of 'politeness,' 'manners,' 'good-breeding,' 'refinement,' 'taste,' and 'conversation'" (Shaftesbury 34). For the conduct book writers, however, the relation of moral imperatives to
physical appearance and conduct are invoked largely for the practical purpose of inculcating specific kinds of reputable behaviour. Shaftesbury is more intellectually engaged with these same moral imperatives; the complex interrelation of beauty, truth, and mind in the real fabric of the cosmos are examined in order to define and direct man’s capacities. In any case, deformity is always identified as an irrational and immoral deviation from the general order of nature.

It is in this guise that deformity and ugliness are explored in the pages of the Spectator and Arthur Murphy’s Gray’s Inn Journal. In both cases, the active principle is moral; the passive object is the individual’s physical being. The result is the malleable significance of the physical. On the one hand, the monstrous character presents a monstrous face; and on the other, the monstrous face may also be sweetened by the assumption of a tranquil disposition. In Spectator 86, Addison writes of a man who is able to read a person’s character by his face:

as a Man hath in the Mould of his Face a remote Likeness to that of an Ox, a Sheep, a Lyon, an Hog, or any other Creature; he hath the same Resemblance in the Frame of his Mind, and is subject to those Passions which are predominant in the Creature that appears in his Countenance. Accordingly he gives the Prints of several Faces that are of a different Mould; and by a little overcharging the Likeness, discovers the Figures of these several kinds of brutal Faces in humane Features. (366-7)
Addison dismisses this as exaggerated, but the same principle—that the mind imprints its character upon the face—can be found expressed by Murphy:

The anatomists will further inform us, that every Muscle of the human Body collects Strength, and expands itself into larger Dimensions, by continual Exercise and Use. . . . It follows then, that the correspondent Muscles of the Face, which express any ruling Passion of the mind, being more frequently exerted, grow out of Proportion, and become conspicuous above the rest. Hence the Face contracts an habitual Air, marking the features with some peculiar Cast of Character, which is legible at one Glance of the Eye.

(No. 6, Nov. 25, 1752, 36)

However, a difficulty is presented by the fact that the physical is nevertheless the passive object of other, more significant forces which render it literally insignificant. While Shaftesbury might feel confident dismissing deformity as evidence of a being’s distance from the influence of an incorruptible and beautiful divinity (Moralists I.69), the more humane Addison recounts the story of Socrates before the physiognomist. From an examination of Socrates, this fellow judges him "the most lewd, libidinous, drunken old Fellow that he had ever met with in his whole Life" (Spectator 86, 368). Addison’s point is not that temperament has no bearing on appearance—as Socrates explains that "he had conquered the strong Dispositions he was born with"—but rather that the proper training of the mind and disposition can utterly neutralize the apparent
viciousness signified by physical appearance. Addison writes:

I have seen many an amiable Piece of Deformity, and have observed a certain Cheerfulness in as bad a System of Features as ever was clap'd together, which hath appeared more lovely than all the blooming Charms of an insolent Beauty. There is a double Praise due to Virtue, when it is lodged in a Body that seems to have been prepared for the Reception of Vice; in many such Cases the Soul and the Body do not seem to be Fellows. (Spectator 86, 367)

While Addison does attach a certain fated immobility to the features, seeing them lightened rather than transformed by the assumption of virtue, Murphy regards physical appearance as more yielding in the presence of moral potentialities. He contrasts the good with the handsome face which he describes as "the mere Formation of inactive Features. . . the Gift of Nature alone" (No.6, 36). The good face may be acquired "by rectifying the Mind, and furnishing it with noble, generous, and virtuous Sentiments, which transfuse themselves into our Features, with an irresistible Persuasion, commanding by a secret Kind of Fascination, the Esteem of every judicious Beholder" (37).

What the Spectator and the Gray's Inn Journal make clear, albeit in different ways, is that physical deformity itself, while its presence may be allowed, is considered repugnant unless other conditions are also present to render it insignificant. Oddly, while vice has the effect of inhabiting deformity, of thrusting deformity into
observation as deformity, the effect of virtue is to render deformity in a sense transparent; and this is the case in the examples of devotional literature I have been examining. Law's contrasting portraits of the religious and the worldly consumptive will be recalled--it is only in the latter case that the particular representation of the corrupted body occurs. Jeremy Taylor, however, plays a slight variation on this practice by identifying deformity not as a mark of spiritual depravity, but as the sign of God's favour, "when God by giving thee a crooked back, hath also made thy spirit stoop or lesse vain, thou art made ready to enter the narrow gate of Heaven, than by being strait, and standing upright, and thinking highly" (93). Nevertheless, like the body in general, deformity always finds its definition in relation to more important realities.

A similar normative tension is exploited by one of Fielding's favourite images. In "An Essay on the Characters of Men", he writes:

Nothing can, in Fact, be more foreign to the Nature of Virtue than Ostentation. It is truly said of Virtue, that could Men behold her naked, they would be all in Love with her. Here it is implied, that this is a Sight very rare or difficult to come at; and indeed there is always a modest Backwardness in true Virtue to expose her naked Beauty. She is conscious of her innate Worth, and little desirous of exposing it to the publick View. It is the Harlot Vice who constantly endeavours to set off the Charms she counterfeits, in order to attract Men's Applause, and to work her sinister Ends by gaining their Admiration and their Confidence. (173-4)
This is an image to which Fielding returns frequently and it is based on a commonplace having its roots in Plato's *Phaedrus*, where as Fielding puts it in the "Essay on Conversation", Plato "draws Virtue in the Person of a fine Woman" (143). The invocation of the physical beauty of Virtue implies that beneath the "counterfeit charms" of the harlot must lie something quite other than beauty. In the *Champion*, Fielding is clearer about the nature of these "counterfeit charms":

... if we strip Virtue and Vice of all their outward Ornaments and Appearances, and view them both naked, and in their pure, native Simplicity ... Vice will appear a taudry, painted Harlot, within, all foul and impure, enticing only at a Distance, the Possession of her certainly attended with Uneasiness, Pain, Disease, Poverty, and Dishonour.

(January, 24, 1739-40; Vol I, 213)

What distinguishes Fielding's image—the ideally beautiful body of virtue personified—from the typical matter of the courtesy writer is the invocation of what Bakhtin calls the classical body in *Rabelais and His World*. The classical body is the centrepiece of what Bakhtin refers to as the "the new bodily canon", a manner of constructing the body that is a heritage of the late Renaissance (319). "The new bodily canon," he writes:

presents an entirely finished, completed, strictly limited body, which is shown from the outside as something individual. That which protrudes, bulges, sprouts, or branches off (when a body transgresses its

19 See Martin Battestin, *The Providence of Wit* 80, n36.
limits and a new one begins) is eliminated, hidden, or moderated. All orifices of the body are closed. The basis of the image is the individual, strictly limited mass, the impenetrable façade.

Bakhtin's account of this canon suggests the extent to which it is served by the literature of courtesy; in the canon, a "leading role is attributed to . . . the place of the body in the external world. The exact position and movements of this finished body in the finished outside world are brought out, so that the limits between them are not weakened." (321). This attention to the visual aesthetics of good manners is exhibited by Fielding in the Covent Garden Journal when he identifies "good breeding" as "the Art of conducting yourself by certain common and general Rules, by which Means, if they were universally observed, the whole World would appear (as all Courtiers actually do) to be, in their external Behaviour at least, but one and the same Person" (#55, 301, my emphasis). Stallybrass and White connect the classical body with the body of statuary, "the classical statue is the radiant centre of a transcendent individualism, 'put on a pedestal', raised above the viewer and the commonality and anticipating passive admiration from below. We gaze up at the figure and wonder" (21). They provide a clearer account than Bakhtin of the social force of the new bodily canon:

the classical body was far more than an aesthetic standard or model. It structured, from the inside as it were, the characteristically 'high' discourses of
philosophy, statecraft, theology and law, as well as literature, as they emerged from the Renaissance. In the classical discursive body were encoded those regulated systems which were closed, homogeneous, monumental, centred and symmetrical.

Bakhtin contrasts this classical body, with its "closed, smooth, and impenetrable surface" (317) with the grotesque body: "the grotesque body is not separated from the rest of the world. It is not a closed, completed unit; it is unfinished, outgrows itself, transgresses its own limits" (26). "Grotesque images," he writes, "... remain ambivalent and contradictory; they are ugly, monstrous, hideous from the point of view of 'classic' aesthetics, that is, the aesthetics of the ready-made and the completed" (25). The image of the grotesque has nothing to do with "the closed, smooth, and impenetrable surface" of the classical body, and instead brings into representation the "excrescences (sprouts, buds) and orifices" (318) of the grotesque body. Clearly, in what we have been seeing so far, it is this body that is a prominent feature in the literature of courtesy.

By contrast, the classical body may be characterized by its habitual absence from the literature of courtesy. Moreover, the literature of devotion provides no physical alternative to the grotesque purgatory of the body, instead taking refuge in the unbodied soul. In both these literatures, but more importantly in the literature of
courtesy, the classical body is merely an implicit presence whose limits are determined by the clearly represented lineaments of the grotesque body. The classical body is, in effect, an ideal body, and it is this body that is expressed by the offensive particularity of the grotesque body. The idea that the grotesque body is contextualized by the ideal body clearly contradicts Bakhtin's account of the grotesque body as fundamentally regenerative and usefully subversive (27, 34). The prescriptive force of the literature of courtesy aims to deny the life of the individual, spontaneously active body altogether, and far from acting subversively, the grotesque body is invoked precisely in order to clarify the prerequisites of its idealized opposite.

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The body enjoys a kind of accidental prominence in a variety of eighteenth-century discourses. This prominence comes about as efforts to form the spirit and mind continually return to the body as a kind of tabula rasa upon which the work of self-discipline and self-construction is made manifest. Particularly in the literatures of devotion and courtesy, the body is subjected both to the rules of table manners and posture and to the rigours of asceticism and mortification. Notably, in the work of Bellegarde, Law, and Taylor, there exists a network of influence in which the
aims of secular and temporal bodily discipline intermingle, as the notion of the work of moral law in the body of man constrains the individual to discipline his body for life in the realms of both society and heaven. However, in the process they persistently raise the figure of the undisciplined body, the body in its unseemly private existence: spontaneous, fleshly, ugly, twisted, broken. The desire to aestheticize the body appears to allow the thoroughly indecorous body to escape into discourse where it is raised like a grotesque spectre in order to inspire neoclassical mantras of revulsion. Erving Goffman speaks of humans as "presumable creatures of variable impulses with moods and energies that change from one moment to the next" (56). What he calls "our higher social activity" (56) takes a course that is freed from the contingencies of our body's existence and manifold states. Social performance thus requires an "expressive coherence" whose aim is to mask all indications of our disorganized and active humanity.

Clearly, devotional manuals and conduct books are manifestations of what amounts to a coherent programme, inculcating a conformity that while professedly moral and social, is manifestly physical. Again, Goffman speaks of what he calls unmeant gestures which disrupt a continuum of performance, and which force "an acutely embarrassing wedge between the official projection and reality" (52). "A
performer may," he writes, "accidentally convey incapacity, impropriety, or disrespect by momentarily losing muscular control of himself. He may trip, stumble, fall; he may belch, yawn, make a slip of the tongue, scratch himself, or be flatulent; he may accidentally impinge upon the body of another participant" (52). It is this life that the eighteenth century, at the level of social, moral, and political self-construction--and through the formulation of the ideal of the classical body--trains itself to ignore or erase. The body is arranged, as has been shown, to suit the prerogatives of spirit and mind and acquires importance only by virtue of the fact that it signifies, not itself, but other things. My examination of the body in the literature of courtesy has isolated an important rhetorical strategy--the expression of the idealized classical body through the qualified disposition of the grotesque body. In the following three chapters, I intend to examine the distinctive characteristics of that rhetorical strategy as it appears in each of Joseph Andrews, Humphry Clinker, and Tristram Shandy.
Chapter Four

Keeping Order in *Joseph Andrews*:

The Night Scene at Booby Hall

In the literature of courtesy, the nature of the grotesque body is wholly determined by the social prerogatives of the classical body. However, it is by means of the habitual appearance of the grotesque body that the values associated with the classical body--values which intermingle rules of physical comportment and norms of moral conduct--are elaborated. In Bellegarde, where the literature of courtesy is closely connected with and influenced by the dramatic preoccupations of character literature, the moralized and well-mannered classical body exists as a kind of protected absence behind a host of hypocrites, boobys, and farce-fools. In the kind of courtesy literature influenced by Della Casa the extravagant body is given very particular attention; it is by means of closely detailed accounts of such indelicate table behaviour as nose-picking and passing wind that the unrepresented ideal of a rigid bodily discipline is expressed. The goal in both cases is to direct individual conduct to conform with a homogeneous and aesthetically oriented social life. It is a goal that attempts to harmonize the philosophical and theological life of the body and the formation of a particular social group's distinctive identity. In a secular transformation of devotional literature's habit of
mortification, the literature of courtesy attempts to isolate and eradicate the body in its vexing, flawed individuality because such a body bears no relation to a continuum of bodies immersed in a generality of pleasurable civility and morality.

At first glance Fielding's Joseph Andrews, Smollett's Humphry Clinker, and Sterne's Tristram Shandy do not appear to share in this project of amelioration. Indeed, the energy with which the grotesque body is disposed in their respective narratives would give credence to the Bakhtinian notion of the beneficially regenerative grotesque body, that subversive essential of the carnivalesque weltanschauung. The boisterous physical activity of Joseph Andrews, the scatology and persistent violence of Humphry Clinker, and the endless sexual suggestiveness of Tristram Shandy are each in their own way distinctly carnivalesque and depend for their content upon the vicissitudes of the grotesque body and its unmannerly activity. However, it should seem odd in a period when the didactic thrust of courtesy literature manifests such a strong determination to limit the life of the individual body, that the novel, no less functional as an expression of ideology, should nevertheless demonstrate an apparent preoccupation with just that kind of individual body whose life the literature of courtesy aims to proscribe. In each of these novels the classical body
makes what appears to be an altogether poor showing, and seems overwhelmed by representations of its opposite. In this and the following two chapters, I will examine the representation of the grotesque body in each of these three novels. My aim will be to demonstrate how the disposition of the grotesque body, far from signifying the kind of unbounded, carnivalesque liberty attached to it by Bakhtin, is of a piece with a process of homogenization continually influenced by the classical body and the values attached to it.

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The adventures in the night at Booby hall in Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* provide an extremely useful illustration of the manner in which the drama of the unmanageable and grotesque body is contextualized by the moral continuum represented by the manageable body. As our discussion in the previous chapter showed, Fielding's invocation of Bellegarde in the Preface to *Joseph Andrew* suggests the extent to which the novel is contextualized by Fielding's deep interest in the literature of courtesy. Paulson has aptly pointed out that Fielding's characters are representative of "divergent sets of manners" (*Satire* 115); and it is this emphasis on manners that is so crucial to the nocturnal adventures at Booby Hall. The most important commentary on this scene remains Mark Spilka's examination
of it as central to the "comic resolution" of the novel.¹

This illuminating essay is not, however, without its limitations. Spilka's observation of the use of nakedness as a symbol of innocence (407) does not take into account the way in which the comic use of nakedness draws attention to how the naked, comic character stands outside the order of the normal. Further, Spilka's fondness for Adams ("Adams' lovable innocence" (410)) and his cursory treatment of Lady Booby's entrance prevent him from fully investigating the complexity of that moment.

The episode is central to this present discussion because its drama of the unmanageable, grotesque body throws the manageable body and its values into high relief. Robert Higbie argues that the dramatic interaction between Fielding's characters tends to be initiated by what Higbie terms the "negative object-characters" (90): characters who are incarnations of the negative values of the novel, and toward whom the novel's critical and satiric voices are directed. Higbie also speaks of "uncontrolled desire" as an

¹ The episode is also examined by Wright (130-1) and by Goldberg (118-122). Arnold Weinstein sees the episode's preoccupation with questions of identity as evidence of Fielding's interest in epistemological uncertainty (121-2), but such a view fails to take into account how the several comic revelations help in fact to fix the reader's sense of the different characters' moral identity. Adams' mistaking Didapper for a young woman (IV.xiv, 332), for example, is a dramatic fulfilment of the narrator's allusions to Didapper's effeminacy provided five chapters earlier.
important component in this equation; but such desire might be more usefully described as "unauthorized". The desires of such "subject-characters" as Joseph and Fanny are entirely authorized at the level of theme; these desires are passive potentialities guided more or less undisturbed through the plot by the "fatherlike authority" (90) of their author. But lust, for example, and worldliness, are continually active in the plot through the agency of such characters as Mrs. Slipslop or Parson Trulliber, and such characters always expose themselves and their immorality in relation to the "subject-characters" of the novel. It is thus through examining the behaviour of players in the two bedroom farces at Booby Hall that we come to a better understanding of how Fielding uses the management of the body as a definitive thematic expression.²

Despite the apparent drama of contingency played out in the dark, it is important to keep in mind how carefully the episode is ordered within the progress of the story as a whole. Much in the same way as the various interpolated narratives which occur throughout the novel, the episode serves as an illuminating commentary at a crucial point in the development of the plot. Interestingly, the episode manages to keep alive, by a kind of burlesque, the libidinal

² Battestin argues that through Fielding's choice of characters he aims "to objectify an abstract moral theme" (180).
tension which hangs over Fanny and Joseph as they lie asleep (now revealed to be brother and sister, they are described as "disappointed Lovers" near the end of the previous chapter (IV.xiii.329)). The passage is, in effect, a grotesque nightmare of the chaste couple's frustrated desire for each other. First Didapper, impersonating Joseph's voice (IV.xiv.330), slips into bed with Mrs. Slipslop, mistaking Fanny's grotesque alter-ego for Fanny herself. Then Adams, albeit unwittingly, slips into bed with a Fanny whose last thoughts before sleeping have been of Joseph (IV.xiv.333). When in the following chapter, further revelations permit Joseph and Fanny to address one another as lovers once more, the erotic potential of their relationship, which has undergone parodic examination and legitimation at the hands of Slipslop, Didapper, and Abraham Adams, is also rightly returned to the young lovers. The drama is concerned with various essentially playful manifestations of sexual activity. In the first part of the chapter, the play takes the form of violence--a series of intended, but violently rebuffed rapes--while in the second half this play takes the form of a kind of delightfully chaste double-entendre--the bedding of Adams and Fanny. The chief object of play is not, as Weinstein would have it, identity, but sexual intention--the repeated crisis of the chapter and the source of its comedy is the jumbled
propriety and impropriety of the different characters' sexual advances.

Concerned as he is in this chapter with a drama of sexual intentions, Fielding must present his characters in a manner which is consistent with those intentions: he presents them naked or nearly naked and repeatedly draws attention to their appearance: Didapper is seen undressing before climbing into bed with Mrs Slipslop (331); it is observed that Adams enters the room without having dressed (331); the softness of Didapper's skin is observed by Adams (332); and Slipslop's "two Mountains" startle Adams (332). Spilka attempts to make a case for the thematic significance of Adams' nakedness (409), but far from distinguishing Adams from his combatants, his nakedness links him with them and with the comic spectacle of three grotesque bodies in confused strife.³ Like Slipslop and Didapper, Adams is the object of comic laughter in this scene precisely because he is naked and because the activity in which he is engaged is farcical, extravagant, and quite of a piece with his physical nature and the history of that physical nature throughout the novel. The laughter occasioned by this chapter is laughter directed at misshapen and grotesque bodies presented in postures of farcical action.

³ On nakedness in Joseph Andrews see also Alter, "Fielding" 126-128.
The visual appearance of these three characters, so clearly rendered by Fielding in previous chapters, is what makes the struggle in which they inadvertently find themselves so funny. Less a person than a "Thing" (IV.ix.313), Didapper is from his introduction in the novel consistently rendered in such a way as to highlight his effeminacy: "His Face was thin and pale; The Shape of his Body and Legs none of the best, for he had very narrow Shoulders, and no Calf; and his Gait might more properly be called hopping than walking" (312). The night scene consistently develops this description, rendering it the more comic, the more grotesque by disposing it in action for which Didapper is signally unfit. Masquerading as Joseph, Didapper becomes an unconscious burlesque of him; his sexuality is a grotesque parody of virility, and where he is first seen in the novel to be less than ideally masculine in form, he is in the night scene taken to be entirely feminine: Adams is in little doubt that "this was the young Woman in danger of ravishing" (IV.xiv.332). The ridiculousness of Didapper’s romantic intentions is conveyed by the grotesque parody of rakish behaviour in which he involves himself, and, as Adams comes to rescue him, in which he becomes involved.

* For a very thorough examination of Fielding’s characterizations, see Shesgreen. For Didapper in particular see 80-84.
Slipslop's activity in the night is equally consistent with the manner in which she has been portrayed in the novel. In her case, the ironic gap between her grotesque appearance and her sexual appetite is significantly constitutive of her character. Fielding's description of her may well be the most frequently quoted passage of his works;

She was not at this time remarkably handsome; being very short, and rather too corpulent in Body, and somewhat red, with the Addition of Pimples in the Face. Her Nose was likewise rather too large, and her Eyes too little; nor did she resemble a Cow so much in her Breath, as in two brown Globes which she carried before her; one of her Legs was also a little shorter than the other, which occasioned her to limp as she walked.

(I.vi.32)

However, as much as her size, her limp, and her enormous breasts distinguish her, so does the dramatic tension bound up in the final sentence of the portrait: "This fair Creature had long cast the Eyes of Affection on Joseph" (I.vi.32). It is the potential of this erotic longing that is released in the farcical bedroom combat. To Didapper's parodic Joseph, Slipslop is a grotesque Fanny, and indeed Fielding allows this improbable romantic elevation its dramatic moment. An instant of silence hangs over Didapper's rapturous embrace and its ardent answer (V.xiv.331), and for that moment unembodied desire is almost freed from the grotesque constraints of the burlesque. But as the desire is revealed to be Slipslop's, it is
immediately returned to its grotesque roots, and now released, begins to function violently and indiscriminately, fully activating the absurd potential that Fielding pointed out when he first described the character. Slipslop is first engaged in such a struggle with Didapper that she tears his shirt "almost off" (IV.xiv.331); she then trades blows with Adams; her mountainous breasts are once more made objects of scrutiny, whatever erotic potential they might have possessed now forcefully deflated as Adams fancies them having given "suck to a Legion of Devils" (332); finally, Slipslop begins edging slowly toward Adams, who clearly recognizes the graceless erotic energy beneath her assumed "courtesy" and flees the room (333). The events of the bedroom farce bring the absurd tension of Slipslop's character to a comic climax, and, as with Didapper, the grotesquerie of her character is dramatized in a climactic round of extravagant behaviour.

The role Adams plays in this episode is much the same as that which he plays elsewhere in the novel. Though his appearance is not described with the same attention as Didapper's and Slipslop's, Adams' consistently extravagant behaviour proceeds from a manifestly curious physical nature. Various descriptions of his appearance create an image of a powerful giant. The size of his fist is "rather less than the Knuckle of an Ox" (I.xv.67). As Adams walks
along the road, the coach in which Mrs. Slipslop is riding attempts to overtake him but cannot (II.vii.130); and a horse that is prone to kneeling poses no threat to the Parson, who "as his Legs almost touched the Ground when he bestrode the beast, had but a little way to fall, and threw himself forward on such Occasions with so much dexterity, that he never received any Mischief" (II.v.118).  

Considering also that at the wedding feast, "Adams demonstrated an appetite surprizing, as well as surpassing every one present" (IV.xvi.343), there is something of the Pantagruelian in Adams' physical appearance and conduct. This being the case, he possesses an unmannerly energy greater and more dramatically diffuse than that of either Didapper or Slipslop--their grotesquerie is largely a risible incarnation of their narrow moral limits. Adams' grotesquerie has its roots in his benign deficiencies--his absentmindedness, his naivete, his harmless hypocrisy. But through the representation of this diffused grotesquerie, this ultimately delightful Pantagruelian physical excess, Fielding indulges in a ridicule that is unfocused, almost

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5 Adams has further difficulty with a horse when he is thrown by one in the final chapter of the book (IV.xvi.340). In a passage concerned with images of Joseph's virility, Fielding is careful to tell us that Joseph is exceptionally talented horseman (I.ii.22). Adams' incapacity in this regard is therefore almost expected, and is an interesting instance of Fielding using aspects of physical comportment to comment upon a character's masculine authenticity.
completely free of satiric venom. It is just that kind of ridiculousness that operates in Adams' appearance in the night scenes. His actions are as exaggerated as they are elsewhere in the novel: he mistakes Slipslop for a devil and beats her violently, he flees from Lady Booby's gaze by ducking under the bedclothes with Mrs. Slipslop, and, discovering himself in bed with Fanny, he concludes that he has been bewitched.

The unmannerliness that links Didapper, Slipslop, and Adams in the night episode is reinforced by their association throughout the novel with what might be called the bestiary of Joseph Andrews. Mrs. Slipslop is associated with cattle: "nor did she resemble a Cow so much in her Breath, as in two brown Globes which she carried before her" (I.vi.32). Didapper is associated with the sexually ambivalent dab chick. Another significantly bestial character is the porcine Trulliber, who hoglike himself, is also a keeper of hogs. And daubed in pig's blood, hunted by dogs for a hare, with knuckles like the knuckles of an ox, Adams is consistently associated with Fielding's comic bestiary. Certainly, in an important respect, the function of the bestial is evaluative. William

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6 See Freedman ("Joseph Andrews") and Shesgreen 43-44.

7 See Shesgreen, 82-84. For Slipslop see 98-99, and for Trulliber 91-93.
Freedman has noticed that Fielding contrasts good and ill nature through the antithesis of the natural and the unnatural resolved into a distinction between the human and the inhuman ("Joseph Andrews" 37). And it is indeed apparent in the cases of Slipslop, Didapper, and Trulliber that the metaphoric association with the bestial is of a piece with Fielding's satiric thrust in each case. But the application of such logic does not hold generally with all the characters in Joseph Andrews; Freedman confesses himself at a loss as to the reason why Lady Booby is not "caged in Fielding's zoo" (39 n.10). And surely Adams' own continual association with the bestial is not meant as a mark of satiric damnation. However, if it were to be argued that the bestial is a mark of the unmannerly, a stigma not so damning as the stigma of outright vice, but an important means nevertheless by which Fielding communicates the distance between these characters and their, as it were, thematic betters, then the fact that Adams is imagistically connected with characters like Slipslop and Didapper is no longer quite so unaccountable. As Adams' career through the bedrooms of Booby Hall demonstrates, his extravagant physical nature places him at permanent odds with the more genteel world around him, the world represented by Lady Booby's dismay, Joseph's indignation, and Fanny's anxiety.
The first of the two significant episodes of the "curious night-adventures" is an entertaining grotesque farce in which three comic characters find themselves entangled, in the dark, in a series of sexual misadventures. Didapper proceeds as a feminized rake, absurdly unequal to the task of bedding the redoubtable Slipslop. Slipslop functions as a singularly aggressive inamorata, the rage of whose sexual desire is manifested as violent physical conflict with Adams. Finally Adams, however morally unsuited to the difficulties in which he becomes haplessly embroiled, is peculiarly well-suited to them. Spilka contrasts Adams' unassailable "inner dignity" and his outwardly "bizarre figure" (406) and argues that the laughter directed at Adams is a kind of release, an unjudging, purely emotional relief occasioned by the juxtaposition of these two aspects of Adams' nature. But the night scene involving Didapper and Slipslop shows how this dignity has a kind of permeability; it becomes of itself comic when it is so closely caught up in the drama of Adams' extravagant physical nature. Rather than existing in juxtaposition with his physical awkwardness, Adams' dignity is always involved in it, an interdependence always faintly tinged with the irony Fielding reserves for his more clearly

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8 Rawson writes that Adams "is comic because of the constant jangling of the spiritual and physical in his makeup" (120).
damnable characters. This is not to say that Fielding ridicules Adams' affectation, but rather, that Fielding exploits the connection between manners and morals--a connection idealized by the conduct of Fanny and Joseph--for his comic purposes and condemns the unmannerly Adams to teeter on a strange balance somewhere between the grotesque clowns of vice and the physically idealized adherents of virtue. This is a point to which I will return at the end of this chapter.

Lady Booby's entrance is perhaps the single most thematically complex incident in the episode. Much of this complexity stems from the fact that the role Lady Booby plays here is different from the role she plays elsewhere in the novel. Previously cast as lascivious widow (I.v.29), and as negligent landlord (IV.i.277), she is now called upon to disentangle the first series of mistakes of the evening. Where Adams, upon hearing the disturbance in Slipslop's bedchamber, acts precipitously but without consideration--he does not pause "to put a rag of clothes on" (331) and so becomes himself embroiled in the farce (just as earlier he unthinkingly consigns his precious Aeschylus to the fire)--Lady Booby, acting "undauntedly" and as a "Woman of a bold Spirit", acts reasonably and dons "a Nightgown, Petticoat and Slippers" (332) before proceeding to discover the source of the disturbance. Thus when she does enter the room, she
remains both in appearance and action quite distinct from its troubled occupants. Again, where Adams, naked and entering in darkness, is quickly consumed by the farce, suitably filling out the grotesque ménage à trois, Lady Booby's entrance breaks the labyrinth of misconceptions and redirects the perceptual and physical energy of both Slipslop and Adams--the former cries out for help and the latter seeks to hide his nakedness. Spilka asserts that, engaged in his struggle with Didapper and Slipslop, Adams represents the "naked truth" (409), but such an interpretation is not completely sensitive to Lady Booby's role. If the chapter may be seen to involve three movements toward truth--Adams entering in darkness, Lady Booby entering with a candle, and Joseph entering with the light of dawn--Adams stands in the ascending order of revelation as nothing more than a principle of unmitigated obscurity. Plunging into the darkness where he mistakes Didapper for a woman, by the time of Lady Booby's entrance Adams has proceeded no further toward discovering the truth of his circumstances than to believe he is menaced by a real witch.

Now while there may be a degree of metaphoric truth to Adams' perceptions, the scene does require more palpable clarification, and a higher principle of order must be made to prevail. This higher principle is dramatized when,
carefully dressed and bearing a candle, Lady Booby enters the room.

To refer to Lady Booby’s entrance, however, as the establishment of a higher principle of order than that pursued by Adams is to run into difficulties posed by the apparent contradiction between her role in this episode and her moral character as dramatized in earlier episodes. Howard D. Weinbrot, for example, has stated that "Lady Booby’s true character is mirrored in Mrs. Slipslop" (19). This is certainly true up to a point, but it does not do justice to the breadth of Lady Booby’s role in the novel. She serves Fielding not only as an agent of illicit desire, but as an example of an imperfect aristocrat. We have already noticed Freedman’s perplexity about Lady Booby’s freedom from the emblematic stereotyping that Fielding imposes on Slipslop, Didapper, and Trulliber. And Spilka observes that in this episode, "Lady Booby appears in a good light" (410). Her role in the novel, particularly in this scene, is in fact multivalenced. Much like Parson Adams, she exists both on the margins of the novel’s negative values and on the margins of its positive values. Nevertheless, her own placement within the three movements of illumination in the chapter does befit the instability of

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9 One is left to wonder by the wording of Spilka’s observation whether or not he was aware of his pun.
her moral status. Free from the grotesque stigmata of caricature which fall heavily on Didapper and Slipslop and which graze Adams ever so slightly, Lady Booby is herself sufficiently corrupt that her entrance upon these characters' distinctive farce is entirely fitting. She has not the moral quality either to enter, as Joseph will, with real daylight, or to involve herself in the disentanglement of a mistake involving the virtue of the ideal Fanny. Instead, Fielding allows her to move through the dark bearing a candle and to sort out the mistakes created by three of the most physically ridiculous characters in the novel--mistakes which are grotesque burlesques of the kind of lasciviousness of which Lady Booby has been guilty.

Having identified how Lady Booby's presence is oriented in the negative pole of the novel, it is still necessary to orient that presence within the positive pole. The fact that she does have an affinity with the novel's positive pole is suggested by the care with which Fielding does separate her from the scene upon which she enters: she enters carefully dressed and bearing a light, and this entrance does bring the most ridiculous of the two episodes of the chapter to a close. Moreover, from very early in the novel, when Joseph resolves "to set out full speed to the Lady Booby's Country Seat, which he had left on his Journey to London" (I.xi.48), and where Fanny resides, the action of
the novel has been steadily moving toward this house where the night episode takes place but where as well the nature of the several significant relationships in the novel is clarified. This spatial movement occurs in a complex labyrinth where social or ideological values are made both to trade and share places with moral ones.10 Fleeing the concupiscence of Lady Booby, Joseph runs toward the chastely alluring Fanny. Thus he flees the vice of a corrupted aristocracy for the simple virtue of the rural poor. Nevertheless, as corrupted in her morals as Lady Booby may be, her presence looms over the novel--her desire for Joseph does not have the harmless, ribald energy of Betty's desire but is dangerously supplemented by the real social power she

10 While, as Richard Gill points out, "Fielding usually places more emphasis on narrative action than its setting" (233), Booby Hall is part of the rural environment that stands in such pointed contrast to the viciousness of London. Jeffrey Duncan writes of the rural ideal that "the bucolic setting provides good nature the simplicity it requires for realizing the ideal, the simplicity necessary for realizing the comic triumph" (270). In the context of his discussion of the country house setting, Alistair Duckworth observes that "it seems appropriate to assume that literary settings are at one and the same time instances (variations) of coded structures already present in the literary tradition and mediations of social, even political attitudes" (222). In the final book of Joseph Andrews, Fielding's observation of how keenly felt is "the Absence of a Person of great Fortune . . . in a little Country Village, for whose Inhabitants such a Family finds a constant Employment and Supply" (VI.1.277) points to the conjunction of moral and economic duty in the ideal value of the landed estate. It is entirely fitting that Joseph and Fanny prove able and contented managers of the small estate Mr. Booby's generosity allows them to set up.
wields over the destinies of the various characters in the novel. Refusing her advances, Joseph is stripped of his livery and left to shift for himself; but Parson Adams finds that when he is brought before the justice under suspicion of robbery, the invocation of Lady Booby's name is sufficient to establish his rank and innocence (II.xi.149). Brian McCrea argues that the ultimate elevation of Joseph and Fanny (quite apart from the issue of that elevation being conventionally comic), "is one part of an ongoing vindication of the social elite--a vindication that Fielding pursues persistently, if sometimes grudgingly, throughout *Joseph Andrews*" (124)." By "grudgingly", I think McCrea

11 It is only in the last few years that Fielding's commentators have turned a critical eye toward the depiction and function of class in Fielding's novels. This is somewhat surprising given that Fielding's own courtesy literature as an index of his class consciousness has long been recognized. Earlier commentators, however, were satisfied with elaborating the moral basis of Fielding's work and--perhaps with the kind of fastidiousness that characterizes Rawson's remark about the writer's "offensive class-consciousness" (21)--were disinclined to investigate every aspect of the novel's ideological complexion. But while the profoundly moral timbre of a work such as *Joseph Andrews* may be affirmed, it is equally important to observe how that morality is of a piece with an essentially conservative ideology. Fielding's critique of the Boobys is not a critique of the aristocracy as such, but of the behaviour of certain of its members. Joseph's virtue is an example to those above and below him alike, though he is himself, significantly, a gentleman (Ruml, 205). John Richetti's reference to what he refers to as the "scandal" (84) of so-called realistic fiction--the failure of its practitioners to faithfully portray the lives and conditions of the lower classes--is a recognition (however histrionic) of the ideological force of social conservatism in the novel. Judith Frank's essay on the Preface to the novel
has in mind Fielding's precarious portrayal of Lady Booby--both Fielding's condemnation of her moral failings, and his reliance on the continuum of social influence which, as it is expressed through the medium of Lady Booby's behaviour in the night scene, is responsible for organizing one strain of the novel's values.\(^{12}\) It is because she must perform this function, because her estate is a potent force in the organization of the narrative, and because she can act as a rational commentator in the night scene, that Lady Booby is not submitted to the stigmata of grotesque caricature.

Because Lady Booby is not grotesque, she can bring light to the experience of the grotesques. Her entrance does in fact constitute an important shift in point of view. Where, until Lady Booby's entrance, the reader is engaged in the comic energy of Slipslop and Adams' violent misunderstanding, relishing the dark and the confusion it has engendered, upon Lady Booby's entrance, the reader moves to a point behind her candle looking toward the area it illuminates. Simultaneously, Adams and Slipslop separate as also shares this interest in its ideological component.

\(^{12}\) It is McCrea who makes the connection between Lady Booby's social status and her role in introducing order to the confusion wrought by Didapper, Slipslop, and Adams (126). However, McCrea's observation that it is Lady Booby who "finally" (126) brings order in this chapter of adventures is clearly wrong: as I have observed, by means of establishing a parallel between Lady Booby's role in this chapter and Joseph's, Fielding carefully limits the kind of order Lady Booby does bring.
combatants and focus their attention on Lady Booby. Both are now engaged in creating the appearance of order that that woman's presence requires. Adams suddenly remembers that he is naked, while "the chaste Slipslop" struggles to keep him from her bed where he is seeking to cover himself. Then Adams provides "an Account of the Reason of his rising from Bed, and the rest" (IV.xiii.333). Spilka maintains that Lady Booby's laughter, which follows Adams' narrative, is directed at "Adams' lovable innocence" (410). But here Spilka fails, I think, to do justice to the way Lady Booby's presence both contains and evaluates Slipslop and Adams. Lady Booby's laughter, as Fielding makes clear, is directed at two sources: at the substance of Adams' narrative and at the figures of Adams and Slipslop propped up in bed together. Laughing at Adams' narrative, Lady Booby is allowed to share the reader's laughter at the events of the grotesque farce. Like the reader, she enjoys the privilege of the rational observer of the ridiculous, laughing at how these characters have behaved absurdly. Laughing at the figures of Slipslop and Adams, at "Slipslop and her Gallant" (333), Lady Booby exposes the irony that has been at the root of the preceding episode--the improbability of such a union of grotesques. Lady Booby's final acts in the scene are appropriate to the greater and greater control she has
established as the scene has progressed, directing Adams to return to his room and Slipslop to attend her in hers (333).

Now if the first half of the night scene can be said to be a farce involving the grotesque, the second half is a farce involving the ideal. Appropriately, it is the thematically amphibious Adams who is central to the confusion in both scenes. As has already been suggested it is Adams' extravagant physical nature, his own grotesquerie, which sufficiently alloys his dignity to locate him often out on the margins of the novel's positive values, setting them into relief against the base of his problematic unmannerliness. So it is fitting that he move "directly from the bed of the ugliest, most indiscriminately lustful woman in the book to that of the loveliest and most chaste" (Spilka, 411). The action of this chapter, as has been previously mentioned, is chiefly concerned with preserving, largely through movements of parodic sexual behaviour, the sexual tension felt by "the disappointed lovers" at the end of chapter thirteen. With Adams' mistaken entry into Fanny's bed Fielding exploits this tension with no less gusto that he has in the first half of the chapter. Indeed, the tension is now sent up in the very presence of its principal object, Fanny herself. After moving Adams into the wrong room, Fielding moves him into the wrong bed, and pauses with a typical and illuminating burlesque simile:
As the Cat or Lapdog of some lovely Nymph for whom
ten thousand Lovers languish, lies quietly by the side
of the charming Maid, and ignorant of the Scene of
Delight on which they repose, meditates the future
Capture of a Mouse, or Surprizal of a Plate of Bread
and Butter: so Adams, lay by the side of Fanny,
ignorant of the Paradise to which he was so near.
(IV.xiii.334)

The chief difference between this episode and the previous
one is of course that here Adams is not involved with a
grotesque body, extravagantly and ridiculously active, but
with an ideal body, a paradise quiet except for the
exhalation of "sweet" breath. But curiously, the
suggestiveness of this passage, created to poke fun at
Adams' obliviousness, is produced at the expense of the
reserve that is such an important aspect of Fanny's
behaviour at other places in the novel. For what Fielding
focuses upon here is the delicious potential of Fanny's
erotic nature--a nature to which only Joseph has a right of
access, but which, at this point in the novel, seems denied
even to him.13

13 The good fun Fielding has with Fanny's erotic
potential throws some light on his treatment of another
character, Betty the chambermaid. While Betty exhibits
little control over her passions, Weinbrot's judgement of
her as "dangerous" (21) is excessive considering Fielding's
general approval of her morality: "she had Good-nature,
Generosity and Compassion" (I.xviii.86). Joseph is not
seriously threatened by the temptation Betty advances, he
simply picks her up and removes her from his room. This
careful balance of Betty's good-nature and sexual experience
make her Fanny's thematic alter-ego--in much the same way
Wilson is Joseph's.
As Adams enters the vicinity of Fanny's desirable body, the frenetic action of the first half of the chapter is left behind. While it is appropriate that Adams touch the skin of Didapper as he tries to save him, and while it is appropriate that he trade blows with Slipslop, here Adams can do nothing to Fanny's body but be juxtaposed with it. Highly eroticized, Fanny's body is appropriately chaste and passive. Its appearance here is the second of three such moments of contemplation. In the first instance she is described in the conventionalized terms that also characterize Joseph's description:

Fanny was now in the nineteenth Year of her Age; she was tall and delicately shaped; but not one of those slender young Women, who seem rather intended to hang up in the Hall of an Anatomist, than for any other Purpose. On the contrary, she was so plump, that she seemed bursting through her tight Stays, especially in the Part which confined her swelling Breasts. Nor did her Hips want the Assistance of a Hoop to extend them. The exact Shape of her Arms, denoted the Form of those Limbs which she concealed; and tho' they were a little redden'd by her Labour, yet if her Sleeve slit above her Elbow, or her Handkerchief discovered any part of her Neck, a Whiteness appeared which the finest Italian Paint would be unable to reach. . . . Her Complexion was fair, a little injured by the Sun, but overspread with such a Bloom, that the finest Ladies would have exchanged all their White for it . . . (II.xii.152-3)

In the second instance, she is ceremoniously undressed not only for Joseph, but for the reader as well:

She was soon undrest; for she had no Jewels to deposite in their Caskets, nor fine Laces to fold with the

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14 For the provenance of such representations of idealized beauty see Shesgreen, 20ff.
nicest Exactness. Undressing to her was properly discovering, not putting off Ornaments: For as all her Charms were the gifts of nature, she could divest herself of none. How, Reader, shall I give thee an adequate Idea of this lovely young Creature! the Bloom of Roses and Lilies might a little illustrate her Complexion, or their Smell her Sweetness: but to comprehend her entirely, conceive Youth, Health, Bloom, Beauty, Neatness, and Innocence in her Bridal-Bed . . .

(F.IV.xvi.343)

Fanny is thus the erotically charged, but physically composed and permanently passive object of desire in the novel. Fielding’s presentation of her has affinities with the commonplace of the desirability of naked Virtue that Fielding employs in several other places and which I have discussed in chapter three. However, if she is virtue incarnate, Fanny activates only the worst kind of attention. She exists, in fact, only to be desired, and when not under the immediate protection of Joseph or Adams she is under continual assault. Her entrance into the novel is as the victim of an attempted rape (II.ix.137); she is kidnapped by the captain and his gang (III.ix.258); she is assaulted once by Didapper’s servant (IV.vii.303); and twice (303, IV.xi.320) by Didapper himself. Now, quite ironically, it is Adams who transgresses this virtuous space. In doing so, he participates in two orders of identity. In the first, he enters Fanny’s bed as an oblivious confederate of her many impatient admirers. Both Fanny and Joseph are quick to make this identification:
For he [Adams] still insisted he was in his own Apartment; but Fanny denied it vehemently, and said his attempting to persuade Joseph of such a Falsehood, convinced her of his wicked Designs. "How!" said Joseph, in a Rage, "Hath he offered any Rudeness to you?"—She answered, she could not accuse him of any more than villainously stealing to Bed to her, which she thought Rudeness sufficient, and what no Man would do without a wicked Intention. (IV.xiii.334-5)

Entering Fanny's bed, Adams carries with him from Slipslop's bedroom the aura of impotent sexual aggression, realized as a ridiculous farce, a harmless parodic reversal of the central value of chastity. In the second order of identity, Adams serves as a parody of Joseph. As manifestly the most innocent of her many admirers, Adams is indeed a less dangerous bedmate to Fanny than Joseph himself, and it is entirely suitable that in this half of the night adventures a surrogate-Joseph such as Adams be bedded with Fanny herself. If Lady Booby enters on a scene where the sexual tension of the farce involves repeated, though misdirected attempts at sexual satisfaction, Joseph enters on a scene where the farce's chief material is the intractable innocence of its players. Joseph corrects a juxtaposition that while harmless is nevertheless unsuitable to Fanny's virtue.

Joseph comes into the room "at the break of Day" (334), and brings to the disordered scene a degree of illumination far greater than Lady Booby has been able to provide. Lady Booby has thrown the light of a candle upon a scene of
outrageous disorder involving some of the novel's most grotesque characters; Joseph, on the other hand, brings daylight to a scene which, while sharing the incongruities of the earlier episode, is marked by an atmosphere dominated by the virtuous Fanny's peaceful sensuality. In this atmosphere, Adams is an intruder. While throughout the novel Joseph is more or less Adams' associate, leagued with him in virtue and in the defence of virtue, in this scene this association is broken as Adams' essential unmannerliness is contrasted with the mannerliness which is the physical manifestation of the virtue of the two lovers. In this case, this unmannerliness is dramatized by the ridiculous error and subsequent obliviousness of Adams as he has put himself into Fanny Goodwill's bed. Though clearly harmless--the error is unintentional, and Adams by no means poses a sexual threat--Adams is an interloper in the virtuous space of Fanny's bedroom. Adams' unsuitability for that space is signified by the disposition of his body in the scene. Notably, Fanny's body is curiously invisible in the scene, concealed behind her name--"the Apartment where Fanny lay" (333) and "Adams, lay by the side of Fanny" (334)--and invoked obliquely both by Fielding's simile and by the detail of "some female Vestments lying on a
Chair" (334). To this chaste invisibility is contrasted Fielding’s attention to Adams’ farcical activity: Adams "groped out the Bed... and deposited his Carcase on the Bedpost" (334); Fanny discovers him when she reaches out and touches his beard; and he is observed to stand in his shirt, a sight from which Fanny is saved by the fact that the bed curtains are drawn (335).

The virtuous space of Fanny’s bedroom is closed off from the potentially upsetting imbalance introduced by Adams’ presence when Joseph enters the room. Adams in bed with Fanny is an impossible and charmed moment. Like the silence which precedes Didapper’s and Slipslop’s discovery of each other’s true identity, it exists in order that the parodic confusion may activate potentialities otherwise unexplored by the text—Didapper and Slipslop grotesquely enact the union of Joseph and Fanny, Adams and Fanny enact an improbable tableau of innocent conjugality. Entering the room and observing Adams, Joseph recognizes the disorder and corrects it. On the one hand, this correction is as simple as that effected by Lady Booby—Joseph uncovers the mystery of Adams’ error and escorts him from the room. On the other

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15 A further absurdity seems to be evoked when Adams believes Fanny’s clothes have been exchanged for his own—"My Clothes are bewitched away too, and Fanny’s brought into their Place." Is Fielding toying with the image of the unwitting Adams rising in the morning to don Fanny’s clothes? It is a joke that would not be out of place here.
hand this correction takes its force from the significance of Joseph's thematic relation to Fanny. If Adams may be regarded as a potential rapist, then with his entry, Joseph plays the role of Fanny's protector, a role which is consistent with his behaviour elsewhere in the novel: he rescues Fanny from her kidnappers, and avenges the assaults of Didapper and his servant. And it is also consistent with a reading of the night adventures as a theatre of Joseph and Fanny's frustrated desire that Joseph appears at this moment, not as a protective brother, but as protective lover. Adams thus plays the role--again, however unintentionally--of a trespasser in the space of Joseph and Fanny's virtuous desire.

Now the exclusivity of this space, the narrow, erotically charged zone that separates Joseph's desiring from Fanny's desirable body, is guaranteed by its compactness. One of the advantages Fielding gains by making a male figure an exemplar of chastity is that he may wilfully interchange the thematic function of his lovers simply by shifting his attention from one to the other. The description of Joseph, however conventional, is as erotically charged as that of Fanny and is contextualized in the novel by Lady Booby's gaze:

Mr. Joseph Andrews was now in the one and twentieth Year of his Age. He was of the highest Degree of middle Stature. His Limbs were put together with great Elegance and no less Strength. His Legs and Thighs
were formed in the exactest Proportion. His Shoulders were broad and brawny, but yet his Arms hung so easily, that he had all the Symptoms of Strength without the least clumsiness. His Hair was of a nut-brown Colour, and was displayed in wanton Ringlets down his Back. His Forehead was high, his Eyes dark, and as full of Sweetness as of Fire. His Nose a little inclined to the Roman. His Teeth white and even. His Lips full, red, and soft. His Beard was only rough on his Chin and upper Lip; but his Cheeks, in which his Blood glowed, were overspread with a thick Down. . . . Such was the Person who now appeared before the Lady.

(I.viii.38-9)

In the novel's opening chapters, Fielding does advance the joke of the chaste male by making Joseph the desire of Lady Booby, Slipslop, and Betty.\textsuperscript{16} However, with the appearance of Fanny, the role of the passive and powerless female is given to a character who can more fully and appropriately embody Joseph's chastity and who can therefore more convincingly enact its vicissitudes.\textsuperscript{17} But with the introduction of Fanny, Fielding also introduces the problem of Fanny and Joseph's quite legitimate desire for one another--one of Adams' primary roles is as a necessary chaperon to the young couple. What Fielding intends with these two characters is an impossibly constrained coexistence of chastity and sexual desire. The sign of this

\textsuperscript{16} Though Fielding's sympathy for Betty would seem to make her rather distracting to Joseph than dangerous.

\textsuperscript{17} Michael McKeon observes that Fielding's use of male chastity obviates the social problems coincident with the issue of female chastity (399), but Fielding's transference of Joseph's sexual vulnerability to Fanny suggests Fielding may not have been particularly interested in avoiding such problems anyway.
virtuous desire is the pair's self-restraint, a self-restraint rooted in an outward mannerliness--the description of Joseph includes such details as the "great elegance" of his frame, the absence of "clumsiness" in his strength, and the "most perfect neatness" of his dress. Fanny is observed to possess a "natural Gentility" (II.xii.153), and, lying in the wedding bed, she is not only healthy, blooming, and beautiful, but neat and innocent as well (IV.xvi.343). This self-restraint is also evinced in the mannerliness by which they are frequently distinguished from those around them.

As they approach Wilson's cottage in the dark, they come upon a hill. Adams is the first to descend:

Adams's Foot slipping, he instantly disappeared, which greatly frightened both Joseph and Fanny; indeed, if the Light had permitted them to see it, they would scarce have refrained laughing to see the Parson rolling down the Hill, which he did from top to bottom without receiving any harm.

Joseph and Fanny descend more carefully:

Joseph and Fanny halted some time, considering what to do; at last they advanced a few Paces, where the Declivity seemed least steep; and then Joseph taking his Fanny in his arms, walked firmly down the Hill, without making a false step, and at length landed her at the bottom, where Adams soon came to them.

(III.ii.194)

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18 Johnson defines "gentility" as first, "good extraction", and second, "elegance of behaviour"; and it will be remembered from an earlier chapter that for Fielding, as well for other courtesy writers, good breeding is primarily signified by good manners.
It is interesting to note here that the contrast between Adams' foolish precipitancy and their careful movement bears direct comparison with the similar contrast between Adams's and Lady Booby's behaviour in the chapter currently under consideration. Fanny's bedroom in the night adventures, protected by the inevitability of Joseph's appearance, can be regarded as a physical manifestation of the complex fact of Joseph and Fanny's relationship at this point in the novel. Adams' presence is both suitable, he is one of the three most virtuous characters in the novel, and unsuitable, his extravagant, unmannerly body constitutes an outrageous intrusion in the virtuous space of the lovers' relationship. It is a relationship whose fundamental value—chastity—is sustained by such outward signs as the pair's ideal beauty and the natural discipline which they exercise over their bodies. Adams' physical presence in Fanny's bedroom can do nothing but disrupt this discipline—he becomes for a moment Fanny's putative rapist—and he must be removed from it.

With the removal of Adams from Fanny's bedroom, the aura of illegitimate sexual intention which has existed since the entrance of Didapper into Slipslop's bedroom is dissipated, and its farcical approach to Fanny herself is arrested. The tension of frustrated desire created by the transformation of Fanny and Joseph's relationship from one of lovers to one of brother and sister can now be released
in the scene which follows, with the pedlar’s revelation that they are in fact not related. But what has transpired, as the preceding pages have attempted to show, is a grotesque farce in which the novel’s hierarchy of value, the value of chastity over lust, has been dramatized by the extravagance of the unmannerly and the discovery and containment of that unmannerliness by the two characters whose social standing, in the case of Lady Booby, and moral stature, in the case of Joseph, are marked by the care with which they comport themselves.

It is in the disposition of Adams’ character that the function of behaviour as a thematic stigma is most clearly revealed. As good as Adams is, and as important as he is to the novel in the representation of the value of charity, his association in the night scene with the course of unmannerly sexual desire marks him as a creature ultimately occupying the margins of the novel’s values. In this respect he shares with Lady Booby a distinctly multi-valent nature—he serves Fielding at different times to dramatize different degrees of value. But where the discretion of Lady Booby’s behaviour in the night scene aligns her with the positive values of her social station, the indiscretion of Adams’ behaviour draws him into the realm of the imperfect. It must, however, be reiterated that Adams’ imperfection is not moral, but that Fielding’s use of the trope of behaviour as
an index of status consigns Adams to that purgatory of the indefinite also occupied, for various reasons, by Lady Booby, Betty the chambermaid and Mr. Wilson.

It is evident from this scene in particular that Fielding opportunistically exploits the different associations connected with what Bakhtin distinguishes as the classical and the grotesque bodies. As I argued in chapter three, the literature of courtesy is devoted to the maintenance of those associations—the grotesque figure engages in behaviour that is anti-social, ludicrous, rustic, while the classically oriented figure exemplifies the values of social intercourse, conformity and decorum. As Stallybrass and White observe of the body of statuary, which they connect with the classical body, "the classical statue is the radiant centre of a transcendent individualism, 'put on a pedestal', raised above the viewer and the commonality and anticipating passive admiration from below. We gaze up at the figure and wonder" (21). Lady Booby's central moral failing of lust debases the terms of admiration. She is vicious because she uses her body seductively and predatorily—the display of "one of the whitest Necks that ever was seen" (I.v.30) is meant to excite only lust. The desirable body in this instance is not virtuously passive but libidinously aggressive. The confusion of erotic intentions and social prerogatives occurs when Lady Booby
uses her authority to deprive Joseph of his livelihood when he refuses to respond to her advances. However, in the night scene, the authority she exercises is not only dramatized by her separation from the occupants of the bedroom, but by the fact of her having dressed herself appropriately, her having taken care to project a respectable physical presence. While certainly Lady Booby's association with the values of the classical body is critiqued through an emphasis on her aggressive sensuality, her exercise of authority in the night scene finds her representing and maintaining the values of decorum and seriousness associated with the classical body.

Adams, on the other hand, is consistently associated with the grotesque body, and in the night scene his separation from the ideological realm of the classical body is dramatized both by the fact that he is ridiculously involved in the farce to which Lady Booby puts an end, and by the fact that his appearance in Fanny's bedroom is dramatized by attention to the manifest unsuitability of his person to that space. While the confusion his appearance in Fanny's bed engenders is minimal, it does serve to emphasize the distinction between the problematically grotesque world in which Parson Adams ably, if uncomfortably, moves, and the decorous and peaceful physical presence of Fanny and Joseph-
-a presence where the appropriately passive classical body holds the erotic and the virtuous in perpetual suspension.

Because of the characteristic passivity of the classical body, a passivity regularized in courtesy literature by the proscription of almost all but the most necessary movement, the ideal physical presence tends not to be dramatically or particularly engaged with the world around it. Fanny is a spectacle, and she tends to be represented in general terms. In the bedroom, as I pointed out earlier, Fanny’s body is represented by Fanny’s name. At the end of the novel, when she is prepared for the wedding night, her body appears as "Charms", "Ornaments", and "Gifts" (IV.xvi.343). This final appearance accords well with Stallybrass and White’s invocation of the passive statue and the admiration it inspires. And it is interesting that this ceremony of undressing, the second last account of an immediate action in the novel, takes place entirely by indirection. Earlier in the novel, the reader has been treated to a more detailed account of Fanny’s physical attributes, but here, where virtue is awarded the sensual pleasure it has so exemplarily forsworn for so long, the object of that pleasure, Fanny’s desirable body, disappears behind a tissue of metaphor. In the following chapter, the characters of Lydia Melford and George Dennison will be discussed. Even more than Fanny and
Joseph, Smollett's exemplary characters enact this peculiar drama of invisibility—a drama in which the classical body nearly disappears from view while the values associated with it are examined by means of the drama of the grotesque body.
Chapter Five

"Improper Objects of Mirth": Lydia Melford and George Dennison in Humphry Clinker

As many of Smollett's commentators have recognized, the character of Matthew Bramble manifests an irresolvable contention between the flesh and the spirit. It can be fairly said that in Humphry Clinker Smollett dramatizes a view of the world which recognizes that the upward progress of the spirit toward intellectual and moral perfection is closely hedged round by the vicissitudes of the body. The inherent fascination of the grotesque has caused critical

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1 The uneasy coexistence of the flesh and the spirit has long been recognized as one of the novel's chief concerns. Bramble, writes Sheridan Baker, "represents man's comic imperfection, the spirit mocked by the flesh" (651). This point has been reiterated by both Donald Bruce and Paul Gabriel Boucé. Following from Bramble's own account of his condition, "every thing that discomposes my mind, produces a correspondent disorder in my body" (June 14, 151), commentators have discussed the psychosomatic origins of Bramble's health problems (Paulson, 194-6; Rothstein, 119-20; Sena 387ff). Sena's essay on Bramble's relation to the surgeon satirist tradition has helped crystallize the relationship between the mind\body theme in the novel and Bramble's persistently satirical voice.

Early discussions of the novel's grotesques have tended to adopt a distinctly Kayserian tone and take place largely in relation to the contention between the flesh and the spirit--see Robert Hopkins and George Karhl. In the recent past, Joanne Lewis has asserted that the grotesque "attempts to make sense of a senseless world" (409), a claim that is not far off Kayser's claim that the grotesque is "an attempt to invoke and subdue the demonic aspects of the world" (188).

Eileen Douglas' recent survey of the body in Smollett's work, while a thoughtful contribution to this particular area of Smollett studies, has, curiously, next to nothing to say about the grotesque.
attention to focus mainly on the characters of Bramble, Tabitha, Lishmahago, and Humphry Clinker, while there has been a tendency to depreciate the roles of the young lovers, Lydia Melford and George Dennison. Surely, however, the persistent drama of Lydia and George’s relationship, young Dennison’s association with his father (the person for whom Bramble reserves his highest admiration), and the parallel sympathies of Bramble and Lydia all point to the manner in which George and Lydia, dramatically colourless as they may be, organize one of the strongest positive thematic poles in the novel. It is in relation to the youth and stock romanticism of the relationship between Lydia Melford and George Dennison that both the frequently grotesque excesses of Tabitha Bramble’s husband-hunting and the low comedy of Winifred Jenkins’ pursuit of Humphry Clinker take place.

The marriage of Lismahago and Tabitha grotesquely parodies the union of Lydia and George (who are, as Lydia’s brother Jery points out, "judged improper objects of mirth" (November 8, 333)), and belongs to that dimension of the novel organized by Bramble’s hypochondria and misanthropy. Lismahago and Tabitha exist as negative, but not negating images of the normal and of the ideal, and their appearance and behaviour are always represented in a ridiculous light: they are "a superannuated lieutenant on half-pay" and "an old maid" (Jery, July 13, 191), likened to Saturn and Cybele
as they sit in bed together on their wedding night (Jery, November 8, 333). By their grotesqueness their marginality is re-emphasized. Far from acting as thematic counters to the spectacle of the normal, they grant assurance to its predominance and its persistence.

In Joseph Andrews, as we have seen, the physical presences of Joseph Andrews and Fanny Goodwill, in contrast to the presences of such characters as Parson Adams, Mrs. Slipslop, or Parson Trulliber, are conventionalized and without intrinsic dramatic interest. Fanny and Joseph exist in order to be preserved from harm—the dramatic action of the novel consistently distinguishing their graceful passivity from the chaotic incidents which embroil the other characters. The treatment of Fanny and Joseph closely parallels the treatment of the classical body in courtesy literature; the virtues they embody are confirmed by the incompatible excesses of those around them, just as the value of the classical body is confirmed in courtesy literature by the attention devoted to elaborating the different orders of error represented by the grotesque body. The vicissitudes of the grotesque body express the values of the classical body.

In Smollett's Humphry Clinker, this paradox may be seen even more clearly. However, in Humphry Clinker, the life of the classical body particularly as it is idealized by the
characters of Lydia Melford and George Dennison is subject to an even less immediate emphasis than it is in Joseph Andrews. At no point in the narrative does Smollett pause to present a careful physical portrait of the two lovers. Nor does the erotic component of their relationship receive particular attention. In fact, they seem to be distinguished from the other characters by virtue of their thoroughgoing inoffensiveness--while the other two couples are comically demonstrative in acknowledging the success of their wedding nights, Lydia and George, Jery tells us, "are too delicate to exhibit any strong-marked signs of their mutual satisfaction" (November 8, 334). This delicacy characterizes their appearance throughout the novel, while the drama of George's attempts to approach the family appear to proceed as a minor key in the novel, sounded repeatedly, and yet never so loudly as to take attention away from the pursuits of the other characters. It is only at the very outset of the novel that the problem of George and Lydia is the focus of dramatic attention, constituting the first significant episode of the narrative, and establishing what will become the enduring problem of Lydia's suitor's identity.

The manner in which the characters representing the classical body are placed, for much of Humphry Clinker, in the background, while the characters representing the
grotesque body attract a substantial portion of the novel’s dramatic interest, suggests the degree to which Smollett’s examination of behaviour significantly complicates the simple arrangement of opposites that structures Joseph Andrews. The manner in which Fielding iconizes his hero and heroine is consistent with Stallybrass and White’s invocation of the classical body of ancient statuary and of the upward gaze that holds it in admiration (21). The satiric voices of Matthew and Jery effectively prevent George and Lydia from attracting such admiring attention, and the novel mirrors, more closely than Joseph Andrews, the rhetorical structure earlier identified as characteristic of conduct literature. The distinctive nature of the classical body, its attitude and moral worth, is largely implied and illuminated by the persistent presence of the grotesque. In Humphry Clinker, Lydia and George become associated with different threads of narrative and thematic interest, ultimately constituting distinct loci of positive or ideal values. Over the course of the following chapter I will examine the characters of George Dennison and Lydia Melford in some detail. My intent is to identify and explore the different thematic issues in which George and Lydia are separately and centrally embedded. What I aim to show is that behaviour remains for Smollett an important means by which strata of worth are arranged. In the end, ideals of
such behaviour rest variously in Lydia and George, and these characters do, however indifferently they sometimes appear to be treated by the narrative, importantly embody ideals toward which or around which the other characters in the novel meaningfully move.

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George Dennison and the Order of Rank

In his way conventional like Lydia, George Dennison is significant because it is toward him that Lydia's desire is directed and continually in relation to him that her dramatic existence is organized. George, it will turn out, is one of the most accomplished and commendable male figures to appear in the novel. Jery writes near the end of the novel of his sister's conquest:

she had really captivated the heart of a gentleman, her equal in rank and superior in fortune... George Dennison is, without all question, one of the most accomplished young fellows in England. His person is at once elegant and manly, and his understanding highly cultivated. Tho' his spirit is lofty, his heart is kind; and his manner so engaging, as to command veneration and love, even from malice and indifference.

(Jery, October 14, 317-18)

"Elegant and manly," George projects a physical presence that is consistent with the classical body. With his other attributes, his intelligence, his confidence, and his good nature, he embodies what Stallybrass and White call
"transcendent individualism" (22). But for much of the novel, George exists merely as an object of Lydia's desire. He is as she says, "so modest and respectful, and seemed to be so melancholy and timorous" (April 6, 11). George's existence is entirely bound up in his potential relationship with Lydia; he is passive, and his quest in the novel is not concerned with romantic fulfilment, but with the revelation of his identity: "he had been at Bath, London, and many other places in quest of us, to make himself and his pretensions known" (Matthew, October 11, 315). A "handsome young fellow" (Matthew, April 17, 14) whose first appearance in the novel as an actor causes the family's initial consternation, George Dennison is a singularly inefficient suitor whose failed attempts to make contact with Lydia serve primarily to articulate the course of her romantic desire. It may well be that the device by which Smollett keeps George's identity concealed is, as Boucé says, "thin" (204); but the constant deferral of this most perfect of unions opens a dramatic space which permits a different order of desire to be explored. Indeed, the clearly unerotic nature of George's character requires that Smollett supplement it through allusion to Aimwell in Farquhar's Beaux' Stratagem (1707). George appears before Lydia at Glasgow "dressed exactly as he was in the character of Aimwell" (Lydia, September 7, 250); Jery records that among
the entertainments the group diverts itself with at the end of the novel, one is a production of *The Beaux' Stratagem* (Jery, October 14, 318). Coming as it does immediately after Jery's encomium to George Dennison, who as Lydia has made clear, is the Aimwell of the piece, this latter allusion to Farquhar's play points to the problem of George Dennison's identity as central to the resolution of the novel. However weakly Smollett draws his romantic lead he does seem to want to attach both erotic energy and exemplary stature to him. As Aimwell himself declares, "I am all counterfeit except my passion" (V.iv)--it is passion which credibly animates George's pursuit of Lydia, but it is the problem of the counterfeit that sustains the interest not only of Matthew's party but of the reader as well. Instead of the erotic desire that is continually attached to Joseph, and which by Fielding's figurative shorthand allows him to dramatize the essential virtue of the classical body, it is a species of political desire that is persistently stimulated by George Dennison. It is through the problem of George's identity that the issue of social status and its relation to appearance and manners enter the novel.²

² John P. Zomchick writes: "Although the England represented in *Humphry Clinker* is by and large pre-industrial, Smollett captures the disruptive effects of economic and social change in the conflict between emergent and traditional groups. Even if these groups lack a fully articulated class consciousness, they function as coherent class actors within the fictional economy of the text"
George's "modest and respectful behaviour" poses a difficulty for those who would damn him for a fellow. Matthew observes that "Wilson" had behaved so well in his private character, as to acquire the respect and goodwill of all his acquaintance . . . [but] after all, I fancy, he will turn out to be a runaway prentice from London" (Matthew, April 17, 15). (The apparent fact of George's low rank is reinforced by the threat of persecution as a vagrant (14).)

When he first introduces Lydia's unacceptable suitor, Jery also points out this conflict between appearance and apparent fact, "Though his rank in life (which, by the bye, I am ashamed to declare) did not entitle him to much deference; yet as his behaviour was remarkably spirited, I admitted him to the privilege of a gentleman" (Jery, April 2, 10). Later in the novel, Jery again poses the problem of "Wilson's" social rank, "I call Wilson a rascal, because, if he had been really a gentleman, with honourable intentions, he would have, ere now, appeared in his own character" (173). My argument is that George is the most important of these "class actors." However, while I accept Zomchick's choice of terminology here, I cannot agree to the prominence he gives to "the dominance of a dynamic [social order] in which class interests and antagonisms have made a return to the past utterly fantastic" (173). Rather, my reading of the novel is consistent with Sekora's identification of the importance of "the world of inherited rights" in the novel: "where the highest ranks of society have exclusive responsibility for determining the nature of the good, where the laws of nature and the laws of tradition are regarded as synonymous, and where social position fixes one's activities and aspirations" (286).
(Jery, August 8, 216). At least in the case of the disguised George Dennison, behaviour is repeatedly examined as a sign of social status. On the one hand, this device simply serves to preserve the rudimentary drama of the fate of Lydia's romantic aspirations, but on the other hand, this persistent investigation is symptomatic of Smollett's concern with the relation of manners to class status. The problem of George's rank is much the same as the problem of Joseph Andrews' rank--within the context of the romantic comedy in which each is involved, it follows the same trajectory of gradual and satisfying revelation. In the case of Joseph Andrews, however, the matter of Joseph's status in relation to the romantic plot is not subjected to the kind of scrutiny that George's status endures. Joseph's person focusses erotic attention; George's person focusses political attention. And it is noteworthy that the two characters who think about George's identity almost exclusively in terms of his rank are Matthew and Jery, the characters most responsible for developing the moral tone of the novel.

For Matthew and Jery the difficulty posed by George is that in the absence of a name, his manners, his behaviour become the only means by which to evaluate his status. In other places, Jery seems to revel in atmospheres where visible distinctions of rank are unavailable:
Here [at Bath] . . . a man has daily opportunities of seeing the most remarkable characters of the community. He sees them in their natural attitudes and true colours; descended from their pedestals, and divested of their formal draperies, undisguised by art and affectation . . . Another entertainment, peculiar to Bath, arises from the general mixture of all degrees assembled in our public rooms, without distinction of rank or fortune. This is what my uncle reprobes, as a monstrous jumble of heterogeneous principles . . . But this chaos is to me a source of infinite amusement.

(Jery, April 30, 47)

It is also left to Jery to describe the cawdies' ball where "lords, and lairds, and other gentlemen, courtezans and cawdies mingled together, as slaves and their masters were in the time of the Saturnalia in ancient Rome" (Jery, August 8, 218). Boucé is quite right to cast Jery as the novel's "official observer" (232); these passages perhaps best exemplify the irony of the benign, seemingly amoral observation so characteristic of Jery. But they are also demonstrations of what Boucé calls Jery's "obsessive class prejudice" (232). The irony Jery directs at Bramble's asperities can also cut with the subtlety of Dryden's executioner, registering a disdain that is unencumbered by Bramble's ridiculous humours:

At that instant, the Abbey bells began to ring so loud, that we could not hear one another speak; and this peal, as we afterwards learned, was for the honour of Mr. Bullock, an eminent cow-keeper of Tottenham, who had just arrived at Bath, to drink the waters for indigestion.

(Jery, April 24, 31)\(^3\)

\(^3\) Bullock's name associates him with Frogmore and Burdock, the oafish pranksters who appear later in the novel. Socially unequal to the welcome extended him,
Later, Jery will apparently contradict the irony evident in this passage when he ridicules his uncle’s distaste for "the participation of the vulgar" in the "elegant diversions of the capital" (Jery, June 5, 113). What distinguishes Jery from his uncle, however, is his view of the results of such mixing, not a disagreement about the observation of rank as a necessary determinant of human affairs. Jery’s view is "that those plebeians who discovered such eagerness to imitate the dress and equipage of their superiors, would likewise, in time, adopt their maxims and their manners, be polished by their conversation, and refined by their example." (Jery, April 30, 49). The improving influence is not exercised outward, but downward. If anything, Jery is more secure in the socially innate separation of the various ranks. Where Bramble fears mixing will taint everyone, Jery’s view is based on the notion of the unfailingly beneficial influence of the upper reaches of society. Implicit as well in this formulation is that his anxiety about George Dennison’s rank stems from Jery’s belief in the natural coexistence of high rank and good manners.

Bullock is damned by his association with the bestial even before he comes to Jery’s attention.

4 The "experiment" at Bath which forms the context of these observations does not satirize the system of rank, but the insufficiency of humans in relation to the obligations coincident to rank.
The robustness and spleen of Bramble's satire distinguish his social criticism from Jery's. Where, as in the case of Mr. Bullock's entrance to Bath, Jery's judgement is cloaked in irony, Matthew's observations are direct and explicit:

Every clerk, apprentice, and even waiter of tavern or coffee-house, maintains a gelding by himself, or in partnership, and assumes the air and apparel of a petit maitre—The gayest places of public entertainment are filled with fashionable figures; which, upon inquiry, will be found to be journeymen taylors, serving-men, and abigails, disguised like their betters.

In short, there is no distinction or subordination left--The different departments of life are all jumbled together. . . .

(Matthew, May 29, 87)

In Bath, he writes:

Every upstart of fortune, harnessed in the trappings of the mode, presents himself at Bath, as in the very focus of observation . . . men of low birth, and no breeding, have found themselves suddenly translated into a state of affluence, unknown to former ages; and no wonder that their brains should be intoxicated with pride, vanity, and presumption. Knowing no other criterion of greatness, but the ostentation of wealth, they discharge their affluence without taste or conduct, through every channel of the most absurd extravagance; and all of them hurry to Bath, because here, without any further qualification, they can

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5 Thomas Preston opposes Jery's comic with Matthew's tragic perspective and relates the difference to their ages (111). Paulson characterizes Jery's satire as Horatian and Matthew's as Juvenalian (202). Mary Wagoner claims that Bramble "represents a satiric norm" and that "in attitude and tastes and even in literary style (for his letters are notably lucid and witty) Bramble is an urbane, 'civilized' eighteenth-century British gentleman" (114), but "urbane" and "civilized" go a bit wide of the mark. The ferocity of Matthew's language disqualifies him from a secure place at the novel's centre, and is, as I shall argue shortly, evidence of his existence closer to the complex negative themes.
mingle with the princes and nobles of the land. . . . Such is the composition of what is called the fashionable company at Bath; where a very inconsiderable proportion of genteel people are lost in a mob of impudent plebeians, who have neither understanding nor judgment, nor the least idea of propriety or decorum; and seem to enjoy nothing so much as an opportunity of insulting their betters. (Matthew, April 23, 36-7 (my emphasis))

One of the visible signs of the unsuitability of the "mob" to that station it would assume is the imperfection of their manners. It is a sentiment that echoes Bellegarde's observation that the "Air of Greatness" assumed by those "rais'd from the Dunghil by their own Skill or Chance . . . prevents not our discovering them through their borrow'd Outside" (72-3). When, as an elector, he is paid a visit by Fitzowen, Bramble observes that, "this mean prostration . . . has, I imagine, contributed in a great measure to raise that spirit of insolence among the vulgar; which, like the devil, will be found very difficult to lay" (Matthew, May 19, 73). Bramble's class consciousness, which manifests itself chiefly as a profound anxiety about the breakdown of the principle of subordination, is characterized by the distinctive violence of the language that typically conveys his observations: "the mob is a monster I never could abide, either in its head, tail, midriff, or members; I detest the whole of it, as a mass of ignorance, presumption, malice, and brutality" (April 23, 37). London inspires a similar observation: "the diversions of the times are not ill suited
to the genius of this incongruous monster, called the public. Give it noise, confusion, glare, and glitter; it has no idea of elegance and propriety" (Matthew, May 20, 88). Matthew persistently figures social groupings in terms of the body. This is demonstrated quite vividly in the episode in Bath when he explains why he has been overcome by the press of the crowd:

If there had been any beauty, grace, activity, magnificent dress or variety of any kind, howsoever absurd, to engage the attention and amuse the fancy, I should not have been surprised; but there was no such object. . . . (Matthew, May 8, 63)

Instead he experiences "an Egyptian gale . . . impregnated with pestilential vapours. . . . a high exalted essence of mingled odours." This disorder is a result of Matthew's sense of what Jery refers to as the "jumbling" together of the different social orders. Matthew conceives of the distinction between the ugly and the beautiful in explicitly physical terms. It is a habit of vision that informs the majority of his perceptions. The distinction he makes comes very close to Bakhtin's distinction between the classical and the grotesque body. On the one hand, Matthew invokes the decorous and discrete object of detached aesthetic contemplation, "beauty, grace, activity, and magnificent dress"--attributes of the realm of the classical body with its characteristic smoothness, uniformity, and closedness (Bakhtin, Rabelais 317). On the other hand, Matthew
conceives of bodies markedly without limits and repugnant because they threaten to engulf the observer. The mob is monstrous, and the air is "impregnated with pestilential vapours"—Matthew's world is overwhelmed by the opened body and its characteristically grotesque functions (Bakhtin, 317).

This aspect of Bramble's language, through its figuration of antithetical judgments as qualities of bodies, clarifies the significance of Lydia and George to the pole of the novel's positive values. The disgust occasioned by the social "jumble" takes two forms. One is to figure the mob in terms of a body, a monster, and to establish an opposition between it and the genteel body. Lydia—"a fine tall girl . . . with an agreeable person"—and George—"at once elegant and manly" are the two characters in the novel whose appearance and behaviour represent the upper limit of the genteel body. The other form in which Matthew articulates his revulsion is in the contrast between the hurry of the city and the tranquillity of solitude: "after having lived in solitude so long, I cannot bear the hurry and impertinence of the multitude" (Matthew, April 28, 46). Bramble's satiric vision clarifies the relation of the grotesque body and the insubordinate urban mob on the one

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6 See n.13 below for an account of Smollett's use of the myth of rural retirement.
hand and the mannerly body and a companionable rural solitude on the other.

Jery and Matthew are the novel's most conscientious commentators on the matter of social status—it is almost entirely by virtue of their judgements that the novel's class consciousness is articulated. However, the satiric force of Jery's and Matthew's judgements is ultimately univocal, and is differentiated only by the different tempers of their minds. Similarly, those characters who serve to incarnate Jery and Matthew's implicit ideals, George and Lydia, are dramatically flat. At their worst they are conventional players in the conventional drama of their romance; at best they are colourless symbols, taking their significance more from their position in relation to other characters' speech and action, than from their own ability to generate dramatic development. In order to actuate his arguments about rank in a dramatic manner, Smollett introduces a series of minor characters whose various narratives serve as illustrations of the different relations of manners to status, relations activated by different degrees of attention to the life of the body.

The highwayman Martin is the closest Smollett comes to dramatically activating the positive values associated with
the classical body in a minor character. Jery describes him in the following manner: "he was a young man, well dressed, and from the manner in which he cross-examined the evidence, we took it for granted, that he was a student in one of the inns of the court" (Jery, June 11, 144). Like George, Martin enters the novel under an assumed identity. Martin wins the approval of those around him, again like George, because of his behaviour; Jery further reports:

> the constable . . . gave me to understand, that Mr Martin . . . never went to work, but when he was cool and sober; that his courage and presence of mind never failed him; that his address was genteel, and his behaviour void of all cruelty and insolence. . . .

(Jery, June 11, 145)

The contrast with George comes in Martin's energy. George is described by Lydia at the beginning of the novel as "timorous" and "modest", and throughout the novel he tends to move discreetly within the private space of Lydia's affection. Martin, on the other hand, occupies a wide field

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7 David Evans expresses the doubleness of Martin's character very well: "Martin is not only a delightful picaro who himself lives in both the respectable and the unrespectable worlds, he is a rogue version of Augustan refinement and rationality joined to an enterprising spirit" (267).

8 The revelation of the identities of Humphry and Matthew is of course important to the novel's climax. Humphry's narrative promotion clearly mirrors that of the persistent "Wilson". For a discussion of Matthew's identity, see Douglas, 163-4. These revelations are however, sudden and final, and are not subjected to the continued and episodic attention give to the problems of George's and Martin's identities.
of action with vigorous animation. The fact that he is a thief seems to have little bearing on the characters' judgment of him; his apparent viciousness is obviated by the fact that over the course of his appearance in the narrative, Martin wants to take up an honest occupation. He is rather distinguished by his peculiar power; in addition to the poise and command he displays in the court room, Martin also acts nobly and energetically with Jery in the repulse of a gang of highwaymen (Jery, June 23, 155). Martin's only failing, as Jery remarks, is "an indiscreet devotion to the fair sex" (June 11, 146). His physical energy may be a credible dramatic sublimation of this erotic energy. In this respect, Martin is finally distinguished from George. Apparently gaining like George, by virtue of his behaviour, the somewhat surprised approval of those around him, Martin is removed from the sphere of complete perfection because of the openly libidinous tendency of his physical energy. In this respect, Smollett evaluates sexual energy in much the same way as Fielding--sexuality in and of itself is apparently an attribute of the unmannerly, Betty the chambermaid in *Joseph Andrews*, and here, Edward Martin. Sexuality is a matter of the body's grotesque life, of as Bakhtin puts it, the "lower stratum" and exists as a species of deformity perceived in strictly moral terms. It is finally significant that unlike George, Martin is briefly
the object of Tabitha's grotesque romantic aspirations. By his imperfections, Martin is drawn into the novel's circle of the ridiculous.

Another character who becomes entangled in the net of Tabitha's ridiculous desire is Barton, Lydia's suitor and Jery and Matthew's insufficient Virgil in the peculiar circle of hell occupied by the Duke of Newcastle's levee. Matthew refers to Barton as "a good sort of man, though most ridiculously warped in his political principles" (Matthew, June 2, 100). Barton's deficiency results from the damage done his capacity for judgement by the zeal of party; Jery points out that "the fumes of faction not only disturb the faculty of reason, but also pervert the organs of sense" (Jery, June 2, 94). This distortion takes over Barton's whole person; he is "a busy talkative politician; a petit-mâitre in his dress, and a ceremonious courtier in his manners" (Jery, June 2, 94). Barton exists almost entirely on the level of appearance, and he is on that account ineffective. Interestingly, this ineffectiveness is dramatized in Barton's lack of success as a suitor to Lydia. It is on the surface of things as well that his initial pretensions to Lydia's hand are well-founded, unlike George Dennison who appears to the family in such a way as to discredit his pretensions from the very beginning. Nevertheless, it is in the gap between Barton's rank and
person that his romantic credibility founders, and it becomes clear that the mark of the petit-mâitre—the abnormal attention to the veneer of personal style—ultimately touches Barton's physical being, damming him with what would seem to be sexual insufficiency. Jery presents the problem in the following manner:

if an opulent estate and a great stock of good-nature are sufficient qualifications in a husband, to render the marriage-state happy for life, she may be happy with Barton; but, I imagine, there is something else required to engage and secure the affection of a woman of sense and delicacy: something which nature has denied our friend. . . .

(Jery, June 2, 94)

Barton's demerit as a potential husband lies in an interesting direction; Jery speaks vaguely of "something else", something clearly different in quality from the gifts of fortune and a good temper. The passage is also noteworthy for its unusually unqualified evaluation of Lydia's merits; the invocation at this juncture of Lydia's "sense and delicacy" serves to point out a strong contrast between the inconsistencies in Barton's nature and the completeness of character that determines Lydia's status as a desirable object. And it is speaking as someone capable of feeling desire that Lydia supplements Jery's estimation of Barton's shortcomings:

it is not in my power to love Mr. Barton, even if my heart was untouched by any other tenderness. Not that there is any thing disagreeable about his person, but there is a total want of that nameless charm which
captivates and controls the enchanted spirit. . . .

(lydia, june 10, 132)

Here, Jery's indeterminate "something" is made clearer--invoking "that nameless charm", Lydia speaks of something which goes beyond the material advantages of a decorous social union. Writing of "captivation" and "enchantment", Lydia is speaking about the prerequisites of erotic attraction, of a physical "something" that necessarily perfects material sufficiency, and without which such an attribute is hollow. Because he is incapable of arousing Lydia's exemplary desire, it is not surprising that in the unfolding of his character in the novel, Barton should precipitously leave the narrative after becoming unwittingly involved in the labyrinth of Tabitha's romantic machinations. He is the only male among the ridiculous grouping of women gathered to hear Humphry preach, brought to further Lady Griskin's and Tabitha's designs. It is consistent with a view of Smollett's careful manipulation of Barton between the poles of desire occupied by Lydia on the one hand and Tabitha on the other that the same letter in which Bramble records Barton's removal from the family circle also gives an account of yet another of young Dennison's attempts, in disguise, to gain a hearing from Lydia (Matthew, June 12, 141-2).
A more ridiculous dramatic organization of the potential effects of stylized behaviour takes place around the character of Dutton. Matthew describes him:

The fellow, whose name is Dutton, seems to be a petit-maitre.--He has got a smattering of French, bows, and grins, and shrugs, and takes snuff a la mode de France, but values himself chiefly upon his skill and dexterity in hair dressing.--If I am not much deceived by appearance, he is, in all respects, the very contrast of Humphry Clinker. (Matthew, June 14, 151)

While Dutton’s dramatic effectiveness is as an illuminating antithesis to Humphry, Dutton also represents a variation on the theme of ridiculous romantic pretensions sounded by Barton. Dutton is introduced not much after Barton’s exit, and the similarities in their careers are revealing. The two characters are connected by Jery and Matthew’s use of the term "petit-maitre" to describe them and to ridicule the affectation of their manners. In both cases, this affectation is in some measure made to bear on the quality of their different romantic inclinations (Bellegarde, it will be recalled, writes that "Affectation diffuses itself over the whole Man, and infects the good Qualities both of the Body and the Mind" (Reflexions, 58)). As we have seen, Barton, for all his exterior graces, is nevertheless deficient in romantic appeal. Dutton’s effectiveness goes quite the other way. Playing on the heart of Win Jenkins, Dutton involves her in his absurd vanity; the two of them make spectacles of themselves and are publicly humiliated:
He was dressed in a silk coat, made at Paris for his former master, with a tawdry waistcoat of tarnished brocard; he wore his hair in a great bag with a huge solitaire, and a long sword dangled from his thigh. The lady was all of a flutter with faded lutestring, washed gauze, and ribbons three times refreshed. . . .

(Jery, July 18, 202)

Jery ridicules Dutton's affectation by attending to the cast-off quality of Dutton's and Win's clothing: "tawdry", "tarnished", "faded" and "three times refreshed." The evaluation of Dutton's absurdity points directly at the incompatibility of his actual rank with the material signs of social prestige--his true character is revealed by the shoddiness of his clothing. The couple also exhibits an inescapable absence of taste; the ridiculous effect of the pair's clothing is compounded by the excessive proportions of their accessories: "the great bag" in which Dutton wears his hair, his long sword, and Win's towering coif and excessive patching. Dutton literally enacts the ignorance of "propriety and decorum" that Matthew so forcefully ridicules in Bath (April 23, 37). While both Barton and Dutton are described as petit-mâtres, their characters develop different aspects of the fop figure. Their separate careers in the novel demonstrate how the body, manifested as sexual potential, and its manners are brought into service in the ridicule of affectation. If Barton dramatizes the potential of the fop for effeminacy (the excessive cultivation of manners and appearance indicates a physical
inauthenticity), Dutton dramatizes the fop's potential for sexual depredation. And so while Barton's effeminacy diminishes the worth of his rank, Dutton's absence of rank makes his romantic exploits wholly ridiculous. He operates as a kind of Billingsgate rake--his last conquest before disappearing from the pages of the novel is to steal an "heiress of a pawn-broker" from the arms of her betrothed, a tailor.

The most outrageous conflation of issues of rank, manners, and affectation comes in the tableau which introduces Sir Ulic Mackilligut to the novel. Whereas the twists in Barton's and Dutton's complexions are subtle and predominantly ironic in mode, Smollett introduces the grotesque of caricature into the ridicule of Mackilligut and by that means subjects Mackilligut to the most enduring judgement. This evaluation is intensified by the fact that MacKilligut, every bit as self-interested as Tabitha, nearly makes a match with her--a match in which he would appear to be, by virtue of his physical appearance and his behaviour, a most worthy and suitable partner. Mackilligut makes his appearance in Bath, when Jery investigates a disturbance above the family's lodgings at Bath:

Finding the room-door open, I entered without ceremony, and perceived an object, which I cannot not now recollect without laughing to excess--It was a dancing-master, with his scholar, in the act of teaching. The master was blind of one eye, lame of one foot, and led about the room by his pupil; who seemed to be about the
The ridicule of Mackilligut in this scene centres upon his employment of a dancing master. The occupation of dancing master is tantamount to affectation itself. One of Dutton’s absurdities is that he sets himself up as dancing master to Win and by that means communicates through instruction the physical style of his empty pretensions. Claude Rawson’s examination of Fielding’s courtesy writing, The Augustan Ideal Under Stress, is contextualized by an examination of the problematic social status of the dancing master. Of low rank themselves, dancing masters nevertheless were "a necessary part of a ‘genteel education’ . . . they were professionals who taught gentlemen some of the marks of gentility . . . The gentleman thus had a painful obligation to the dancing-master, and the dancing master must have acquired pretensions of gentility which exacerbated the situation" (Rawson, 27). It is clearly these "pretensions of gentility" that Smollett fastens on when he uses the dancing master as a term of ridicule. In the case of Dutton, this ridicule is at the expense of Dutton’s low rank, and in the case of MacKilligut, the ridicule is very much a part of Bramble’s uneasiness about insubordinate class mixture lowering the standards of the upper classes. Mackilligut is doubly ridiculous in this case both because
of his rank and because his age, "three score", should perhaps indicate a maturity and experience which would raise him above the pettiness of vanity. The passage is intensely emblematic: blind and lame, the dancing master's social insufficiency is incarnated as physical deformity; and not leading but led by Mackilligut about the room, the dancing master is subjected to a farce of his dependence and marginality. In his turn, Mackilligut, aged, stooped, physically unattractive, outlandishly dressed, and identified by a cacophonous name whose associations redound to his ridiculous physical appearance (Win lends a further twisted strand to these bodily associations by placing him in "the cunty of Kalloway" (April 26, 42 (my emphasis)), is signally lacking in the gentility he is attempting to polish. 9

Each of these characters--Edward Martin, Barton, Dutton, and Mackilligut--provides a means by which Smollett can examine the varying relations of rank and gentility to manners. Particularly in the cases of Barton, Dutton, and Mackilligut, this examination appears as ridicule directed at the affectation of these characters. These characters are primarily significant as they tend to act out the

9 Mackilligut's stooping posture is shared by three other characters in the novel, Tabitha, Lismahago, and Humphry Clinker upon his first appearance. Good posture is explicitly recommended as a sign of rank by both Della Casa (25) and by Petrie (58-9).
specific criticisms levelled against society by Matthew and Jery. Thus Bramble's predisposition for conflating the moral and the physical, his tendency to both see and react to moral qualities in physical terms is translated into the characters themselves. As exemplars of the debasement of society through the use of false or over-refined manners in the service of aberrant social mobility (Barton is ridiculed for the intellectual vacuity that results from cultivating an exterior appropriate to a realm of morally empty political manoeuvre), these characters are confined to the cities of Bath and London where the chaos of irresponsible social mixing has its greatest effect. It is thus appropriate to view them as emblematic of the social chaos described in general terms by Matthew and Jery. While not a negative character, the highwayman Edward Martin also has his origins in the corrupted metropolis—he appears first in a court of law, presided over by a Justice Buzzard. Interestingly, the course of Martin's redemption develops outside the city, in the countryside frequently celebrated by Lydia's and Matthew's lyric voices. Nevertheless, Martin does bear relation to the characters of Barton, Dutton, and Mackilligut by virtue of the fact that his brief dramatic existence takes place entirely in terms of the relation of manners to morals. His destiny is circumscribed by aspects
of the social dilemma that occupies Matthew's attention in Bath and London.

The exploration of the themes originating in the problem of George Dennison's identity and social status is for the most part confined within the range of Matthew's and Jery's satiric voices, and the emblematization of those themes in the characters of Martin, Barton, Dutton, and Mackilligut. In Bath and London, Smollett appears to be gathering negative terms with which to fill out the movement of recuperation that orients Matthew's progress from one end of the novel to the other. The problem of luxury is for the most part an urban vice, while its correction is worked out in other terms. Through George Dennison's elegance and manliness, and through his connection with the successful Charles Dennison, a success explicitly connected with the natural, rural environment (Charles Dennison, writes Matthew, "has really attained to that pitch of rural felicity, at which I have been aspiring these twenty years in vain" (October 8, 307)), Smollett makes connections with thematic strands elaborated in other characters. As we have seen, the characters of Edward Martin, Barton, Dutton, and Mackilligut do each in their way participate in the order idealized by George Dennison. Much of this order concerns the disposition of the body in social space. The merit or

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the absurdity of these different characters is related to their behaviour—Martin's poise and eloquence for example, or Mackilligut's ludicrous association with the dancing master. Bramble's materially-centred satiric vision continually invokes the grotesque body, but while the romanticized person of George Dennison points in the direction of the grotesque body's idealized opposite, the deferral of his actual presence requires that Smollett develop the values of the ideal body elsewhere. For this development he employs the character of Lydia Melford, and it is to her we will now turn, in order to examine the part her character plays in orienting and contextualizing the drama of the body in *Humphry Clinker*.

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II  

**Lydia Melford and the Order of the Ideal**

My examination of Lydia Melford, an examination that takes place within the circuit of values centring upon her person, will consist of three parts. In the first, I will examine the distinctive aspects of Lydia's personality. In the second, I will examine how aspects of Lydia's character bear strong relation to similar aspects in the character of Matthew Bramble. And in the third part of this examination I will turn to the characters of Tabitha, Lismahago, Win
Jenkins, and Humphry Clinker in order to show how the values of physical decorum associated with Lydia are mediated by characters granted fuller physical existences. If George organizes values arranged explicitly around issues of social rank, Lydia organizes values concerned with the potential perfectibility of physical existence. Jery describes Lydia as "a fine tall girl, of seventeen, with an agreeable person; but remarkably simple, and quite ignorant of the world" (April 2, 10); and Charles Dennison calls her "one of the most lovely creatures I have ever beheld" (Matthew, October 11, 314). In her physical appearance, Lydia is unlike most of the characters in the novel, in that she is deformed neither by disease (Bramble and Bullford), by injury (Lishmahago), nor by affectation (Tabitha, MacKilligut). Moreover, save for her rather passive participation in the several coach accidents over the course of the family's travels (in each case, a single sentence is given to the account of her rescue (Jery, May 24, 76; Jery, [October], 301)), Lydia is never involved in incidents in which she is made a ridiculous physical spectacle. Her distinction in this respect is made quite clear by the contrast between her behaviour and the behaviour of Tabitha and Win at Bath. While Tabitha and Win take to the waters with characteristically farcical results--Win loses her clothing and becomes completely discomposed, she "was
fluttered all day; so that we could hardly keep her from going into hysterics" (April 26, 39) -- Lydia is content merely to sip the waters. Certainly this virgin modesty is to be expected of Lydia, but the care with which Smollett disposes Lydia's body does nevertheless constitute a very important measure of her special status in the novel. Like George Dennison, she is consistently preserved from the stigma of the grotesque.

Commentary on Lydia has for the longest time tended to focus on the conventionality of her character. John V. Price, for example, writes that "Lydia is little more than a paradigm of the romantic heroine, ready to die at any slight misfortune and to regard herself as afflicted and forlorn" (41). And Price regards Smollett's treatment of her as fundamentally satiric (42). Boucé calls Lydia "a contrite little ninny" (194) and writes, "Jery's final opinion of his sister, 'she is really an amiable creature' (230), does no more than justice to this heroine, not outstandingly intelligent, but not devoid of the charm of emotional freshness" (225). These limited views of Lydia have been recently echoed in Robert Donald Spector's recent (1989) survey of Smollett's work.

Still more recently in his Smollett's Women (1994), however, Spector has treated Lydia's character with new sensitivity and sympathy. Beginning with the unexceptional
claim that Lydia is "no Restoration heroine, but interesting in her way" (60), and acknowledging Lydia’s role in Smollett’s satire of the romance genre (62), Spector proceeds through a close reading of Lydia’s letters to expand the traditionally narrow view of her conventionality. Spector finds that Lydia’s letters to Letty and to Mrs. Jermyn "display a more fully developed character than has been suggested by modern critics who have found in the early letters especially a naïve, altogether innocent young woman" (61), and, Spector writes, "through the breadth and depth of Lydia’s letters, Smollett presents a romantic young heroine whose journey allows her to display the fullness of her character as she matures in her understanding of the world" (61). Lydia is "a woman of good common sense quite aware of the realities of the world" (69) and gifted with "sound judgment" (70). Smollett’s treatment of his heroine, Spector argues, is intelligent and evocative. In the episode of Lydia’s dream in which Wilson is married to Tabitha by Mr Barton while Lydia sees herself standing "weeping in a corner, half naked, and without shoes and stockings" (June 10, 132), Smollett is said to display "a Richardsonian sensitivity to the conflict between a young woman’s desires and the repressive conventions of her society" (69). But Spector’s analysis is sometimes questionable. Lydia’s good sense and complexity, it
appears, are largely evidenced in the sense of discretion and decorum she shows in taking care about who she trusts with her confidence—giving Letty, for example, details of her feelings for Dennison/Wilson which she does not give to Mrs. Jermyn (Spector, 62). Similarly, Spector lauds Lydia's "perceptive abilities and her rather cool handling of the more adult world" (67) when she is careful not to give Lady Griskin the real reason for her lack of interest in Mr. Barton. Spector elevates Lydia's discretion to the level of "political sense" (62), but surely Boucé is more accurate claiming that "Lydia is not lacking in a certain basic feminine duplicity" (194). This observation of the conventionality of Lydia's discretion is closer to the mark than Spector's unwarranted exaggeration of its significance. Nevertheless, Spector's sense of the unexamined complexity of Lydia's character is fundamentally sound. He points to the obvious thematic importance of her desire for George Dennison (72-3), her apparent place as Mrs. Dennison's successor (80), and to her role in preserving and developing the desire for rural retirement also so important to Matthew Bramble (76). Most importantly, Spector gives pause to the dismissiveness that has traditionally informed the criticism surrounding the character of Lydia Melford.

Lydia is, as Jery puts it, "remarkably simple". Simplicity is Lydia's most characteristic trait--Matthew
calls her "a good-natured simpleton" (April 16, 13), and Win observes that Lydia is "as innocent as the child unborn" (April 26, 41). It can be argued that this simplicity is entirely consistent with the conventionality of Lydia's character--her purpose as a stock romantic heroine being to do little more than repine vacuously for an absent lover. But the fact that she shares this trait of simplicity with the novel's eponymous hero suggests that Smollett intends her to be taken more seriously. Humphry Clinker calls himself "innocent as the babe unborn" (Jery, May 24, 85), precisely echoing Win's comment about Lydia; and Bramble says of Clinker that he is "the very picture of simplicity" (Matthew, June 12, 143) and that his "character is downright simplicity" (June 14, 150). Jery observes that Clinker is "a surprising compound of genius and simplicity" (July 10, 180). Humphry's simplicity is the basis of his goodness; perpetually charitable and useful, he moves effortlessly and unself-consciously in an environment of labourers and felons. Naively drawn to Methodism, Humphry is nevertheless empowered by his fundamental simplicity to transmit truths whose morality transcends the stigma Bramble attaches to the sect. When Bramble rebukes Humphry for his preaching, arguing that to rid the language of the lower classes of profanity would be to remove a necessary external sign of class status, Humphry correctly replies that "at the day of
judgment, there will be no distinction of persons" (Jery, June 2, 98).

Lydia's own simplicity can likewise be seen as positively informing her moral timbre. Of the women who attend Humphry's preaching, Lydia is the only one who does not go out of self-interest, but in response to simple spiritual striving. She is "persuaded" (June 10, 132) by Tabitha and Win. Attending Humphry's preaching quite by accident, she is nevertheless thrown into real spiritual turmoil by her apparent insensitivity to "those inward motions, these operations of grace, which are the signs of a regenerated spirit" (June 10, 133). The irrational excesses of Methodism are of course subject to Smollett's satire through the character of Bramble. Bramble refers to the spontaneous revelation as "reveries of a disturbed imagination" and an imposition "upon silly women, and others of crazed understanding" (Jery, June 10, 135). However, Lydia's simplicity puts her precisely in the same relation to Methodism as Clinker: "Poor Liddy," reports Jery, "said she had no right to the title of a devotee; that she thought there was no harm in hearing a pious discourse, even if it came from a footman" (June 10, 134). For Lydia, as for Humphry, it is not the form of Methodism that concerns them, but simply its status as "pious discourse." In their spiritual innocence, they simply do not know any better, and
are absolved from Bramble's condemnation by their simplicity. It is notable, as well, that though Lydia prays "fervently to be enlightened" (June 10, 133), she is not.\(^{11}\) She is incapable of the spiritual pride, much less the distinctly sublunary self-interest that carry Tabitha and Lady Griskin into Humphry's motley congregation. It is through Humphry and Lydia--both by nature "simple"--that the restlessness of the family is transformed into explicitly spiritual striving.

Coupled with Lydia's laudable simplicity is her seriousness. The simplicity of Lydia's encounter with Methodism does not become ridiculous because Lydia's piety is also quite serious--"I have prayed fervently to be enlightened"--a genuine impulse that suggests aspects of her character pointing quite beyond the conventional to the seriousness of the novel's themes. Near the end of the novel, Jery contrasts his sister with her friend, the delightful Miss Willis. Miss Willis "is gay, frank, a little giddy, and always good-humoured"; Jery plainly prefers her character to that of his sister whom he judges "rather too grave and sentimental" (Jery, November 8, 330). Lydia's gravity renders her humourless, and it is by virtue

\(^{11}\) Sekora connects Smollett's satire on Methodism with his antipathy for the mob (237). In his introduction to the Georgia edition of the novel, Preston points out that Samuel Foote's *The Minor* (1760) may have suggested Methodism as an object of satire (xxv, n.20).
of her gravity that she is set apart from the misadventures of most of the other characters in the novel. The colourlessness of her relationship with George Dennison proceeds directly from her gravity and sentimentality--far from passionate, Lydia is rather unfailingly correct and decorous. And her desire for the young man is regularly contextualized by her sense of obedience to her family. When we first hear her voice in the novel, its tone is humble and penitent:

I confess I have given just cause of offence by my want of prudence and experience. I ought not to have listened to what the young man said; and it was my duty to have told you all that passed, but I was ashamed to mention it; and then he behaved so modest and respectful, and seemed to be so melancholy and timorous, that I could not find it in my heart to do any thing that would make him miserable and desperate.

(Lydia, April 6, 11)

Lydia's solicitude for George's peace of mind is framed by her recognition of her duty to those around her. Her passion for George is nothing if not responsible. Finally, Jery's report of Lydia's conduct toward Humphry upon the discovery of his relationship to Matthew provides an entirely characteristic view of her sobriety:

Liddy seemed much pleased with this acquisition to the family.--She took him by the hand, declaring she should always be proud to own her connexion with a virtuous young man, who had given so many proofs of his gratitude and affection to her uncle. . . .

(Jery, [October], 306)

Critics have tended to disregard the seriousness of Lydia's character and therefore the serious tone of many of
the things she says. She is remembered as a foil to Matthew's irascibility. She observes in the present moment and place the wonders to which Bramble is constitutionally blind. "I find nothing but disappointment at Bath" (April 23, 34), Bramble complains to Dr Lewis. But for Lydia, "Bath is to me a new world--All is gayety, good-humour, and diversion" (April 26, 38). Similarly Bramble regards London as "an overgrown monster" (May 29, 86), while Lydia finds herself "quite in a maze of admiration" (May 31, 90). This optimism and receptivity is entirely consistent with the character of an inexperienced girl, but Lydia is careful to qualify her enthusiasm with more mature sentiments. She is quick to assure Letty of her loyalty: "neither Bath, nor London, nor all the diversions of life, shall ever be able to efface the idea of my dear Letty, from the heart of her ever affectionate" Lydia (Lydia, April 26, 41). And this fundamental companionability has its special setting:

I wish my weak head may not grow giddy in the midst of all this gallantry and dissipation; though, as yet, I can safely declare, I could gladly give up all these tumultuous pleasures, for country solitude, and a happy retreat with those we love. . . .

(Lydia, May 31, 93)

Lydia's "as yet" is an empty apprehension--she maintains her desire for a social solitude as consistently as she does her

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12 Boucé explains Lydia's pessimism as an otherwise unaccountable effect of the "atmosphere of moral derangement" that obtains in the novel (238).
desire for George Dennison. She first acknowledges the attractions of solitude early in the novel, "I begin to be in love with solitude" (April 21, 27), she writes from Hot Well just before the family moves on to Bath; and she will write at length of the merits of solitude near the end of the family's peregrinations:

Nature never intended me for the busy world---I long for repose and solitude, where I can enjoy that disinterested friendship which is not to be found among crowds, and indulge those pleasing reveries that shun the hurry and tumult of fashionable society---Unexperienced as I am in the commerce of life, I have seen enough to give me a disgust to the generality of those who carry it on--There is such malice, treachery, and dissimulation, even among professed friends and intimate companions, as cannot fail to strike a virtuous mind with horror; and when Vice quits the stage for a moment, her place is immediately occupied by Folly, which is often too serious to excite anything but compassion. . . . (October 4, 296)

This last observation is significant not merely for its profound seriousness, but for the way in which its moral force so closely follows her uncle's own observations. In London, Matthew fumes, "Every thing I see, and hear, and feel, in this great reservoir of folly, knavery, and sophistication, contributes to enhance the value of a country life" (Matthew, June 2, 104); and he expresses a longing for "my solitude and mountains" (May 29, 89).

Matthew and Lydia's coinciding sympathies are extensively elaborated over the course of the novel. They have similar experiences of the crowds at Bath. Matthew is overcome by what he describes as "pestilential vapours";
Lydia is affected in much the same way. She writes of her sensations in the crowd of one of the public rooms: "The place was so hot, and the smell so different from what we are used to in the country, that I was quite feverish when I came away. Aunt says it is the effect of a vulgar constitution, reared among woods and mountains; and, that as I become accustomed to genteel company, it will wear off" (Lydia, April 26, 41). This passage manages to strike many of the thematic chords associated with Lydia: like her uncle she exhibits a physical sensitivity that has a latent moral component--she experiences the crowd in terms of its odour; additionally Tabitha’s opposition of gentility and provinciality takes place in terms of an explicit invocation of the natural order. Tabitha’s constitutional affectation injects the correcting irony into her opinion, with the result that the practised gentility she commends is ridiculed and the atmosphere of rural retreat, woods, and mountains--the atmosphere in which Lydia’s apparent provinciality places her--is given approval. The terms in which Lydia describes her fondness for the Downs at Hotwell also bears comparison with the objects of Matthew’s observation. Lydia writes:

I begin to be in love with solitude, and this is a charming romantic place. The air is so pure; the Downs are so agreeable; the furze in full blossom; the ground enamelled with daisies, and primroses, and cowslips; all the trees bursting into leaves, and the hedges already clothed in their vernal livery; the mountains
covered with flocks of sheep, and tender bleating wanton lambkins playing, frisking and skipping from side to side. . . . Then, for variety, we go down to the nymph of the Bristol spring, where the company is assembled before dinner; so good-natured, so free, so easy; and there we drink the water so clear, so pure, so mild, so charmingly maukish. (April 21, 27-28)

In Scotland, having praised the "transparent, pastoral, and delightful" water of the Leven, Matthew precedes to describe Lough-Lomond:

Nor are the banks destitute of beauties, which even partake of the sublime. On this side they display a variety of woodland, corn-field, and pasture, with several agreeable villas emerging as it were out of the lake, till, at some distance, the prospect terminates in huge mountains covered with heath, which being in bloom, affords a very rich covering of purple. Everything here is romantic beyond imagination. (August 28, 241)

And this structure is repeated again only a few pages later:

Above that house [of Cameron] is a romantic glen or cliff of a mountain, covered with hanging woods, having at bottom a stream of fine water that forms a number of cascades in its descent to join the Leven; so that the scene is quite enchanting. (September 6, 243)

Matthew's observation of the sublime mountain scenery in northern Scotland is a climactic moment in the novel:

This country is amazingly wild, especially towards the mountains, which are heaped upon the backs of one another, making a most stupendous appearance of savage nature, with hardly any signs of cultivation, or even of population. All is sublimity, silence, and solitude. (September 6, 244)

Matthew's rhapsody on natural beauty exactly parallels Lydia's own. Lydia's affinity with the unsophisticated natural order is to her credit; solitude is a space where
the moral life may achieve its most complete state, and solitude's special natural environment is the space toward which the narrative inevitably makes its most poetic gestures. Significantly the appreciation of natural solitude seems natural to Lydia; her enchantment at Hot Well comes before the journeys through Bath and London, where the innocence of her vision is largely preserved. Matthew on the other hand achieves the rhapsodic vision only after having suffered through the corruptions of Bath and London. For Lydia, the capacity for enchantment is innate, for Matthew it comes as a part of a process of purgation.¹³

This connection between Lydia and her uncle is dramatized by the increasingly close and affectionate relationship between them. At the novel's outset, they are united almost circumstantially. Matthew views his niece with grouchy irritation: "Those children of my sister are

¹³ As has been amply pointed out by many commentators, Smollett makes important use of the myth of rural retirement, the beatus ille tradition rooted in Horace's 2nd epode, in Humphry Clinker. Thomas Preston takes note of the role of the tradition in his Introduction to the novel, paying particular attention to the contrast between the estates of Baynard and Charles Dennision (xxvi-xxvii). Jeffrey Duncan compares Fielding's and Smollett's use of the convention of rural retirement at some length and like Preston examines the role of Dennison's estate in Smollett's treatment of the convention (520-524). Edward Copeland, on the other hand, calls Smollett's novel "a comic pastoral poem in prose" (493), connecting it, inaccurately in light of Duncan's essay, with the older Greek tradition. For the relation of Horace to the convention, see Maren-Sofie Røstvig's The Happy Man: Studies in the Metamorphoses of a Classical Ideal 1600-1700, 47-9, 71-4.
left me for a perpetual source of vexation" (Matthew, April 2, 7), and it is left to Jery to provide a more useful picture of Lydia's character. Before long however, Matthew is writing, "She is one of the best hearted creatures I ever knew, and gains upon my affection every day" (Matthew, May 5, 52). By October, when Bramble is almost drowned in the coach accident, Smollett renders one of the most sentimental scenes in the novel as Lydia is reunited with her uncle:

she ran thither half naked, with the wildest expression of eagerness in her countenance--Seeing the 'squire sitting up in the bed, she sprang forwards, and throwing her arms about his neck, exclaimed in a most pathetic tone, "Are you--Are you indeed my uncle--My dear uncle!--My best friend! My father!..."

(Jery, [October], 302)

This demonstrative scene of family affection is not however without its peculiarities. By paralleling the family's search for health and peace with Lydia's romantic quest, Smollett is able to eroticize the desire that animates the family's expedition. In this scene of reunion, the detail concerning Lydia's state of undress, while it serves to establish her precipitancy at this moment, is also voyeuristic and so briefly tinges the moment with a discernible eroticism, though it is an eroticism carefully limited by the fact of Lydia's relationship to Matthew and by the sentimentality that gives the scene its predominant tone. It is a brief view of Lydia that participates somewhat in the virtue undressed commonplace so frequently
exploited by Fielding. John P. Zomchick argues that one goal of the family’s quest is to enlist "excess energies (chiefly identified as erotic) under the banner of the domestic household. Tabitha’s lust, Lydia’s romance, and Win’s vitality are bound to their husbands" (181). Similarly, Douglas claims that "the ‘cure’ of Matthew Bramble requires the containment of female sexuality" (170). Both points are true enough; the disorder experienced by the family is partially attributable to erotic energy. But it is also true that this same erotic energy, especially as it is released through Lydia, is a means of using the decorums attached to the classical body to authorize the desire for beneficial ends, whether they be union with George Dennison or the natural delights and perfections coincident with rural retirement.

If Lydia is a passive incarnation of the novel’s positive values, values which seem to circle around a conception of the beatus ille tradition characterized by the habitual association of virtue with an enchanting or sublime natural environment, Matthew functions as a more active incarnation of those values. As was pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, Matthew’s character seems perpetually caught between the claims of the body and the claims of the spirit. The difficulty of this contention is manifested in affairs of manners, particularly in Matthew’s
sensitivity to decorum. Lydia is so modest that she stays out of the public baths, and George, whom Lydia very early in the novel calls "modest", behaves so well while concealing his identity as to engage both "the respect and goodwill of all his acquaintance" (Matthew, April 17, 15). By an interesting contrast, Matthew stands apart from both these extremes of manners, and in doing so is subject both to the ridicule due the novel's grotesques and the merit due its ideal characters. Matthew is profoundly conscious of his existence as an object of public scrutiny. He can't, he writes of himself, "bear thoughts of affording a spectacle to the multitude" (July 4, 177). Indignantly aware of the epidemic confusion of rank through the affectation of manners, Matthew exhibits a rigidly moral self-consciousness, and he might be said to represent the self-consciousness of the classical body, a self-consciousness aimed at keeping the moral self carefully contained within the limits of a body closed to the outside world. In recounting the episode of Bramble's treatment by Clinker on the beaches at Scarborough, Jery observes that his uncle "has the most extravagant ideas of decency and decorum in the economy of his own person" (July 10, 180). Matthew's vanity is not social, but moral--Jery connects decency with decorum--and he can act as ridiculously in his way, as the clowns of affectation, Barton, Dutton, and Mackilligut, can
in theirs. The humour of the incident at Scarborough derives precisely from this point--Bramble’s exposure by Humphry to the crowds on the beach is much the same as the satiric exposure of Dutton’s or Mackilligut’s affectation. Appropriately for one who cultivates physical reserve, Bramble’s response is typically outrageous: "I was so exasperated by the pain of my ear, and the disgrace of being exposed in such an attitude, that, in the first transport, I struck him down" (July 4, 179). The picture he draws of himself in his embarrassment makes the immediate connection between excessive physical display and the unnatural: "I cannot walk the street without being pointed at, as the monster that was hauled naked a-shore upon the beach" (179). Exposed naked to the crowds, Matthew displays an excessively physical presence that reveals his association with the plane of the novel’s grotesquerie--the deformity of Mackilligut’s dancing master, for example, or the absurdity of his sister Tabitha’s physical appearance. Matthew’s collapse at Bath is symptomatic of his conflation of the physical and the moral. His sensitivity to distinctions of rank is articulated as a moral vision whose objects are qualities of physical presence: the jumble of the gathering leaves no room for "beauty" and "grace", and Matthew is instead overcome by "pestilential vapours." Again, it is Jery who perceptively observes: "Mr. Bramble is
extravagantly delicate in all his sensations, both of soul and body" (May 10, 64). This delicacy lends Bramble a curious femininity and reinforces his association with Lydia. His moral purity seems validated by his constitutional weakness, and he exhibits curious and continued lapses into a kind of victimized passivity—he faints at Bath, is embarrassed in Scarborough, and is almost drowned in the stagecoach accident. Indeed it might be argued that the extraordinarily physical quality of his satiric vision is in some degree a compensation for this weakness in his character. The susceptibility of his body to accident and disease, its peculiar openness (he is overcome by vapours, "exposed" at Bath, and nearly drowned) requires that it be closed or supplemented by an aggressive bringing to attention of other bodies in all their deformity, disease, and awkwardness. Bramble’s physical weakness is implicated in the physical weakness of those around him. His bodily experience dramatizes the experience of an unclosable, shifting, painful physical identity which extends to almost all of the novel’s characters. This physical complexity nevertheless stands quite apart from that strand of moral sensitivity and purity signified by

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14 James P. Carson tantalizingly points out that "Smollett accords moral value to the figure of the ‘feminized’ benevolent man" (25), but only connects this feminization with the relation of benevolence to sentimentality (40).
Matthew's delicacy, and incarnated first in Lydia and then climactically in the sublimity and the solitude of the Hebrides.

Smollett aims, I think, to express as efficiently as possible his sense of the struggle of the subject through the clotting of material existence toward a region of more perfect, less materially intricate peace. The spirit and body coexist by influencing, sometimes negatively, sometimes positively, their individual destinies. Smollett aims to bring into meaningful equilibrium the often contradictory prerogatives of the body and the spirit by arranging his different characters around the pole of the problematically physical. Like Lydia's stammering toward a fitting name for her uncle's relationship with her--"Are you--Are you indeed my uncle--My dear uncle!--My best friend! My father!" (Jery, [October], 302)--each of Smollett's characters represents an adjustment of the facts of the physical to the claims of the ideal. Bramble's profound sense of decorum is evidence of the difficulty of this adjustment. In the following pages I will take in turn the characters of Tabitha, Lishmahago, Win Jenkins, and Humphry Clinker, and follow the movement of this physical struggle from its most constricted incarnation in the person of Tabitha Bramble outward through Lishmahago, Winifred Jenkins, and finally Humphry Clinker. I will show how, especially in the case of Win and Clinker, this excess
of physicality is lifted out of the slough of the grotesque by the redeeming presence of particular qualities which in turn bear association with the novel’s ideal values.

Tabitha is the most thoroughly grotesque figure in the novel. She is introduced as a grotesque and her behaviour is continually ridiculous. Where Lismahago’s grotesquerie is augmented by his wit and intelligence, Tabitha’s is barely distinguished by her loyalty to her brother. Her character is more strongly stamped by the different aspects of her indefatigable self-interest—her petty avarice and her indiscriminate romantic desire. Indeed, as a grotesque, particularly in the first third of the novel, she is treated extraordinarily harshly. Typically it is Jery who provides the most complete picture of her person:

Mrs. Tabitha Bramble is a maiden of forty-five. In her person, she is tall, raw-boned, awkward, flat-chested, and stooping; her complexion is sallow and freckled; her eyes are not grey, but greenish, like those of a cat, and generally inflamed; her hair is of a sandy, or rather dusty hue; her forehead low; her nose long, sharp, and, towards the extremity, always red in cool weather; her lips skinny, her mouth extensive, her teeth straggling and loose, of various colours and conformation; her long neck shrivelled into a thousand wrinkles. . . . (Jery, May 6, 58-9)

Matthew repeats her association with the cat; he calls her "that wild cat", and more generally, "that fantastical animal" (Matthew, April 17, 13). The other figure she attracts is more negative still. Bramble writes, "I almost think she’s the devil incarnate" (13); and Jery repeats that
evaluation when he judges the excess of her character, "she is "of all the antiquated maids the most diabolically capricious" (April 20, 22), and "she is one of those geniuses who find some diabolical enjoyment in being dreaded and detested by their fellow-creatures" (May 6, 59). As an animal, Tabitha is consigned to that satiric purgatory occupied by such appropriately named figures as Bullock, Griskin, Burdock, and Frogmore; but associated with the diabolical, Tabitha is marked by the severest judgement. Most of the other characters in the novel are in different degrees restrained by their consciousness of correct physical comportment, but Tabitha generally acts without any restraint, and her public behaviour is typified by physical excess. Jery describes her behaviour during the first coach accident in quite characteristic terms, explicitly connecting the demonic aspect of her character with the quality of her physical activity: Tabitha "had lost her cap in the struggle; and being rather more than half frantic, with rage and terror, was no bad representation of one of the sister Furies that guard the gates of hell" (May 24, 76). Interrupting Matthew’s act of charity at Bath, Tabitha

15 Hopkins argues that hell is most prominently connected with Matthew (170-171), but as I have just shown, this connection is forcefully and explicitly made with Tabitha.

16 For further work on imagery in Humphry Clinker, see Park and Pannill.
"bounced into the parlour in a violent rage" (Jery, April 20, 22); in her quarrel with Lady Griskin, she is described as looking "grim and ghastly, with an aspect breathing discord and dismay" (Jery, June 12, 141). But however extraordinary Tabitha's unpleasantness, it is further and even more grotesquely augmented by her association with Chowder in the first third of the novel.

Chowder represents a deformation in the quality of Tabitha's sensibilities, as Jery acidly points out: "One would imagine she had distinguished this beast with her favour on account of his ugliness and ill-nature; if it was not, indeed, an instinctive sympathy between his disposition and her own" (May 6, 60). With her typical simplicity, Lydia formulates the same equation: "What a pity it is, that a woman of her years and discretion, should place her affection upon such an ugly, ill-conditioned cur, that snarls and snaps at every body" (May 6, 57). Eric Rothstein has rightly noticed that Clinker effectually replaces Chowder (137) and thus presents a more worthy object for the party's attention than a dog. Significantly it is on the occasion of Clinker first acting as servant to the family at table that Tabitha vilifies him as a "mangy hound". The close relationship between Chowder's and Matthew's physical complaints--Win notices that the dropsical Chowder likes the waters of Bath "no better than the squire" (April 26, 42)--
has been illustrated by Beverly Scafidel, who has also suggested that "the family's ills begin to diminish after they have left London and Chowder behind". But Chowder's importance to the drama of the body is more extensive than this. Because he does play an emblematic role in representing the physical and moral progress of the family, Chowder focuses significant thematic relations between different characters. Diseased in body, Chowder, because he is a dog, also displays an unmannerseness that is a symbolic caricature of the social disaffection exhibited by Matthew, Tabitha (Matthew, as has been mentioned, early describes her as a "fantastical animal" (April 17, 13)), Lismahago, and others. In the coach accident, Chowder tears Matthew's leg and bites the fingers of the footman, who in turn kicks the dog in the ribs and exclaims, "Damn the nasty son of a bitch, and them he belongs to!" (April 24, 76). In an earlier episode at Bath, when Chowder threatens the Master of Ceremonies with his "long, white, sharp teeth", Sir Ulic Mackilligut kicks the dog in the mouth in order to drive it away (May 6, 60). Social intercourse is reduced to the gnashing of fangs.

The relief from the grotesque inner spaces of Tabitha's character comes finally from the outward orientation of her romantic energy, and the ultimate satisfaction of that energy in its appropriate object. That object is Lismahago,
a grotesque who is not subject to the full rigours of Smollett’s condemnation. Lismahago is not deformed as satiric punishment for affectation, he is grotesque because his body has been tortured in North America. There is a sense in which the affectation of characters such as Tabitha, Mackilligut and Dutton is predatory; it aims at intruding, in interposing prerogatives where they are inappropriate—Tabitha’s airs, Mackilligut’s tuition under the dancing master, and Dutton’s rakishness. But from his first introduction, Lismahago is singularly unaffected. An early attempt at an affected appearance immediately degenerates into farce:

Perceiving ladies at the window above, he endeavoured to dismount with the most graceful air he could assume; but the ostler neglecting to hold the stirrup when he wheeled off his right foot, and stood with his whole weight on the other, the girth unfortunately gave way, the saddle turned, down came the cavalier to the ground, and his hat and periwig falling off, displayed a headpiece of various colours, patched and plaistered in a woeful condition. . . . (Jery, July 10, 182)

As the passage indicates, Lismahago’s physical nature is a kind of passive weight. Tabitha’s appearance is a sign of the real unpleasantness of her character, but Lismahago’s appearance is a sign of his suffering:

A joint of one finger had been cut, or rather sawed off with a rusty knife; one of his great toes was crushed into a mash betwixt two stones; some of his teeth were drawn, or dug out with a crooked nail; splintered reeds had been thrust up his nostrils and other tender parts; and the calves of his legs had been blown up with mines of gunpowder dug in the flesh with the sharp point of the tomahawk. (Jery, July 13, 188)
The comedy of Lismahago comes from the limitations Smollett imposes on him as a character. Lismahago does not, like Matthew, quest beyond himself; he does not submit the condition of his body to a governing idea of wholeness. He is empty of all desire save national zeal. Joanne Lewis' observation that Lismahago "represents steady worth in a changing world" (412) does not seem far off the mark in this respect—he enters the environment of the family circle in order to augment the course of their experience, and not to attract dramatic interest to the quality of his own experience. Indeed, by virtue of his grotesquerie, and his freedom from the exigencies of redemption which orient the other characters, Lismahago can move in the underworld of the grotesque without being marked or belittled by his involvement. Lismahago is the only member of the family touched by the jokes at the house of Sir Thomas Bullford; he is publicly embarrassed trying to escape the house supposedly going up in flames:

There was no need of much rhetoric to persuade Lismahago, who forthwith made his exit by the window, roaring all the time to the people below to hold fast the ladder.

17 Most commentators on Lismahago offer some variation on the immobility that seems to rest at the centre of his character. Hopkins calls him a "living grotesque object" who serves as a catharsis for Bramble's "morbid imagination" (174); in a similar vein, Rothstein calls Lismahago a "surrogate" for Bramble's bitterness (139). It has been customary, as well, to see the character as the voice of Scottish nationalism (Martz, 170; Boucé 221).
Notwithstanding the gravity of the occasion, it was impossible to behold this scene without being seized with an inclination to laugh. The rueful aspect of the lieutenant in his shirt, with a quilted night-cap fastened under his chin, and his long lank limbs and posteriors exposed to the wind, made a very picturesque appearance, when illumined by the links and torches which the servants held up to light him in his descent.

(Jery, October 3, 287-8)

Subsequent to this episode, Justice Frogmore is polluted with a particularly effective emetic, and it devolves upon Lismahago to exact retribution by startling the old knight into jumping out the parlour window and into the new fish-pond. Lismahago's peculiar fitness for this grotesque underworld seems further pointed out by the fact that where Bullford's jests envelop Lismahago, they do not extend to Matthew. It is significantly characteristic of Matthew that he contracts a chill during the episode of Lismahago's picturesque appearance on the ladder (Jery, October 3, 294). And it will be recalled that Matthew's misadventures at Bath and Scarborough are strongly marked by his sense of helpless humiliation.

The grotesquerie of Lismahago is further important in that it points explicitly toward pain and disease both more directly than Matthew's grotesquerie and in a more patently cathartic sense. His escapades in America give him a kind of ghastly, absurd immortality, a baptism in the figures of
pagan savagery;" but the association with death is strongest near the end of the novel when Jery identifies Lismahago as Consumption as the lieutenant plays Pierot in Harlequin Skeleton, and when Jery describes the arrival from London of Lismahago’s luggage, among which is "a long deal box not unlike a coffin" (October 26, 331). This is perhaps the most difficult aspect of Lismahago’s character to account for; the temptation is to lend Lismahago a seriousness of conception that would, I think, overestimate his significance in relation to the vicissitudes of the more clearly central characters. Writing that this aspect of Lismahago’s character aligns him with the world of commedia dell’arte and that "as such he becomes an emblem of unspoken subversions present in Smollett and present in the age" (406), Joanne Lewis injects a misleading degree of

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"Charlotte Sussman’s reading of Lismahago’s experiences in North America as creating an "instability in cultural identification with him" (604) is suggestive--Lismahago represents "the presence of creolized North America on English domestic soil" (604). Sussman connects Lismahago’s injuries with Smollett’s anxiety about colonial expansion (609) and sees that anxiety as centrally figured in the novel’s critique of luxury. But Sussman finally exaggerates the thematic significance of the North American episode when she concludes that "it is the inherent instability in the balance of power between England and her colonial possessions that provokes Humphry Clinker’s deepest fear" (615). Humphry Clinker’s "deepest fear", whatever it might be said to be, is surely far more abstract and personal than any "fear" generated by the largely isolated narrative of Lismahago’s misadventures among the Miamis. Lismahago’s suffering is certainly constitutive of his character as I argue, but does not determine that character in any absolute manner."
indeterminacy into the character, indeterminacy that flies in the face of Smollett’s continual attention to balance in both the arrangement of the narrative and the disposition of the various characters. As I have been suggesting, this disposition constitutes a species of dialogue moderated by the presence of Lydia and George. Their presence is, in turn, informed by the values of a civil and solitary retreat into a rustic or natural environment. To view Lismahago as a dreadful, fatal fissure in the novel, like the strangely elongated skull that scars Holbein’s *Ambassadors*, is to impose an unsatisfactory disruption upon Smollett’s design. The conclusion of the novel, in my view, quite goes against this suggestion of subversion. Like Matthew, Lismahago is closely touched by the redemptive movement of the novel—"His temper, which had been soured and shrivelled by disappointment and chagrin, is now swelled out, and smoothed like a raisin in plum-porridge" (Jery, November 8, 331). But his grotesquerie exists in comic stasis in the novel. While Lismahago’s body is consistent with the theme of the troubled body, this body is a figure used by Smollett in order to draw out the narrative of renovation. By associating Lismahago with death, Tabitha with the demonic, and Frogmore, Bullford, and Bullock with the bestial, Smollett aims only at invoking the body in extremes of imperfection in order to throw it into greater contrast with
the mannerly bodies of George and Lydia, and the value of social stability lived out in an harmonious natural environment that attaches to them.

This significant contrast is nowhere so evident as it is at the end of the novel when the grotesque comedy of Lismahago and Tabitha's appearance as bride and groom draws its energy from the contrast with Lydia and George. The comparison is assisted by the fact that in Matthew's and Jery's letters (October 26 and November 8, respectively) the order of the three weddings always places George and Lydia's first, Lismahago and Tabitha's second, and Humphry and Win's last. The effect of this ordering is to assert George and Lydia's thematic priority and to intensify the sense of contrast provided by Lismahago and Tabitha. This contrast is further elaborated at the expense of Lismahago and Tabitha. Lismahago's conduct at the altar is characteristic: "Lismahago advanced in the military step with his French coat reaching no farther than the middle of his thigh, his campaign wig that surpasses all description, and a languishing leer upon his countenance, in which there seemed to be something arch and ironical" (Jery, November 8, 333). His behaviour the following morning is equally extravagant:

Mrs. Tabitha Lismahago is rather fulsome in signifying her approbation of the captain's love; while his deportment is the very pink of gallantry.--He sighs, and ogles, and languishes at this amiable object; he
kisses her hand, mutters ejaculations of rapture, and
sings tender airs; and, no doubt, laughs internally at
her folly in believing him sincere.--In order to shew
how little his vigour was impaired by the fatigues of
the preceding day, he this morning danced a Highland
saraband over a naked back-sword, and leaped so high,
that I believe he would make no contemptible figure as
a vaulter at Sadler's Wells. . . .

(Jery, November 8, 334)

His exaggerated and spectacular behaviour places Lismahago
in perfect contrast with the "elegant and manly" George
Dennison. The contrast depends on the acknowledgement and
comic exploitation of limits, and not on the destabilizing,
invasive movement of subversion.

The third couple is of course Win Jenkins and Humphry
Clinker. If Tabitha and Lismahago are self-limiting
parodies of the marriage of the whole, classical body, not
entirely participating in its fruits because of their
physical grotesqueries, Win and Humphry are a kind of
sublunary shadow of George and Lydia, who, sexlessly sexed,
insulated from ridicule, and constrained by the decorum
necessary to their place in the narrative, are denied an
active physical presence. Win and Humphry live the life of
the body that fills Bramble's speech and which appears in a
variety of exaggerated circumstances in many of the other
characters. Win and Humphry are not, however, grotesques,
but instead display a comic frankness that is centred upon
the disposition of their bodies. They live lives that are
neither wholly decorous, like the classical bodies of George
and Lydia, nor wholly ridiculous, like the grotesque bodies of Lismahago and Tabitha. Quite unlike most of the rest of the characters in the novel, they live comfortably through the body, their virtues inextricably involved in its life. Win and Humphry function as a mediation, a life not wholly lost in the potentially grotesque mazes of the body, but a life also not consigned to the continuing crisis of inexpressibility which attends the relationship of Lydia and George and which constrains the representation of the classical body.

When the coach carrying the family overturns on the road to London, and Jery hurries up to help the passengers extricate themselves from the wreckage, the first thing he sees is "the nether end of Jenkins" (May 24, 76). "Kicking her heels and squalling with great vociferation" (76), Win is reacting with appropriate hysteria to the accident, but she is also represented in what is very much her mode—a physicality that is at once graceless and exuberant. Although Win appears absurd in this episode, this absurdity is benign in a way that Tabitha’s absurdity is not benign, and Win’s own peculiar simplicity, an uncalculating girlishness, allows her to be ridiculous without being damnable. She is, additionally, graced with enough real conscience to recognize when she has made a fool of herself, as for example, when Dutton takes her to a play "all of a
flutter with faded lutestring, washed gauze, and ribbons
three times refreshed" (Jery, July 18, 202):

O, Mary Jones! Mary Jones! I have had trials and
tremulation. God help me! I have been a vixen and a
griffin these many days—Sattin has had power to temp
me in the shape of van Ditton, the young 'squire's
wally de shamble; but by God's grease he did not
purvail—I thoft as how, there was no arm in going to a
play at Newcastle, with my hair dressed in the Parish
fashion; and as for the trifle of paint, he said as how
my complexion wanted rouch, and so I let him put it on
with a little Spanish owl; but a mischievous mob of
colliers, and such promiscuous ribble rabble, that
could bare no smut but their own, attacked us in the
street, and called me hoar and painted Issabel, and
splashed my close, and spoiled me a complete set of
blond lace triple ruffles, not a pin the worse for
ware. . . . (Win, July 18, 212)

Mary Wagoner has written rather harshly of Win, linking her
closely with Tabitha, suggesting that Smollett has "treated
them with particularly vehement laughter that explodes their
presumption by demolishing their claims to dignity" (112).
But in the case of Win Jenkins, Smollett does not need to
"explode" anything. Her humiliation in Newcastle is a comic
deflation of vanity whose display is absurd to begin with--
Win is neither dangerous like Mrs. Baynard, nor mean-
spirited like Tabitha. She is rather an important means by
which Smollett is able to release the erotic potential of
George and Lydia's continually deferred romance.

Win's immersion in the world of the physical is most
present in her language, a hodgepodge of malapropisms, which
have a way of redoubling and animating the distinctly
physical aspects of the world around her: "Mistress was
taken with the astericks*, she writes in her first letter, "but they soon went off" (April 2, 9)." Her language is useful as well in its unwitting candour for the way in which it extends the range of Smollett's expressiveness, Bullford becoming Ballfart, for example and Jery's man MacAlpine, when Win momentarily considers pursuing him, Machappy (October 14, 323). Such translations as these serve to tell truth in one direction, as a playful and credible authorial annotation; others reveal that aspect of Win's character that is perhaps most important to her position within the narrative's thematic matrix. She writes of her experience in the King's Bath:

I have been twice in the Bath with mistress, and na'r a smoak upon our backs, hussy--The first time I was mortally afraid, and flustered all day; and afterwards made believe that I had got the hedick; but mistress said, if I didn't go, I should take a dose of bumptaffy; . . . [so] I chose rather to go again with her into the Bath, and then I met with an accident. I dropt my petticoat, and could not get it up from the bottom--But what did that signify? they mought laff, but they could see nothing; for I was up to the sin in water. To be sure, it threw me into such a gumbustion, that I know not what I said, nor what I did, nor how they got me out, and rapt me in a blanket. . . . (April 26, 42)

19 W. Arthur Boggs's work on Win's language is extensive and exhaustive. He has for the most part struck a satisfying balance between investigating the relation of Win's language to contemporary usage and pointing out the use to which Smollett puts the words of this comic character. See especially "Some Standard Eighteenth-Century English Usages" and "Dialectal Ingenuity in Humphry Clinker." Arthur Sherbo's "Win Jenkins' Language" provides a useful criticism and augmentation of Boggs' work. Louise Hanes has investigated the correspondence between Tabitha Bramble's pronunciation and contemporary practice.
For Win, Bath is primarily an adventure in modesty, the prospect of appearing in public in a state of undress so excites her as to throw her into a confusion in which—just as the form of her language communicates an otherwise unconsidered truth—she does in fact appear actually, though quite accidentally, naked. In her way, Win displays as much uneasiness about this apparently authorized lapse in decorum as Lydia—Lydia’s characteristic restraint is secure from violation because she is careful to merely sip the waters from a glass (Lydia, April 26, 39). Win on the other hand, as much as she would also like to preserve herself from uneasiness, feigning a "heddick", is exposed in a way that characteristically distinguishes her from Lydia’s modesty and Tabitha’s grotesquerie. And it is clear from her remark about her and Tabitha’s shared understanding of the incident—"she knows as I know what’s what" (April 26, 42)—that modesty’s slips serve their purpose. Win’s sexuality is quite active and of a piece with the essential physicality of her character.

Jery’s observation of Win’s "nether end" in the overturned coach and Martin’s use of her "posteriors as a step to rise in his ascent" (May 24, 76) in the same episode seem to stand in for a kind of rough and tumble sexual play, and point to the way the narrative uses her to actualize the sexual energy that is an important element of Lydia’s
longing for the mysterious Wilson. Jery observes, however cynically, that it was the exhibition of "the pattern of [Clinker’s] naked skin at Marlborough" that is the primary cause of her attraction to Clinker (July 18, 202); Win helpfully adds to Tabitha’s account of the vision of Clinker’s naked behind that "he had a skin as fair as alabaster" (May 24, 78). Win also regards the methodistical enthusiasm that Clinker’s preaching has inspired in her in a tellingly sexual light: "I make no doubt, but [Lydia], and all of us, will be brought, by the endeavours of Mr. Clinker, to produce blessed fruit of generation and repentance" (June 14, 152).20 This sexualization of Win is also evident in the way her body is presented. The suggestion of her nudity is held up for the reader’s entertainment at Bath. A similar spectacle is offered when she leaps for safety from the fire at Harrogate (July 1, 170), and when after the final coach accident she is drawn from the water, looking "like a mermaid with her hair dishevelled about her ears" (Jery [October], 301).21

20 It is consistent with Clinker’s own highly physical characterization that his energy is given distinctly sexual overtones by Win, and by Tabitha as well: writing to Mrs Gwyllim, Tabitha expresses the hope that Clinker will "penetrate and instill his goodness, even into your most inward parts" (Tabitha Sept 18, 264). Donald Bruce points out that in the episode of the fire at Harrigate, Win’s body is eroticized by Clinker’s observation of it (61).

21 See also Rothstein, 126, who comments upon Smollett’s use of Win’s body.
Contrasting her with her mistress, Tabitha, Jery writes of Win: "Nature intended Jenkins for something very different from the character of her mistress; yet custom and habit have effected a resemblance betwixt them in many particulars. Win, to be sure, is much younger and more agreeable in her person; she is likewise tender-hearted and benevolent, qualities for which her mistress is by no means remarkable" (July 18, 201-2). Fielding's characterization of Betty the chambermaid in *Joseph Andrews* reads as follows: "she had Good-nature, Generosity and Compassion" (I.xviii.86). The similarities are revealing in respect to Win's character. Her open sexuality is at once a stigma and an earthly virtue, whose value is in its unaffected and nearly instinctive actualization, its plain physical truth. As with Betty, it is this truth that most fundamentally constitutes Win's character; it is what activates her in the narrative, and what situates her in relation to the other characters. It derives its positive value from its attachment to the character's acknowledged good-nature, and it is by virtue of this aspect of the character that her sexuality acts, so to speak, upward. When she weds Clinker, Win's essential goodness is recognized by a promotion in social status--"as I trust you'll behave respectful, and keep a proper distance, you may always depend upon the good will and protection of/ Yours,/ W. Loyd" (November 20, 337).
As Betty is for Fanny Goodwill in *Joseph Andrews*, Win Jenkins is Lydia's comic, bawdy proxy in the lists of love. Win's thematic status, manifested in the social status of her character, allows her to live the sexualized existence from which Lydia is barred. She appears naked, she observes Humphry Clinker's naked flesh, and she is the object of the sexual desire of both Clinker and Jery.22 Constrained both by her natural discretion, and by the vigilance of Matthew and Jery, Lydia lives a life in which romantic fulfilment, figured generally in strictly idealized terms, is repeatedly deferred. Because Win is a servant, it is entirely fitting that she serves as Lydia and Wilson's go-between on different occasions; this aspect of the young people's intrigue is Win's province. But the obligations of service in this instance are enlivened by Win's predominantly physical nature and by her peculiar capacity for

22 The closest we come to understanding the exact nature of Jery's regard for Win is the suggestiveness of Bramble's remark in the incident of Wilson's intercepted letter early in the novel. Both Lydia and Matthew comment upon Jery's intervention in the affair, but it is Bramble, who will later allude to his "days of hot blood and unrestrained libertinism" (Jery, [October], 306), who hints at the nature of Jery's influence over Win: "but it seems Jery had already acquired so much credit with the maid, (by what means he best knows) that she carried the letter to him, and so the whole plot was discovered" (Bramble, April 17, 14 (my emphasis)). That Jery is sexually active is made clear elsewhere in the novel when he must defend himself against what would appear to be reasonable assumptions of his dalliance with a certain "miss Blackerby" (Jery, April 24, 28), and it is perfectly reasonable to assume that he would have a healthy sexual interest in Win as well.
discernment: "Jews with beards, that were no Jews; but handsome Christians, without a hair upon their sin, strolling with spectacles, to get speech of Miss Liddy" (April 26, 41). It is a finally fitting summary of Win’s distinctive function, when on the morning after the wedding night, Clinker cries "For what we have received, Lord make us thankful: amen" (November 8, 334).²³

Humphry has of course more reasons to be thankful than any other character in the novel. He enters the novel in such a degraded state as to be placed on a level with Chowder: "Am I to be affronted by every mangy hound that you pick up in the highway?" cries Tabitha when Humphry innocently offers to dispatch her dog (Jery, May 24, 82). But at this interval he has already been elevated to the status of Bramble’s servant and will by the novel’s close be recognized as Matthew’s illegitimate son and accordingly find his social status again improved. Humphry’s identity is in its way every bit as problematic as the identity of

²³ This is perhaps one of the "few modest and greedy allusions at the end of the novel" (292) to which Boucé refers when he derogates Smollett’s depiction of conjugal love. In the case of Humphry Clinker, at least, such a judgment fails to account for the entire context of Clinker’s exclamation. As I think I have shown, the manner in which the character of Win Jenkins is presented in the novel, a subsidiary character who lives out the latent sexual longing of the novel’s ideal characters, taken with the clearly represented pious simplicity of Clinker’s character, makes Clinker’s words in this scene entirely apt. It is a consummation that has been preparing since the first third of the novel.
George Dennison, but whereas George is oriented toward the conventions of romance and the subsumption of manners within the prerequisites of social rank, fulfilling his dramatic destiny with appropriate restraint, Humphry is active in a carefully particularized world, a world into which his physical nature, his objectness, is satisfactorily blended, and a world in which the profoundly physical aspects of his identity strangely constitute the source of his goodness.

The juxtaposition of the materiality of Humphry's identity with its moral orientation is dramatized in the scene at London during his work as an enthusiastic preacher. Earlier, we have had occasion to examine how Humphry's simplicity elevates his spiritual impulses above the problematic forms of Methodism which Matthew calls "the reveries of a disturbed imagination" (Jery, June 10, 135). The world in which Clinker's unarguably good intentions are exercised (he silences Matthew when he points out that salvation will not be determined by social rank) is as crowded and colourful as the gatherings at Bath, but it is a world confirmed in its worth by essences and not by appearances, and by the unmistakable connection of place with person. Jery reports that Humphry is first discovered preaching among "a crowd of laqueys and chairmen" (June 2, 97), and later:

Humphry was, at that very instant, haranguing the felons in the chapel; and that the gaoler's wife and
daughter, together with my aunt's woman, Win Jenkins, and our house-maid, were among the audience, which we immediately joined. I never saw any thing so strongly picturesque as this congregation of felons clanking their chains, in the midst of which stood orator Clinker, expatiating, in a transport of fervor, on the torments of hell, denounced in scripture against evil-doers, comprehending murderers, robbers, thieves, and whoremongers. 

(Jery, June 11, 147)

This is not a grotesque world like Bath where the prevalence of affectation and the distortion of manners is subjected to the deforming figures of satire, but a world plainly physical, a world manifestly unaffected, but imprisoned in the brutality of its physical identity. It is a world like the world of Bramble's body, redeemable because it strives for goodness and clarity (it is, notably, a world with which Martin is associated by virtue of his criminal career).

"He seemed to be about twenty years of age, of a middling size, with bandy legs, stooping shoulders, high forehead, sandy locks, pinking eyes, flat nose, and a long chin" (Jery, May 19, 78): Humphry's "bandy legs" and "stooping shoulders" draw him toward the caricatural appearance of a character like Lismahago, but the portrait does not contain the kinds of exaggeration that are part of Lismahago's description ("his face was, at least, half a yard in length"). Rather than grotesque, Clinker's body is notable for its distinctly "intrusive" presence: Tabitha maligns him for his nakedness, "She said, he was such a beggarly rascal, that he had ne'er a shirt to his back; and
had the impudence to shock her sight by shewing his bare posteriors, for which act of indelicacy he deserved to be set in the stocks" (Jery, May 24, 78). By connecting his nakedness with beggarliness and criminality, Tabitha establishes a connection between the physical and the socially depraved that will be reinforced by Humphry's proselytizing among London's lower orders—in other words, in her mean-spiritedness, Tabitha articulates associations that Smollett's narrative confirms. Humphry exists at a place where the impoverished, the criminal, and the physical share a common essence. It is Win who redeems the physical by musing on the apparently inevitable complication of the spirit and the flesh: Humphry is "a good sole as ever broke bread; which shews that a scalded cat may prove a good mouser, and a hound be staunch, thof he has got narro hare on his buttocks; but the proudest nose may be bro't to the grine-stone, by sickness and misfortunes" (Win, June 3, 105). While typical of Win's manner of expressing herself, this passage nevertheless confirms the peculiar accretion of physicality and materiality that characterizes Humphry.

24 Equally mixing physicality and goodness, Win appears to have an instinctive recognition of Humphry's true status. She also notices the fairness of his skin, a conventional sign of noble rank (see Baker, 653).
Like the grotesque Lismahago, Humphry with his pronounced physicality is repeatedly involved in farce. Jery notices his "natural awkwardness" (May 24, 82) from his first appearance in the novel, and at different times Humphry's movement through the world is confined to a series of blunders. When he waits at table he spills custard on Tabitha, steps on Chowder, and drops a dish (Jery, May 24, 82). Late in the novel, when he discovers that Matthew is his father, he distractedly throws a coal scuttle on Lismahago's toes (Jery, [October], 304). And of course the most memorable episode of Clinker's awkwardness comes when out of his good intentions, he drags Bramble naked onto the shore at Scarborough and is knocked down for his trouble (Bramble, July 4, 179). This last instance again demonstrates the complex manner in which Clinker's essential goodness is bound up within what can only be called the confusion of his physical existence. This immixture is demonstrated to better effect on the occasion of the terrible accident in which Matthew is nearly drowned. There Clinker's good impulses become involved in the ludicrous as they are dramatized through a particular figure, "the faithful Clinker, taking him [Matthew] up in his arms, as if he had been an infant of six months, carried him ashore, howling most piteously all the way" (Jery, [October], 301). This is a characteristic exaggeration of Humphry's response
through physical action, an exhibition of unusual strength and a purely emotional vocalization. The singularity of Humphry's actions is reinforced when we compare it with the actions in the crash of Jery who depicts himself in a generalized "transport of grief and consternation" and Lismahago whose rescue of Tabitha is pure physical farce (Jery, [October], 300-301). Clinker revives his benefactor with a "horse-fleam...in the farrier style" (Jery, [October], 301), a further augmentation of Humphry's intricately physical existence, this time consistent with Humphry's connection with Chowder, and with Win's allusion to cats, mice, and dogs in her speculations on Clinker's nature.

But while Humphry's physical nature is given a comic turn, Smollett also uses it as the source of a different strand of evocation. Late in the novel, Bramble writes that Humphry "is stout and lusty, very sober and conscientious" (Bramble, October 26, 329). But the emphasis is on Clinker's strength and energy and is free from potentially comic associations. During the period of Dutton's employment with the family, Humphry's behaviour is sharply contrasted with Dutton's. In Jery's telling, the episode develops in a way which ultimately clarifies Clinker's

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25 John Richetti makes the point that Clinker's relationship with Bramble is an idealization of obedience and servitude (96).
place, through the quality of his physical activity, in the antithetical structure which arranges the novel’s principal values. Jery’s ironic suggestion that Win’s appreciation of Humphry’s merit is rooted in his exhibition of "the pattern of his naked skin at Marlborough" comes close to making an explicit connection between Humphry’s fundamental honesty and good-nature.²⁶ It is Dutton’s "outlandish qualifications" which distract and ultimately draw Win into public embarrassment. The course of Clinker’s retribution is rooted in the physical directness of his character. Where Dutton proposes the use of swords to settle their dispute, Clinker disdains their use as affected, "it doth not become servants to use those weapons, or to claim the privilege of gentlemen to kill one another when they fall out" (Jery, July 18, 203). Instead, Clinker determines that "if your honour won’t be angry, I’ll engage to gee en a good drubbing".²⁷ Clinker makes short work of his opponent, and urged by Lismahago to run his victim through, again distinguishes between less and more direct methods of

²⁶ The role of nudity in the novel has been carefully analyzed by both Goldberg (171-75) and Dunn.

²⁷ The series of guttural sounds catching in the throat mimes the directness of Humphry’s mode of physical combat. Here Clinker’s language takes on an essential expressiveness that is in sharp contrast to his simple, articulate eloquence elsewhere (compare only a few lines later, "I am so far from being afraid of his cold iron, that I shall use nothing in my defence but a good cudgel, which shall always be at his service").
combat, here preferring the plain cudgel to the sword (203). This incident constitutes the last important dramatic episode before the family enters Scotland, where the party will travel almost to the most northern extent of the island, and where Matthew will rhapsodize about sublimity in a wild, natural environment. The opposition of Dutton and Clinker reaffirms the terms of antithesis that provide the novels' thematic structure, with Dutton clearly part of the disorganized jumble of the mob, one of the "insufferably arrogant and troublesome" plebeians Matthew execrates at Bath, and Clinker oriented toward values of simplicity and hardiness that find their apotheosis in Matthew's vision of the "most stupendous appearance of savage nature, with hardly any signs of cultivation, or even of population" (Matthew, September 6, 244). This ideal moves through Clinker at the level of his physical identity, where an ideal simplicity is incarnated in a plain affinity with the unameliorated, brute welter of objects which crowd lived experience--the poor, the animal, the mechanical, and the bluff, effective strength of moral rectitude. It is quite to the point that Jery's comparison of Dutton and Clinker takes place in entirely impersonal terms, terms which catch on the evocative qualities of inanimate objects: "Humphry may be compared to an English pudding, composed of good wholesome flour and suet, and Dutton to a syllabub or iced
froth, which, though agreeable to the taste, has nothing solid or substantial" (202). The adjectives contain the important meanings, "solid", "substantial" "wholesome", and "good"--"good" being the adjective Clinker uses to describe both the beating he will inflict on Dutton and the cudgel he prefers to Lismahago's sword. Moreover, Jery's gastronomic metaphor preserves exactly the same sense of corruption as Matthew's use of diet as a measure of corruption earlier in the novel. There, in one of his main jeremiads against the lapse of distinction and subordination in the capital, Matthew points to a period twenty-five years in the past when the tables of London's first citizens "produced nothing but plain boiled and roasted, with a bottle of port and a tankard of beer" and compares it to the present age when "every trader in any degree of credit" and others of his kind "make sumptuous entertainments, and treat with the richest wines of Bordeaux, Burgundy, and Champagne" (Bramble, May 20, 87).

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The characters of Humphry Clinker and Winifred Jenkins live in the body with a completeness, and a simple, unabashed involuntariness that is quite unlike any other character in the novel. It is possible to situate them in the very centre of the novel's scale of significance, a scale which ranges from Lydia and George with their
finished, and wholly decorous physical presence at one end, to the thorough grotesquerie of Tabitha and Lismahago at the other end. Unlike Bramble or Jery, Humphry and Win cannot clearly conceptualize the good they both do and aspire to do. Instead, that desire for good moves through and animates their ever present bodies. They literally embody the virtues of simplicity and good nature, but do so by straddling the divide between the disreputably grotesque body on the one hand and the ideally classical body on the other. However, as with the mark of the body in Joseph Andrews, the life of Humphry and Win in the body keeps them from both the perfection of Lydia and George and the sophistication of Matthew and Jery--the extravagance of the body is the appropriate milieu of characters associated with the servant class. They are by virtue of their class extended a kind of comic warrant which allows Smollett to animate goodness within a not wholly decorous physical presence; they are by virtue of their class permitted to explore the juxtaposition of the frankly appearing body with the simple moral life. They bear the upward sweep of the novel's idealizing thrust with an irony rooted in the habitual lapses of bodily existence, legitimizing and tempering its aspirations to the ideal life with a wholly human truth.
In examining the ways in which the grotesque body is contextualized by the ideal, this chapter has ranged very widely over the novel. Smollett's manner of dramatically representing his experience of his society involves an intricate layering of interconnected criticisms and correctives. The body bears a traffic of values extending from the pestilential atmosphere in Bath to the pure water and sublimity of the Scottish Highlands. The trope of retirement gathers both the absurd disguises of affectation and the indefinable erotic charm of an innocent young couple within its compass. The grotesque in *Humphry Clinker* is contextualized by ideals of intellectual and moral perfection which find their highest incarnation in the persons of Lydia Melford and George Dennison. It may indeed be the case that the drama of this couple's relationship has about it an unsatisfying conventionality, but it is the drama of their relationship, a drama comprised on the one hand of Lydia's desire for George and on the other of George's attempts to establish his identity, that provides one of the principal strands of narrative interest in the novel, stretching as it does virtually from the beginning to the end of the narrative.

In the first part of this chapter I examined at some length the character of George Dennison in the context of the class consciousness of the novel, a class consciousness
manifested in Matthew’s and Jery’s numerous satiric observations of society in Bath and London. Through the character of these observations a coherent view of the correct ordering of society can be established, and it is a view contained both in Matthew’s remarks about the failure of subordination in London ("there is no distinction or subordination left--The different departments of life are all jumbled together." (Matthew, June 29, 87)) and in Jery’s encomium on the character of George Dennison ("instead of debasing her sentiments and views to a wretched stroller, [Lydia] had really captivated the heart of a gentleman, her equal in rank and superior in fortune." (Jery, October 14, 317)). George occupies the highest place in a descending scale of value whose degrees are marked by the coincidence of manners and morals. Other characters assume markedly emblematic aspects in relation to the way they dramatize different qualities of manners and morals. In the cases of Edward Martin and Barton, explicit and implicit comparisons are established between aspects of their characters and aspects of George’s. Dutton and Mackilligut appear as a near caricature and caricature of the man corrupted and deformed by the assumption of inappropriate modes of behaviour. George’s stature is the measure of the worth of these different characters, and it is notable that the mystery of his identity is continually dramatized as a
question of rank. In the case of George Dennison, the classical body is representative of a principle of a social order in which the principle of subordination and the prerogatives of rank are duly recognized. And again, in this context, Stallybrass and White's observation is germane: "in the classical discursive body were encoded those regulated systems which were closed, homogeneous, monumental, centred and symmetrical" (22).

In the second half of this chapter, I examined the character of Lydia Melford. The discussion of George Dennison demonstrated how questions of rank, of a commendable social order, are articulated largely through a distinction between physical appearances and moral qualities, the grotesque being the sign of the unmannerly, the affectations, and the morally imperfect. The discussion of Lydia has examined how Smollett elaborates the connection between physical qualities and other values. Lydia's simple but consistent attachment to the ideal of retirement in a perfect natural environment strongly connects her to a similar, if more sophisticated attachment also consistently articulated by her uncle. Her association with the convention of retirement, as I have suggested, embodies and eroticizes the desire for that retirement shared by Bramble. This triangular association then, connecting Lydia, Bramble, and a natural world both of them refer to as "romantic"
(Lydia, April 21, 27; Matthew, August 28, 241), concretizes the terms of a physical and moral perfection rooted in good health, good manners, and an uncorrupted natural environment. Here, the classical body is less significant as the locus of abstract principles concerned with the correct disposition of social life than as the inspiriting source of a more immediate, more thoroughly physical, and most significantly, more lyrical conception of human experience. Especially as such virtues as simplicity and honesty are mediated through the bodies of Humphry Clinker and Win Jenkins, this connection of the classical body with the delights of sensuous experience constitutes one of the distinctions of Smollett's novel.

Smollett's conception of experience admits of subtleties uncomprehended by the masculine perfection of George Dennison, on the one hand, and the intense grotesqueries of the physically and morally deformed Tabitha. Through the characters of Win Jenkins and Humphry Clinker, Smollett mediates between the imperfections of physical existence and the prerogatives of the moral life. In the frank, comic, physical existence of these two characters, Smollett constructs a kind of benign grotesque. This grotesque is not the efficient instrument of an excoriating satire, but rather the best means of juxtaposing the divergent values of body and spirit. It is certainly a
grotesque limited by the appearance of the perfect physical and moral existence of Lydia and George (a comparison made clear by the ordering of the wedding sequence), but it is a grotesque life nevertheless validated by the sincerity and unassuming depth of Win and Humphry's virtuous striving.
Chapter Six

Grotesquing the Ideal in *Tristram Shandy*

The life of the grotesque body is as prominent in *Tristram Shandy* as it is in *Joseph Andrews* and *Humphry Clinker*. Like these novels, *Tristram Shandy* deploys the grotesque body as an object of ridicule, twisting it through farce and caricature in order to direct judgment and provoke laughter. Dr. Slop—"with a breadth of back, and a sesquipedality of belly, which might have done honour to a Serjeant in the Horse-Guards" (II.ix; I:121)—is the most obvious example of this use of the grotesque, and the satiric thrust of his portrait has long been recognized.¹ So far, I have been arguing that the appearance of the grotesque body in the comic novel bears relation to its appearance in courtesy literature where it is invoked in order to define the limits of manners and morals. The representation of the grotesque body is thus generally contextualized by some sense of an idealized body, which is notable chiefly for the slightness of its dramatic existence. The ideal body tends to disappear out of representation while the vicissitudes of the grotesque body constitute the text's primary interest. The antithesis between the ideal and the grotesque bodies has social force as it tends to form a focus of thematic interest, preserving

¹ See Cash for a discussion of the relation of Dr Slop to Dr. John Burton (I.180).
and communicating patterns of value and the connection of
value with prerequisites of behaviour or manners. As we
have seen in the case of Smollett, this formula is subject
to a thematic elaboration in which the ideal, or the
classical body activates associations with a variety of
positive values.

Smollett's use of the grotesque in Humphry Clinker is
also significant for the complexity with which he involves
opposite terms in the mediation of their own extreme forms.
The characters of Humphry Clinker and Matthew Bramble are
markedly more intricate than the character of Abraham Adams
in the ways in which they unite aspects of the grotesque and
the ideal. In particular, Matthew Bramble incarnates the
chief dialectical movement in the novel--the movement of the
spirit through the imperfect and resistant body. This kind
of dialectic constitutes an intelligent elaboration of the
straightforward separation of high and low represented by
the disposition of the body in a social space that is the
particular province of the literature of courtesy. Tristram
Shandy is another comic novel that transcends the simple
argument made by courtesy literature, while nevertheless
devoting a great deal of attention to the grotesquerie of
the body. "Our minds shine not through the body, but are
wraupt up here in a dark covering of uncrystalized flesh and
blood" (I.xxiii; I:83): Tristram's lament proceeds from an
anxious evaluation of the limits of human experience that are uncomprehended by the fastidious preservation of order prescribed by the literature of courtesy.

Indeed, in Tristram's narrative the grotesque body has become detached from any reference to its ideal appearance. Such descriptions as that of Trim as he composes himself to read the sermon that has dropped from Toby's Stevinus (II.xvii; I:140-2), of Walter's exasperated fall onto his bed, of Toby and Walter's protracted descent upon the staircase, and of the embarrassing collision between Walter and Mrs. Shandy as they observe Toby and Trim's advance upon the widow Wadman's house all share a peculiar grotesquerie rooted in a fastidious accumulation of detail. The accumulation of curious and distinct objects that attends in one instance Toby's indulgence of his miniature campaigns, and in another Dr. Slop's obstetric practice is an extension of the mania of detail into the world of inanimate objects. Moreover, this proliferation of objects is frequently given a distinctly sexual bias—"ordinary domestic objects . . . start to look like articles in a sex-shop catalogue" (Berthoud, 24). It is an interesting accumulation of emphases, leading both away from and deeply into the life of the body. And these qualities of emphasis are far removed from the decorously finished physical life prescribed by the literature of courtesy and idealized by both Fielding and
Smollett. The carefully composed view of an altogether exemplary young man and woman is replaced by the scattered observations of a manifestly undisciplined and singularly libidinous narrator. Over the course of this chapter, I will examine the material universe that Sterne has created in his novel. I will begin by examining Sterne’s representation of bodies through the lens of Tristram’s remarks about Della Casa and his Galateo (V.xvi). The body in Sterne’s novel materializes and focuses the irremediable frustrations which characterize human existence. But I will go on to argue that it is in the capacity for sexual desire that the human subject attempts to overreach these frustrations. By introducing the oddly graphical implications of sexual desire into the drama of his novel, Sterne is ultimately more successful than Smollett in mediating between the grotesque purgatory of the physical and the almost un-representable ideal of a perfected physical existence. In Tristram Shandy, the ideal is explicitly sexualized and developed almost entirely in terms of the grotesque of the body.

Juliet McMaster has pointed out that the "consciousness of physicality is omnipresent in the novel" (214). Her point is partially concerned with the quality of Tristram’s intellect: the physicality of the novel "figures forth in Tristram the narrator a mind that is constantly occupied
with itself as incarnation" (214). This is an evocative observation in light of the preoccupation with physicality so characteristic of the literature of courtesy. Robert Erickson has spoken generally about *Tristram Shandy* as "a courtesy book in which a new kind of courtier is fashioned in Uncle Toby" (198). There is some truth in this, particularly if one assumes that Sterne is seriously involved in elaborating the values of the sentimental existence.\(^2\) However, considering the main thrust of conventional courtesy literature, considering the close connection between social status and physical discipline, Sterne’s treatment of the body stands quite apart from the more common use of the body as a kind of tablet upon which the indicia of rank are deeply inscribed. McMaster says as much when she writes that "Sterne, unlike Fielding, is not interested in the exposure of affectation" (200). Her remark is of a piece with Henri Fluchère’s earlier observation that *Tristram Shandy* stands quite in opposition to the eighteenth-century practice of depicting manners in relation to a moralizing convention (17). Nevertheless it is particularly in scenes such as Walter’s long hiatus upon the bed and his collision with his wife that some sense of

\(^2\) See for example, Traugott (62-75) and Moglen (98-105). New argues quite the other way by identifying sentimentalism as one of the novel’s satiric targets (31-49).
the preoccupations of courtesy literature is evoked. These motions of Walter's body clearly exist outside the sphere of prescription that orients the movements of characters as diverse as Joseph Andrews and Tabitha Bramble, yet these motions are, as critics have pointed out, in themselves extraordinary, and are depicted in such a way as to draw attention to their peculiarity. Certainly, Sterne has no interest in manners in a conventional sense--at no place in the novel is any kind of didactic regularization of behaviour articulated--but the body does nevertheless proceed in its course in an atmosphere of intense surveillance; its motions, however homely and insignificant, are all the same isolated, revealed, and enlarged. The careful description of Walter's fingers--"so stood my father, holding fast his fore-finger betwixt his finger and his thumb" (IV.vii; I:333)--besides being in itself precise and visual, is further enriched by the invocation of first Raphael and then Garrick. And the descriptions of Trim before the sermon and of Mr. and Mrs. Shandy's collision are also manifestations of the most intense and particular kind of scrutiny. It is in this context not altogether surprising that Della Casa's Galateo should make an appearance in the novel.

The allusion is certainly tangential--Tristram compares the length of Della Casa's labours over his brief work with
those of Walter over his *Tristra-pædia* (V.xvi; I:446-8)—but is of interest because of the manner in which Tristram speaks of Della Casa’s book. He wonders at the imbalance between the time Della Casa spent on his book and its size: "his Grace of Benevento spent near forty years of his life [writing the Galateo]; and when the thing came out, it was not of above half the size or the thickness of a Rider’s Almanack" (V.xvi; I:446). Tristram’s point is that the book did not in the end merit the attention Della Casa gave it. Sterne claims to reverence Della Casa’s memory, but adds, "notwithstanding his Galatea" (my emphasis, 446). On this reading, Della Casa suffers under the same kind of weakness as Walter, a confusion in proportioning means to ends. There appears to be in all this a summary criticism of the importance of the substance of Della Casa’s work, the prescription of manners. The possibility that Tristram’s mind is on the content of the Galateo is strengthened by what follows. It is apparently Della Casa’s opinion "that

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3 In the Florida Edition, in his note on this passage, Melvyn New opines that "in all likelihood, Sterne never read the Galateo" (III.365.n446.7-11). However, the accounts both of Mason and Aresty of the Galateo’s influence, particularly in eighteenth-century England (see above, Chapter 3, n14), suggest that it is just as likely Sterne did read Della Casa’s treatise. Clearly, my reading of this episode assumes Sterne had a passing familiarity with the book.

4 Whether Sterne is confusing the Galateo with "other works" which draw attention to Della Casa’s sexual predilections (Rothstein, 92; New "Sterne, Warburton" 264)
whenever a Christian was writing a book (not for his private
amusement, but) where his intent and purpose was bona fide,
to print and publish it to the world, his first thoughts
were always the temptations of the evil one" (447). The
more venerable the writer, the greater the distractions:

all the devils in hell broke out of their holes to
cajo him.--'Twas Term-time with them,--every thought, 
first and last, was captious;--how specious and good
soever,--'twas all one;--in whatever form or colour it 
presented itself to the imagination,--'twas still a
stroke of one or other of 'em levelled at him, and was
to be fenced off. . . . (V.xvi; I:447)

In the case of Della Casa, the thoughts he is concerned to
purify are those related to the disposition of the body in
society. The purpose of his book, it will be recalled, is
to give an account of:

what things a Man ought to observe, and how he ought to
demean himself, for gaining the Reputation of a Person
well-bred, and for rendering himself acceptable to
those he converses with: The doing of which is either a
real Vertue, or, at least, so like to Vertue, that it
may be justly reckoned as near of kin to it.5 (2)

And it is the formulation of these prescriptions that must
contend against the mischievous perversions of evil. The

is open to doubt. That he is when he calls the Galateo a
"nasty Romance" in Book IX (xiv; II:765-6) seems clear, but
that confusion does not seem to be as relevant in this
current passage. New’s reading of the passage (263-6), for
example, does not turn on the issue of Sterne’s knowledge
of Della Casa’s work. It may well be that Sterne is both
invoking the sense of the Galateo for one purpose in this
episode and exploiting Della Casa’s association with sodomy
for another.

5 The formulation of this fortuitous resemblance
introduces just the kind of imprecision Tristram revels in.
Galateo may thus be regarded as the result of a long contest, and the veneer of correct manners barely contains the forces of chaos and indiscipline. Sterne's treatment of Della Casa, then, has two important components. It would seem to be the case, on the one hand, that Sterne is aiming a stroke or two at the slightness of Della Casa's labours--the Galateo may well be, in Sterne's opinion, a perfect instance of "silly and trifling Events" being allotted "the Circumstantial Pomp of great Ones" (Letters, 33a, 77), as he says of the method of his own book. If Sterne aims to burlesque human affairs by such an ironic reversal, then Della Casa descends to self-parody in gravely promoting just such a confusion. Della Casa's Christian struggle is absurd because it is unsuited to the end toward which it is directed, a slim book of manners. And on the other hand, in giving an account of the prevalence of "captious" thoughts in the mental labour of writing, in opposing the idea of "composition" with one of "warfare", Sterne is giving an account of his own practice. If Tristram Shandy might be considered a courtesy book, as Erickson suggests, then it is a courtesy book overwhelmed by the signs of "first thoughts"--it does not prescribe the body's discipline, it instead records the disposition of the body in a state of innate, insuperable indiscipline. Trim's posture is magnified into ridiculousness, and Mr. and Mrs. Shandy move
with what little ease their lack of understanding of one
another allows them.

The Galateo, like Walter's *Tristra--padia*, aims to
solidify and to objectify through self-conscious selection
what is in reality a dynamic struggle with and in a
continuum of phenomena. Human experience is transformed
into a series of mechanical motions that apparently simplify
and regularize the complexities of sensitive experience.
Tristram's narrative is rife with this kind of activity.
During his recovery from the injury incurred at Namur, Toby
struggles to recover his experience and to present it
intelligibly:

the many perplexities he was in [about trying to
clearly explain what happened at Namur], arose out of
the most insurmountable difficulties he found in
telling his story intelligibly, and giving such clear
ideas of the differences and distinctions between the
scarp and countercarp. . . . (II.i; I:94)

Toby, as Tristram tells us, "was pretty confident he could
stick a pin upon the identical spot of ground where he was
standing in when the stone struck him" (II.i; I:96). This
assurance is typical of the sort of artificer that reappears
in different shapes throughout Sterne's novel. Walter's
enthusiasm for the *Tristra-padía* precisely mirrors the
enthusiasm Toby has for his recreation of Namur--"my father
gave himself up to it with as much devotion as ever my uncle
Toby had done to his doctrine of projectiles" (V.xvi; I:445).
And what Tristram has to say of Toby's project--"Endless is
the Search of Truth" (II.iii; I:103)--can be said with equal justification of Walter's as well. The result is the complete replacement of the represented phenomenon by the representation. Particularly in the case of the Tristram-pædia what happens is the wholesale replacement of an individual life with an object--a person becomes a thing: he was three years and something more, indefatigably at work, and at last, had scarce compleated, by his own reckoning, one half of his undertaking: the misfortune was, that I was all that time totally neglected and abandoned to my mother. . . . (V.xvi; I:448)

The futility of Walter's pursuit is articulated by Tristram when he writes that had his accident with the casement window not occurred, the pace of his development would have soon outstripped his father's ability to contain it in writing: "I verily believe, I had put by my father, and left him drawing a sun-dial, for no better purpose than to be

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6 Lanham observes that "both brothers live a pastoral life in a green world. Neither acknowledges the existence of a 'reality' outside the range of his possible pleasures" (80). On this view, the novel can be seen as an ironic criticism of the beatus ille convention. Lanham's is a penetrating observation. The resistance to New's reading of the novel as a satire may be partly based in the clear absence of an overarching satirical perspective in Sterne's narrative--a perspective that is clearly and continuously elaborated in the novels of Fielding and Smollett. Toby and Walter enjoy the kind of retirement Lismahago and Bramble are about to enter upon at the end of Humphry Clinker. However, for the Shandys such retirement amounts to, as Lanham points out, a self-involvement that has little reference to its surroundings. The bowling green's locality, for example, is completely reconfigured and is made to be somewhere else in miniature. Oddly, it endures equally with Namur the solipsistic rigour of Toby's mind.
buried under ground" (V.xvi; I:449). But Walter readily turns to yet another means of transforming lived experience into a discrete object. Walter of course can only conceive of experience in material terms: "there is a North west passage to the intellectual world" (V.xlii; I:484). And it is in pursuit of this topographically defined short cut that he lights upon the utility of auxiliary verbs:

Now the use of the Auxiliaries is at once to set the soul a going by herself upon the materials as they are brought her; and by the versability of this great engine, round which they are twisted, to open new tracks of enquiry, and make every idea engender millions. (V.xlii; I:485)

Toby and Walter (and Tristram as well, his efforts to make his book keep pace with his experience set the pattern for the preoccupations of his elders) are equally engaged in the indefatigable labour of supplementation, a labour whose chief purpose is to replace what is complex and subjective with what is limited and objective: the European wars become a manageable arrangement of miniatures, Tristram's experience is made into a book.

What is occurring is a species of embodiment, of incarnation. It is not a positive incarnation, but a purgatorial one--the subject is lost to the name given it, and disappears behind a continuum of conventional signification. This is nowhere more evident than in Walter's obsession with the correct naming of his son. The name has the power to activate potentialities, and Walter
has great faith in "that magic bias which good or bad names irresistibly impress upon our characters and conducts" (IV.viii; I:334). Like the maps and miniature fortifications which Toby uses to replace Namur, the name is for Walter a material object that may acquire its own particular destiny; he asks Susannah, "Canst thou carry Trismegistus in thy head, the length of the gallery without scattering" (IV.xiv; I:344). It is by virtue of the name, in Walter's view, that the progress of disasters besetting Tristram on his birth day might have been reversed--"there was one cast of the dye left for our child after all" (IV.xix; I:356). The correct name indeed would have elided Tristram's essentially physical flaws: "Cripple, Dwarf, Driviller, Goosecap," cries Walter, "(shape him as you will) the door of Fortune stands open" (IV.xix; I:355). But even here Walter shows a characteristic predisposition for suppressing the complexity of the subject beneath a conventionally descriptive term. In Walter's mind at least the human subject is secondary to a well ordered lexicon--for all his premeditation on the subject, Walter is a singularly obtuse kind of Adam, deforming as he names. For by his name Tristram is consigned to the purgatory of Walter's powers of association: "Unhappy Tristram! child of wrath! child of decrepitude! interruption! mistake! and discontent" (IV.xix; I:354). Walter's outburst couples a
knotting of the physical (decrepitude and interruption) with intense anguish (wrath and discontent) and points to the reality of Tristram's "conscious" existence as represented by Sterne. The anguish arises from an impatience with a constraint: "our minds shine not through the body, but are wrapt up here in a dark covering of uncrystalized flesh and blood". This is not a world regulated by the dictates of courtesy; this is not a world where the mind does indeed shine through the body, seeking validation in the body's disciplined conformity to a beneficent social sphere. Instead, it is a world of frustration in which the mind struggles for validity within a crowded and seemingly malevolent material environment.

Tristram is a grotesque character who, instead of being seen, like Lismahago, or Slipslop, is seen through--his consciousness interrupts the contemplation of his deformed exterior. By virtue of its eccentricity, Tristram's voice replaces his appearance as an object of contemplation. Tristram is "willing that all mankind should write as well as [him] . . . Which they certainly will, when they think as little" (IX.xii; II:762). If not wholly foolish, this is a voice given over to perpetual fooling. John Stedmond writes that Tristram "deliberately plays the role of the scatter-brain" (67) and quite justly refers to Tristram as a "clown" (69). Tristram unrolls his narrative in a continual
atmosphere of playfulness, repeatedly and often noisily retreating from the kind of judgments which fill the speech of Fielding's narrator and Smollett's principal letter writers. Where Fielding's narrator may time and again provide meaningful point to his method with such lines as these--"as in most of our characters we mean not to lash individuals, but all of the like sort, so, in our general descriptions, we mean not universals, but would be understood with many exceptions" (I.i.160)--Sterne explodes the pretensions of reasoned discourse altogether--"wit and judgment in this world never go together; inasmuch as they are two operations differing from each other as wide as east is from west.--So, says Locke,--so are farting and hickuping, say I" (III. Preface; I:227).

Melvyn New, arguing a case for the predominantly satiric thrust of the novel (see below, n8), refers to "the disorganized, uncontrolled, and undisciplined mind which writes Tristram Shandy" (Laurence Sterne 85), seeing Tristram's "exuberance" as a manifestly satiric demonstration of the mind's insufficiency. Helene Moglen, on the other hand, sees in the play of Tristram's language an invitation to the reader to participate in Tristram's progress of self-definition (29). On this reading, Tristram's language exists as a medium through which the reader's understanding moves to engage other aspects of his
character. But I think the character of Tristram's voice lies in its very objectness. By this I do not mean in a significant sense the text as a graphic form, but rather the thing-centredness of Tristram's mind. It is quite typical of Tristram's method of proceeding that a consideration of wit and judgment is replaced by the sensuous particulars of hiccoughing and farting. The strongest mark of the preoccupied materiality of Tristram's voice is its profound fidelity to Tristram's immediate experience in a world of objects and events. That world is repeatedly invoked, and its presence fills Tristram's narrative: "this very day, in which I am writing this book for the edification of the world,---which is March 9, 1759" (I.xviii; I:51). Not much later, Tristram speaks of "this very rainy day, March 26, 1759" (I.xxxi; I:71). The creation of the act of writing is deferred by an account of the material life of the writer: "I am this moment also entering Lyons with my post-chaise broke into a thousand pieces" (VII.xxxviii; II:622). And at another time, Tristram laments having thrown "not half an hour ago . . . a fair sheet, which I had just finished, and carefully wrote out, slap into the fire, instead of the foul one" (IV.xvii; I:350).

Not only is the lived world of the writing subject rendered the more complex by his material surroundings, the act of writing itself, by reason of the peculiar thrust of
Tristram's discursive ambitions, becomes lost in the material exigencies of its own process. Like his father's *Tristra-pædia*, Tristram's narrative threatens to collapse into the physical labour required to keep it moving forward. He points out in his fourth volume that:

*I am this month one whole year older than I was this time twelve-month; and having got, as you perceive, almost into the middle of my fourth volume--and no farther than to my first day's life--'tis demonstrative that I have three hundred and sixty-four days life to write just now, than when I first set out (V.iii; I:341)*

Tristram resolves to persist in his work and at the end of the chapter wishes that "the manufactures of paper" shall prosper. However, while at first a jest involving only a wish for the continued patience of his reader and a plentiful supply of paper, this problem of a potentially endless narrative impinges on the person of Tristram himself. The narrative will consume not merely paper, but Tristram's own physical existence: "I think, I said, I would write two volumes every year, provided the vile cough which then tormented me, and which to this hour I dread worse than the devil, would but give me leave" (VII.i; II:575). This shift of attention is important as it extends the immediate material context of the narrative to the fate of the narrator's physical being. The lightly wound thread of characters and incidents which constitutes Tristram's narrative becomes set against the few extraordinary views of
a subject complexly involved in a generally invasive and disruptive material continuum.

Tristram's mind "skirts the borders of death" (127), writes William Holtz, and the prevalence of death in the novel has been noted by more than one commentator. A.R. Towers has called Sterne's book "an appalling catalogue of human woe" (13), while Ben Reid, writing of Sterne's "sad hilarity" has pointed out that the "recessive tragic" constitutes an important emotional strand in the novel (118). Melvyn New points to "the persuasive presence of death throughout the work" (76), and indeed bases his evaluation of the strength of the novel's satiric thrust upon the pervasiveness of Sterne's morbidity. "The Shandy world," writes New, "offers to the reader a collage of accidents, injuries, and illnesses which, like the more stark reality of death, provides an image of man which renders his theories and his hobby-horses, his ambitions and pursuits at once ludicrous and culpable" (123). While New has, I think, successfully captured the importance of the novel's treatment of death and disease to an overall evaluation of its fundamental thrust, he has perhaps too hastily obliterated the significance of the presence of the material minutiae of the "hobby-horses and pursuits" that clutter the novel. The matter of death itself, and its presence as an immediate material determinant of the
narrator's affairs, coexist with other apparently less
profound but equally influential objects. "Sport of small
accidents," Tristram calls himself (III.viii; I:196),
typically and facetiously eliding a more troubled perception
of his relation to his environment.

The precedence Sterne gives to the welter of the
material is ironic, to be sure. Sterne has characterized
the humour of the novel, as I mentioned earlier, as
"Cervantic", "describing silly and trifling Events, with the
Circumstantial Pomp of great Ones". What Sterne means is
made manifest by such episodes as Obadiah's excommunication.
The excommunication episode is of a piece with the anti-
papist satire so strongly focused on the figure of Dr Slop.7

7 The relation of the novel to satire has long
interested the novel's commentators. In an early article,
D.W. Jefferson hails Sterne as the "last great writer" in
the tradition of wit exemplified in such "Augustan comic
and satiric writing" (227) as Swift's Tale of the Tub,
Pope's Art of Sinking in Poetry, and the Memoirs of Martinus
Sciblerius. Jefferson writes at some length about comic
wit but never provides any sense of his understanding of the
distinction between comedy and satire in the context he
presents. Almost as an afterthought to his study of
Sternian rhetoric, John Traugott assures his reader that "I
would not ... remove [Sterne] from his cultural and
intellectual climate, that radical search of the eighteenth-
century Augustans through the agency of satire for the true
aspects of man's place in his society" (149). Traugott's
care not to associate Sterne "with the most uncompromising
of eighteenth-century satirists" (149) is followed by
Stedmond in his "Satire and Tristram Shandy" where he points
out that the tone of Sterne's novel is "far less biting,
much more good-humoured" than that of the Tale of the Tub
(53). Stedmond does however connect some of Sterne's
satiric subjects with those in the Memoirs of Martinus
Sciblerius--scholasticism, for example, and theories of
But as satirical a passage as the excommunication is, it also serves to elaborate the encrustation of forms upon human experience. The interjections of the curse's audience preserve the high comedy of the moment, while demonstrating the sensitivity of the individual to the force of his or her surroundings. Though Toby manages to keep up a satiric pre-natal influence (53-54). It is Melvyn New who takes up this series of cautious treatments of satire in Tristram Shandy, arguing beyond their circumspect identification of the satiric aspects of the novel to a fuller elaboration of the sources and aims of the novel's satiric thrust. "In the tense interplay of authority, pride, and reason, the Augustans defined their satiric vision," he writes, "it is as well, I believe, the vision Sterne accepted and upheld in his satire, Tristram Shandy" (28). Various satiric devices are regarded as being at play in the novel: satiric inversion, exemplified by the "vast range of folly" presented by Tristram "in a most grave and panegyric manner" (66); and the "rhetoric of diminution", the reduction of life to the order of the mechanical exemplified by the conduct of Uncle Toby's miniature campaigns (69). New's reading of the novel is supported by a clearly tendentious account of satire. He elaborates an account of satire that focuses on it as a set of generic conventions. Genre is a "complex of intentions, styles, forms, conventions, decorums, and tendencies which [define] not the final form of an artistic work, but rather the possibilities and potentialities that [govern] an artistic process" (49). Consequently, "a certain set of conventions, collectively known as 'satire,' may be operative in Tristram Shandy and . . . the reader may best understand the work by approaching it through those conventions" (47). Helene Moglen's judgment that New's reading is "flawed and partial" (27n.) gets at the pitfall of his notions of genre and satire--if the generic form of a work is determined by no more than a convenient view of a set of "possibilities and potentialities", such a view can indeed be little else other than "partial". Like Traugott and Stedmond, New is correct in recognizing Tristram Shandy's determination by a distinctly eighteenth-century satiric sensibility, but he errs I think in suiting his conception of the novel to characteristic formal aspects of satire.
Lillabullero through Slop's reading, Walter is affected by the curse of the brains and vertex (III.xi; I:209) and Toby himself by the curse of the groin--"God in heaven forbid, quoth my uncle Toby" (209). Similarly, the babble of voices into which the sermon on conscience is set both surrounds the sermon with and makes it part of the quotidian existence of objects and of the urge to harness those objects with significance. Indeed, objects in the novel are meaningful only insofar as they are substantial, immediate, and possessed by human desire. Thus while the homunculus allows Sterne to satirize doctrinal excess, it also presents yet another instance of matter as an adjunct of human nature:

The HOMUNCULUS is created by the same hand,--engender’d in the same course of nature,--endowed with the same loco-motive powers and faculties with us:----That he consists, as we do, of skin, hair, fat, flesh, veins, arteries, ligaments, nerves, cartilages, bones, marrow, brains, glands, genitals, humours, and articulations. . .

(I.ii; I:3)

The record of Walter’s movements between the crushing of Tristram’s name and the mis-christening is told by a description of Walter’s body and its disposition among various material objects:

he threw himself prostrate across his bed in the wildest disorder imaginable, but at the same time, in the most lamentable attitude of a man borne down with sorrows, that ever the eye of pity dropp’d a tear for.---The palm of his right hand, as he fell upon the bed, receiving his forehead, and covering the greatest part of both his eyes, gently sunk down with his head (his elbow giving way backwards) till his nose touch’d the quilt. . . .

(III.xxix; I:255)
Tristram's long digression on noses follows this collapse, but when he returns to the account of his father, Walter's experience continues to progress as a history of objects:

My father lay stretched across the bed as still as if the hand of death had pushed him down, for a full hour and a half, before he began to play upon the floor with the toe of that foot which hung over the bed-side. . . .

(IV.ii; I:327)

Different interpretations of Walter's attitude on the bed have been offered. Pointing to the artificiality of Walter's gesture, Farrell argues that these gestures (along with those of Trim during the sermon, see below) are parodies of formal rhetorical gestures (21). Holtz, on the other hand, claims that Sterne, in so precisely describing reality, is following Hogarth's account of the ridiculous from the Analysis of Beauty (26-7), and that the description of Walter's disposition on the bed is an instance of what Hogarth refers to as "incompatible excess" (quoted, 28). This appeal to Hogarth is understandable given that Sterne has occasion to allude to the Analysis several times, after the description of Dr. Slop (II.ix; I:121), and in the description of Trim before the sermon (II.xvii; I:141). But what Hogarth is discussing in the passage Holtz mentions is a species of manifest unfitness. Hogarth draws his readers' attention to the figure of "a fat grown face of a man, with an infant's cap on" and "a child with a man's wig and cap on." "In these," Hogarth writes, "you see the ideas of
youth and age jumbled together, in forms without beauty" (48). The accounts both of Farrell and Holtz proceed by positing Sterne’s method as unusual and finding means to explain its purpose. But Walter Shandy’s careful movement in a manifestly material, object-full environment is entirely consistent with the narrative’s unbroken movement through a continuum of objects.

It is in fact highly characteristic of Tristram Shandy that humans move through space explicitly and physically. The most memorable example is of course the arrangement of Trim before he reads the sermon.

He stood,—for I repeat it, to take the picture of him in at one view, with his body sway’d, and somewhat bent forwards,—his right leg firm behind him, sustaining seven-eighths of his full weight,—the foot of his right leg, the defect of which was no disadvantage to his attitude, advanced a little,—not laterally, nor forwards, but in a line betwixt them;—his knee bent, but that not violently,—but so as to fall within the limits of the line of beauty;—and I add, of the line of science too. . . . (II.xvii; I:141)

Again, this scene is remarkable for the divergence of commentaries upon it. Farrell finds a relation of Trim’s posture and gestures to ancient and contemporary rhetorical theory (29). Brissenden sees the disposition of Trim’s body as a satire on theories of painting (96-104). Cash suggests that contemporary literature on acting might be the source of Sterne’s portrayal (I.207-8). Each of these interpretations is in its way suggestive without being comprehensive. Indeed the passage itself cautions against
any quick conclusions about its significance, for however readily Sterne invokes Hogarth's aesthetics, he renders his invocation facetious by pairing it with an appeal to "the line of science"--Trim is arranged the way he is simply in order to prevent himself from collapsing onto the floor. And as I mentioned earlier (5), in the course of Walter's gradual movement from the bed to the staircase, Sterne invokes first the example of Raphael, and then utters an apostrophe to Garrick as he attempts to enrich his depiction of Walter's posture at the moment: "so stood my father, holding fast his fore-finger betwixt his finger and his thumb" (IV.vii; I:333). Sterne in this case does not appear to be using either the aesthetics of painting or of acting for any other reason than to intensify his representation. Raphael is invoked to assist the reader (whose pretensions to sophistication are mocked by Tristram's, "your connoisseurship") to visualize Walter's appearance at the moment, and Garrick, I think, in order to bring into being a sense of the full, immediate, physical life of the moment--Tristram attempts to lift the scene from his page and place it upon the stage: "what a rich scene of this would thy exquisite powers make" (IV.vii; I:333).

Later in the novel, Tristram again brings extraordinary attention to the disposition of his characters. The scene of Walter and Mrs. Shandy's collision at the beginning of
the ninth volume efficiently launches several thematic strands which will be fully developed in the various adventures and misadventures Trim and Toby encounter in the widow Wadman’s house. The collision occurs following Walter’s insinuation of the nature of his wife’s curiosity:

My mother was then conjugally swinging with her left arm twisted under his right, in such wise, that the inside of her hand rested upon the back of his--she raised her fingers, and let them fall--it could scarce be call’d a tap; or if it was a tap----’twould have puzzled a casuist to say, whether ’twas a tap of remonstrance, or a tap of confession: my father, who was all sensibilities from head to foot, class’d it right--Conscience redoubled her blow--he turn’d his face suddenly the other way, and my mother supposing his body was about to turn with it in order to move homewards, by a cross movement of her right leg, keeping her left as its centre, brought herself so far in front, that as he turned his head, he met her eye---Confusion again! he saw a thousand reasons to wipe out the reproach, and as many to reproach himself----a thin, blue, chill, pellucid chrystal with all its humours so at rest, the least mote or speck of desire might have been seen at the bottom of it, had it existed--it did not. . . . (IX.i; II:735-6)

The predominant event here is confusion operating at the level of physical movement. They collide because Mrs. Shandy makes an incorrect assumption about Walter’s motion. Toby and the widow Wadman’s misunderstanding of each other will be played out in physical terms not many chapters later: "You shall lay your finger upon the place----said my uncle Toby.----I will not touch it, however, quoth Mrs. Wadman to herself" (IX.xx; II:773). Moreover, the events which take place in the widow’s house, Trim’s campaign with Bridget and Toby’s with the widow, are motivated by sexual
desire. Mr. and Mrs. Shandy's collision occurs in an atmosphere charged by his insinuation of the quality of her desire—"Call it, my dear, by its right name, quoth my father, and look through the keyhole as long as you will."

And the dénouement of the episode involves his recognition of her innocence—Walter can detect not "the least mote or speck of desire" in his wife's eye (IX.i; II:736). The scene is as good an illustration as any of what widow Wadman calls "the cares and disquietudes of the marriage state" (IX.The Eighteenth Chapter; II:787), and lightly introduces the themes of physical confusion, desire, and the innocent absence of desire that will be slowly elaborated over the next thirty chapters. However, the scene is significant for our purposes for its demonstration of how intricately human destiny is connected to the life of the body; the body serves both to fulfil that destiny and to signify the quality of its aspirations. Davis gives the term "detailism" to Sterne's method of juxtaposing mental activity with "the homely, the trivial, and the grotesque" (211). And this view of the slightly unsettling quality of Sterne's descriptions is shared by others. Jefferson writes that it is typically Sternian "to give a studied precision to descriptions of physical postures in scenes where the composed effect is grotesque rather than dignified" (245).
New argues that the effect of Sterne's method is to reduce man "to a mechanism, a puppet, an animal" (109).

Of the imagery of engines and mechanisms in the novel, Burckhardt has pointed out that it is second in prevalence only to imagery of sex (76). The allure of systematic mechanism enthrals Toby with his miniature engines of war and Walter with his notion of the soul as a "great engine" to which motive force is applied by auxiliary verbs. As we have noticed, a limitation is placed upon the effectiveness of these systems by the complexity of the reality they presume to contain and to control. Comically, Toby is consigned to an endless round of detailed adjustments in order to follow the European campaigns by making use of the bowling green and an endless array of miscellaneous domestic objects. More significantly, Walter's faith in the ability of the mechanisms of language to contain his son within a narrow strait of conventional predeterminations is contradicted at every turn by the mind and the voice of that same son existing in all the variability of free subjectivity. And it is this same son who is able to look back at the pursuits of his relatives with a unique sense of the insufficiency of system. Tristram's most important insight involves the perception that the excesses of mechanism can be mirrored by the fundamental trickiness of language, a trickiness that exists because the authority of
language, its power to signify, can be ironically subverted by the person who uses it. Walter's and Toby's dependence on system is frequently acted out as a faith in the close connection between words and the things they name. And ironically while much of their activity gives rise to nearly endless confusion, they themselves inevitably act with both resolution and, to their minds, great clarity of thought. Tristram, it would appear, has no such faith but the consciousness instead of the dangerous self-satisfaction of those who would rely upon convention, upon settled systems of interpretation to understand their surroundings. Their understanding is a parody of understanding, mistaking the forms by which a thing is known for the thing itself: "where the word Nose occurs,--I declare, by that word I mean a Nose, and nothing more, or less" (III.xxxi; I:258).

The life of the body also becomes subject to the dizzying inflation of irrelevance when it is reduced to a signifying system. The reverse of the composition of decorum is a chaos of particularized activity. Hence the description of Trim's posture, or of Walter’s long rest upon his bed. Hence also the ironic tilt at the Galateo, the slender issue of an eminent divine's combat with legions of devils. But the ironic inflation also makes room for a full existence outside the limited content of convention--Trim is so carefully arranged not only to present a beautiful figure
but to prevent himself from falling, and moreover the exaggerated physical decorum that attends this reading of the sermon on conscience is set off by the distracting physical life of the company, the random gestures and the babble of voices convulsed both with sectarian bickering and, in the case of Trim's anxiety for his brother, the bathetic musings coincident with characteristic human inattention. The life of the body enters the novel like the legions of devils which trouble the thoughtful Della Casa—the full presence of the body is marked by restless irresolution, an instance of composition overborne by warfare.

Juliet McMaster has justly observed that, "there seems to be scarcely a word or an image that can be sustained at a purely intellectual level, everything eventually tends toward a bodily and sexual inference" (208). And as certainly as the life of the body opens the closed space of the decorous pose, sexuality opens the body itself even further. In the course of the sermon, the reader's attention is occupied at different times with Trim's incredible posture, with the problem of Tom's marriage to the "Jew's widow, who kept a small shop, and sold sausages" (II.xvii; I:.99), and with the body of the Inquisition's victim, "wasted with sorrow and confinement" and subject to "exquisite tortures" (II.xvii; I:144). Sexuality does in
fact most consistently short circuit conventional paths of signification. Things as miscellaneous as chamber pots, fur caps, button holes, an inch of red seal wax, and sausages serve to signify the unmentionable anatomy of sexuality. By means of sexuality, the body is projected upon the miscellaneous collection of day to day objects. A sexualized presence continually intrudes itself among what becomes a grotesque miscellany of isolated and meaningless particulars. It is a presence profoundly rooted in the body's life and the body's desire, but it is also a presence that Sterne consistently pushes away from the conventional constraints of language. The sexualized life of the body can simply not be named and instead persists throughout the novel in an array of grotesque disguises which finally express the frustration of the subject's highest desire among the imperfect material clutter of the day to day.⁸

⁸ Commentators on sexuality in Tristram Shandy have tended to fall into either one of two camps. On the one hand, the novel's sexuality has been regarded in a negative light. Henri Fluchère uses the phrase "bad conscience" (228) to describe Sterne's attitude toward sexuality in Tristram Shandy. On this view the representation of sexuality is considered to disrupt the ostensible gaiety of Tristram's autobiography. More recently, Ruth Perry has written of the "fearful, protective, and concerned" (33) phallocentrism of the novel. (See also Burkhardt and Spacks for further accounts of the negative aspects of sexuality.) On the other hand, the sexuality in the novel has been regarded as one of its most positively playful elements. An optimistic account of sexuality in the novel has been offered by Robert Alter ("Tristram Shandy"), while more recently Dennis Allen has explored the "invagination" (660) of the novel and connects this "vaginal view of the text"
this respect, Sterne's novel comes closest to being a work of anti-courtesy--not that is a tale of the body calculated to offend, but a tale rigorously, distractingly faithful to the body's full life. I will return to this idea at the end of the chapter.

"Every thing in this world, said my father, is big with jest" (V.xxxii; I:470)--Walter is referring to Trim's version of the Catechism, but he is also stating what is for Tristram a methodological truth. Whiskers go the way of noses, as noses have gone the way of "placket-holes, and pump-handles--and spigots and faucets" (V.i; I:414). Tristram will get what sexual meaning into a thing he can, "Button-holes!--there is something lively in the very idea of 'em. . . . 'tis a maiden subject" (IV.xv; I:346). Even his warnings against the constructions his reader might bring to the text are sexualized: "Now don't let Satan, my dear girl, in this chapter, take advantage of any one spot of rising-ground to get astride of your imagination, if you can any ways help it" (III.xxxvi; I:267). However, while this suggestiveness is habitual, it is a kind of playful baroque ornamentation of a more serious pattern of

(670) with its play and the pleasure of that play. In my view, the representation of sexuality in the novel is neither wholly negative nor positive. Rather, as I will be arguing, sited as it is in the human body, sexuality as the end of desire simultaneously liberates man from his body and reinforces his confinement within it.
signification. A quintessentially Sternian moment occurs when Trim speaks of his experience of death; and as Sterne allows a pronoun to shift, its sense shifts as well as it wanders among different minds:

I've look'd him, added the corporal, an hundred times in the face,--and know what he is.--He's nothing, Obadiah, at all in the field.--But he's very frightful in a house, quoth Obadiah.----I never mind it myself, said Jonathan, upon a coach-box.--It must, in my opinion, be most natural in bed, replied Susannah:436)

As Lillian Furst has observed, "beneath the outer crust of the comedy there lurks a sub-stratum of the horrendous" (17). Sexuality is most persistently present in the novel through the grotesque bawdy of "genital pain" (33). The phrase is Ruth Perry's and amounts to a paraphrase of Burckhardt's observation in his essay on gravity in the novel of how genitals are peculiarly susceptible to falling objects (72). Phutatorious is burnt by a roasted chestnut falling into his pants, and his discomfort is intensified by the apprehension "that possibly a Newt, or an Asker, or some such detested reptile, had crept up, and was fastening his teeth" (IV.xxvii; I:382). Phutatorious' injury is clearly a variation of the wounds incurred by both Tristram and Toby. Of the three wounds, it is Tristram's that draws most attention to the penis itself as an object--Susannah cries "nothing is left" (V.xvii; I:450); Trim illustrates the incident by striking the edge of his hand across his extended forefinger; and Slop declares that "'Twill end in a
phimosis" (V.xxxix; I:480). But in drawing attention to the organ, each character is pointing out how it is damaged. In the case of both Phutatorius and Tristram, there is a precision both in the invocation of the penis and of the wound it sustains. But in the case of Toby, there is a generality in the figuration of the wound that quite erases the existence of the penis altogether. The widow Wadman refers to "the monstrous wound upon his groin" (VII.xxviii; II:713), and Toby's doctor to "that great injury which [the stone] had done my Uncle Toby's groin" (I.xxv; I:88). Toby's is the first of the three wounds to be presented in the novel, and the details of its occurrence precede the details of Tristram's unfortunate birth. As such Toby's wound may be considered the master trope of the always supplemented sexual presence in the novel. As a grievous wound which is pressed (so to speak) into service as a permanent double entendre in the final two books of the novel, it is fundamentally grotesque in aspect. A cicatrized mortality united with a joyful sexual innuendo, Toby's wound organizes the grotesque sexual vocabulary of the novel.

It is as a laceration, a traumatic opening of the flesh that Toby's wound establishes such a resonance in the novel. Haunted by this wound, the novel is made to proceed in the shadow of the grotesque body, and it is in tension with this
grotesque body that sexual desire attains significance. Playing with the word "nose" and playfully attempting to deflect the charge of bawdiness, Tristram writes that "the world has revenged itself upon me for leaving so many openings to equivocal structures" (III.xxxi; I:257 (my emphasis)). Tristram's language presents an aperture through which his reader's imaginations may enter and alter his professed meaning ("by a nose I mean a nose"). But the aperture in fact looms large in the novel. The chestnut fell perpendicularly into that particular aperture of Phutatorius' breeches, for which, to the shame and indelicacy of our language be it spoke, there is no chaste word throughout all Johnson's dictionary--let it suffice to say--it was that particular aperture, which in all good societies, the laws of decorum do strictly require, like the temple of Janus (in peace at least) to be universally shut up. (IV.xxvii; I:380)

Ripped "in the most disastrous direction you can imagine", Tristram's breeches are furnished with an unexpected aperture (VII.xxxii; II:632)—for Tristram next offers a tentative "Out upon it." We have already noticed Tristram's enthusiasm for buttonholes. Both Nannette the sun-burnt daughter of labour and the widow Wadman have "slits" in their clothing (VII.xliii; II:650; IX.The Eighteenth Chapter; II:786). And distracted by the thought of a woman, Tristram strokes a warm soft fur hat as he swears, "by all that is hirsute and gashly" (VIII.xi; II:670). The aperture is clearly figured on the female sexual organ, and as the last few examples show, the aperture serves the language of
bawdy in the novel when it is presented explicitly in relation to sexually desirable women. But as the opening through which Phutatorius is burned and Tristram exposed, the aperture does not exist with the same innocence.

When Tristram suggests "Cover'd way" (II.vi; I:116) for the mysterious word Toby has used, he offers a Rabelaisian transmogrification which carries the problematic series of asterisk quite beyond bawdy to the grotesque of the nearly unimaginable. Similarly, as Toby muses on the right end of a woman, and fixes his eyes "upon a small crevice, form'd by a bad joint in the chimney piece" (II.vii; I:117-8), the aperture about which the innuendo of the passage plays is clotted with a materiality that moves against the implicit sexual presence. The kinds of apertures Toby introduces seem to participate more in the problematic nature of his wound--a wound which while gesturing toward a sexual presence, supplements it in such a way as to nearly erase it. In a highly suggestive study of Tristram Shandy as belonging to the genre of the mid-wife's manual, Erickson has pointed out the connection between the episode of Toby's wounding and what Erickson calls Tristram's "birth shock". The relation of Tristram's birth to Toby's wound concerns us here in what comes down to the fact of Tristram's introduction to the world through the aperture of his mother's body. Indeed, whereas most other apertures in the
novel allow a smooth passage through them, the aperture of Mrs. Shandy's body resists that movement, and like Toby's wound, becomes a site where for a prolonged period of time pain, injury, and deformation predominate. Interestingly it is Walter, for whom sexuality is an unambiguously laborious practice (he commends the bull who goes about his business with a grave face), who seeks to overcome the potential threat the aperture poses to the infant by suggesting the performance of a Caesarean section. The Caesarean is posited as a decidedly unequivocal opening that quite replaces the problematic forces bound up in what Toby has called the "covered way". The prospect of the Caesarean enters the text with all the explicitness that goes into the account of Toby's wound:

this incision of the abdomen and uterus, ran for six weeks together in my father's head;—he had read, and was satisfied, that wounds in the epigastrium, and those in the matrix, were not mortal;—so that the belly of the mother might be opened extremely well to give passage to the child. . . . (II.xix; I:179)

And yet this too is a grotesque supplement of the "hirsute and gashly", and perhaps the one that best demonstrates how the grotesque continually undermines the positivities of sexuality's always liminal presence.

The continual return of the novel's interest to phallic and vaginal structures, or perhaps more accurately, the novel's basis in them, firmly orients the novel along the axis of the grotesque body in precisely the terms Bakhtin
uses to constitute that body. It will be recalled from chapter three that the grotesque body exhibits certain characteristic features. The grotesque body is concerned with the "lower stratum" of the body (Bakhtin, 21) and the image of the grotesque brings into representation the "excrescences (sprouts, buds) and orifices" (318) of the body. The penis and vagina are plainly instances of such "excrescences and orifices", and it would seem clear that by associating the various details of the material environment both of Shandy Hall and the world at large with the sense of the sexualized body Sterne both imparts sexual significance to material creation and constrains that sexual significance within the problematic of the body's inherent grotesquerie—the "dark covering of uncrystalized flesh and blood". Bakhtin calls grotesque images "ambivalent and contradictory." "They are," he continues, "ugly, monstrous, hideous from the point of view of 'classic' aesthetics, that is the aesthetics of the ready-made and the completed" (25). As I have pointed out, "the closed, smooth, and impenetrable surface" of the classical body is not allowed to establish an authoritative position in the text—it fails to exercise the kind of direct and significant influence it commands in the novels of Fielding or Smollett. The invocation of the classical ideal, of details of Raphael's painting in one instance, of the aesthetics of the serpentine line in
another, is merely the opening gambit in an episode of deflation which always finds the detailed account of the body’s undisciplined life thrust into prominence. Again, Tristram’s play with Della Casa is illuminating in this instance, for composition is disrupted by a state of warfare initiated by the devil, and instead of constituting one half of an equilibrium of opposites, Della Casa’s good intentions are embroiled in contention and resistance, and interrupted by captious thought. What ideals the novel might invoke do not stand apart from the grotesque, but seem to be so deeply involved in it as to be entirely overwhelmed by its existence.

Yet repeatedly, excessively supplemented by a grotesque variety of miscellaneous objects, sexuality shifts away from a welter of random, peculiar, and dreadful particulars. Even as Tristram toys with the presence of sexuality, he pushes it from the text, "Now I see no sin in saying, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, a hundred times together; nor is there any turpitude in pronouncing the syllable ger, ger, ger, ger, ger, were it from our matins to our vespers" (VII.xxv; II:613-4). The fact of sexuality’s absence is sustained by the presence of a coexistent materiality. For Walter, sexuality is so delicate a subject that it defies naming altogether, "for what reason is it, that all the parts thereof--the congridents--the preparations--the
instruments, and whatever serves thereto, are so held as to be conveyed to a cleanly mind by no language, translation, or periphrasis whatever?" (IX.xxxiii; II:806). This apparent fact frustrates Walter because sexuality therefore cannot be consumed by his mania for system—his solution is to replace the potential significance of the sexual with other unrelated systems, the winding of a clock, or the relatively safe expedient of the Caesarian section. But what happens, with Walter, and generally elsewhere in the novel is that the obliquely significant supplement, the grotesque object, finally acts as an efficient bar to the nature of what is now the sexualized absence. The difficulty of the wounds sustained by both Tristram and Toby is that their precise nature is uncertain. They are lain over against sexual function in such a way as to nearly erase it, they exist as obstacles to the full experience of a sexualized truth: "I am terribly afraid, said widow Wadman, in case I should marry him, Bridget—that the poor captain will not enjoy his health, with that monstrous wound upon his groin" (VIII.xxviii; II:713). Again, as an obstacle to the full presence of Toby’s sexual identity, his wound is the pattern of other such obstacles in the novel. Thus such characteristic ellipses as the asterisk and the dash also function as obstacles to full meaning and draw attention to themselves as self-sufficient structures.
significant primarily for their physical inscrutability. Tristram's lament about the mind's confinement within the body's material (I.xxiii; I:83) has an analogy in the way in which the novel's sexual presence is impeded, first supplemented by the double entendre, and finally obliterated by the grotesque fact of the mediating term. Tristram--"child of wrath! child of decrepitude! interruption!"--himself participates in this clotting of inscrutability which sees impotence constructed not as disfunction but as the virtual replacement of sexuality with the grotesquerie of matter, Slawkenbergius' enormous nose, Tristram's mangled phallus, and Toby's "horrible wound".

This impotence is, however, ultimately Shandean9--sexuality is supplemented by wounds in the case of both Toby and Tristram, and by the material of language in the case of Walter, who indeed blames lust for "every evil and disorder in the world" (IX.xxxii; II:805). Trim, however, is able to engage with sexuality in a way the Shandys cannot. And while there is a comedy of material surrounding his amours--the wrecked bridge and the affair of his own wound--these things pose no obstacle to Trim's sexual activity. In fact the wound to Trim's knee stands as a kind of parody of

9 Towers sees impotence differently associated with each of the three Shandy men. Tristram is thus involved in "the comedy of inadequacy", Toby in "the comedy of displacement", and Walter in "the comedy of frustration."
Tristram's and Toby's wounds. In the episode of the
Beguine, the knee as the initial limit to the motion of the
nun's hands is increasingly eroticized as an obstacle and is
finally simply bypassed. Helene Moglen has noticed the
relative ease with which Trim pursues sexual satisfaction
(120), and it should be pointed out that his brother Tom is
equally capable in such a pursuit. Moreover, the
representation of the young nun is important in this
instance. She is dressed "in black down to her toes, with
her hair conceal'd under a cambrick border, laid close to
her forehead" (VIII.xx; II:698)--she resembles in an odd
fashion the black page with its curious conjunction of the
playful and the moribund. Trim records that "the whole
night long was the fair Beguinee, like an angel, close by my
bedside, holding back my curtain and offering me cordials"
(VIII.xx; II:699). She is in fact a sexual presence, and
one of the strongest and most erotic in the novel--her
dextrous fingers lead to one of the novel's major ellipses.
In the nun, sexuality appears as an idealized presence,
active but almost invisible.

Sexual love is the ideal that struggles for identity
beneath the novel's plethoric grotesquerie. Sexual love is,
as I have been arguing, an absence largely determined by a
sharply opposed materiality. In this respect, sexual love
and the grotesque are arranged in a manner that bears
comparison with what I referred to as the "rhetorical strategy" of courtesy literature: the expression of an unrepresented ideal is achieved by means of its exhaustively represented material antithesis. The importance of this ideal in Tristram Shandy is enunciated by two of the novel's most sensible characters. Walter distinguishes between rational and natural love:

- the first, which is the golden chain let down from heaven, excites to love heroic, which comprehends in it, and excites to the desire of philosophy and truth--
- the second, excites to desire, simply-----

----I think the procreation of children as beneficial to the world, said Yorick, as the finding out of longitude----

----To be sure, said my mother, love keeps peace in the world. . . .

(VIII.xxxiii; II:721)

Two things are of interest in the passage: First, Walter's "simply" is a reductive and constrictive judgment of the nature of physical desire. Second, the interposition of Yorick and Mrs. Shandy contradicts the thrust of that simplification, both in terms of the fundamental importance of desire, and in terms of its very identity--Walter Shandy's desire becomes Mrs. Shandy's love.10 In renaming

10 Ronald Paulson has very recently argued that the emphasis in the novel is "not on a love as a positive alternative but on love as another form of death" (The Beautiful 171), and he associates Sterne's conception of love with Burke's sublime and the "death-drive of the beautiful" (171). As I am arguing, love has an inherently sexual component that is inevitably attached to the mortal destiny of the body, but as I will show in the following pages, it is through desire that the individual attempts to overreach the body's failing. Love does not have identity with death, but hollows out a charmed space in the midst of
desire, Mrs. Shandy is participating in the general pattern of supplementation in the novel; here she reverses it, seeing through the lower term, desire, to the higher, love. She lifts as it were the limitations of the mortal vision to uncover the near divine truth. This truth, as I have been trying to show, is ultimately itself unfigured behind a mass of other representations, button holes, slit petticoats, noses, and wounds to the phallic region.

Sexual desire is incarnated in four women, the Beguine—with whom we have already dealt—Tristram's lover, Jenny, the widow Wadman, and Nannette, the sunburnt daughter of labour. Again, Sterne's method of proceeding in this respect is deeply evocative of the terms of Bakhtin's "new bodily canon" and of the unquestionably female classical body offered naked to the male gaze through the medium of personified Virtue. Fielding’s claim in "An Essay on the Characters of Men" that, "It is truly said of Virtue, that, could men behold her naked, they would be all in love with her" (300) is curiously resonant in light of the nature of Tristram's interest in these different women. Sterne's contribution to the commonplace is his distinctive preoccupation with the material milieu of the desirable object. The truth of Jenny's relationship with Tristram is apparently subject to endless deferral: "but who my Jenny it."
is--and which is the right and which the wrong end of a woman, is the thing to be concealed--it shall be told you the next chapter but one, to my chapter of button-holes" (IV.xxxii; I:401). With typical suggestiveness, Tristram defers the revelation of Jenny’s identity till after he has written a chapter on the nature of buttonholes and examined the problem of the right and the wrong end of the woman. Elsewhere, Tristram presents Jenny as something to be looked into: "She looks at her outside,--I, at her in--" (V.xxxiv; I:457), and the passage ends with an ellipsis that enacts this interiority. In light of the outer habit of the nun and her real nature, and in light of Tristram’s coy concealment of his sexual relationship with Jenny, Tristram’s voyeuristic presentation of the innkeeper’s daughter at Montreuil is entirely consistent with the characteristic structure of sex and what covers or supplements it: Tristram considers drawing her, "may I never draw more . . . if I do not draw her in all her proportions, and with as determin’d a pencil, as if I had her in the wettest drapery" (VII.ix; II:589). Here, the actual appearance of the woman, her naked and desirable body, is replaced by an intervening material object, the wettest drapery.

Coming last in a series of similarly structured figures, the representation of widow Wadman can be seen as
entirely typical of Sterne's presentation of sexualized love:

Let love therefore be what it will,—my uncle Toby fell into it.
---And possibly, gentle reader, with such a temptation—so wouldst thou: For never did thy eyes behold, or thy concupiscence covet any thing in this world, more concupiscible than widow Wadman.

(VI.xxvii; II:565)

Leaving a space in which the reader may introduce his or her own visual conception of this paragon, Tristram employs the same conceit he uses to draw attention to the concupiscibility of the innkeeper's daughter—such perfection is to be rendered visually. However, in each case, the central image, the actual image of the desirable object is deferred and supplemented by some accretion of the material.

In Tristram's dance with Nannette can be found a climactic incarnation of this game of supplemented desire. Interestingly, the grotesque constitutes an important subtext to the dance: it is a "lame youth" with his tambourine and pipe who provides the music for the dance: "the youth struck the note upon the tabourin—his pipe followed, and off we bounded" (VII.xliii; II:650). Lamed, this youth is a thematic relation to the sciatical Walter, the wounded Toby, and the accidentally circumcised Tristram. What the episode dramatizes is the approach of desire to its object: "A sun-burnt daughter of Labour rose up from the
groupe to meet me as I advanced towards them" (II:649). "A transient spark of amity shot across the space betwixt us," writes Tristram (II:651). What Tristram seeks in this instant is a perfect and timeless union: "Why could I not live and end my days thus! Just disposer of our joys and sorrows, cried I, why could not a man sit down in the lap of content here--and dance, and sing, and say his prayers, and go to heaven with this nut brown maid?" (II:651) (Trim, it will be recalled, refers to the Beguine as "angelic"). But here, at the close approach of fulfilment--"capriciously did she bend her head on one side, and dance up insidious" (II:651)--Tristram dances away from the finality of union into the chain of the endless dance which does not end but which is transformed into the act of writing the long deferred story of Toby's amours--he goes "on straight forwards" upon "a paper of black lines" (II:651). This last detail invokes what can be called the novel's vocabulary of sadness, Yorick's black page, and the habit of the Beguine, a vocabulary of the grotesque which by the very nature of the grotesque allows Sterne to simultaneously pursue the falling and the flying of his mortal experience.

* In light of our discussion of courtesy literature and of the occasional appearance of the dancing master as representative of the negative ideals of courtesy--Johnson
asperses Chesterfield's character in terms of the dancing-master's manners and Smollett presents a perfect caricature of the dancing master in the decrepit creature tutoring Mackilligut--it is interesting that one of the most important climaxes in Tristram Shandy is Tristram's dance with Nannette." The milieu of this dance, however, is quite distinct from the milieu of the dancing master associated with courtesy. Tristram is welcomed not into a formalized social ritual, but into an extemporaneous folk expression--the dance takes place outdoors, in a spirit of relaxation after a day of physical labour. Indeed Sterne seems to be intent upon erecting a distinctive emblem in introducing Nannette as a "sun-burnt daughter of Labour", and focusing on details evocative both of her sexuality and her freedom from inhibition--the brief exchange about her disordered hair draws attention to the physical freedoms coincident with private familiarity. Moreover Nannette's

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Battestin (The Providence of Wit) points out that, "As the scene unfolds, images that in the Augustan Tradition served as metaphors for Nature's abstract Order--the measured dance, the harmony of reconciled opposites--are humanized, rendering the love and concord in the hearts of men and women" (255). His remarks suggest the extent to which this episode serves as an important instance of the juxtaposition of the ideal and the physical in the novel. As such, Tristram's dance with Nannette may be seen as a variation of the marriages of Joseph Andrews and Fanny Goodwill, George Dennison and Lydia Melford. Freedman (Laurence Sterne) sees the episode with Nannette as the musical culmination of the uniquely musical volume seven (139-143).
politeness, Tristram troubles to tell us, is "self-taught". Nannette's is a world far away from the fussy pretence of the Galateo—it is a social world ordered by private values where the free play of desire is not restrained by the normative force of carefully elaborated rules of conduct. Tristram is brought into a "ring of pleasure" and is swept up in a dance that assumes fantastic proportions, becoming a joyful voyage through France.

While my argument in the last few pages has tended toward isolating the appearance of the classical body in the novel, that classical body survives as a clear hybrid. The classical body as its attributes are summarized by Bakhtin and in its appearance in the literature of courtesy is conventionally characterized by its wholeness, its uniformity, its closedness before the outer world. It is not subject to the kind of penetration and overflowing that is characteristic of the grotesque body. Nannette is clearly not of this narrowly defined, materially constrained world. Nor is the able Beguine with her dextrous fingers; nor, with her insatiable sexual curiosity, is the widow Wadman. The universe of the body seems to be for Sterne a self-reflexive, self-incarnating continuum utterly devoid of unmediated ideal terms. The materiality and physicality that constitute the content of human experience are, as it were, purgatorial. The flesh is simply not available as the
grounds for an argument about morals. Its state is grotesque. Its behaviour cannot be disciplined. Rather, human desires move through the flesh and find in it labyrinths both of intellectual perplexity and sensual enchantment.

I have suggested that Sterne exhibits a convincing consciousness of the triviality of courtesy literature and that in respect to that triviality he mounts a work of what might be called "anti-courtesy", a work which ignores the classical body and its values and instead engages in dense representations of the purgatorial body. Where the episteme of the classical body exists in the novel it exists only to invite an obstinately reductive attack. Its shadowy existence in the invocation of the Galateo is only as an object of fun. Its actual incursion into the drama of the text in the form of Trim's elaborately precise posture during the reading of the sermon on conscience ultimately collapses into the ridiculous because of the superfluidity of Tristram's attention. And if the classical body comes nearest to serious consideration in the sexualized persons of the Beguine and Nannette, the prerequisite characteristics of smoothness, closedness, decorous and uniform arrangement are problematically juxtaposed with the motions of the lower bodily stratum. The Beguine is both demure, chaste, and libidinous, while Nannette, inherently
polite, assumes a troubling sexual aggressiveness by virtue of the obtrusive slit in her petticoat. While Fielding's and Smollett's heroines--Fanny Goodwill to a greater and Lydia Melford to a somewhat lesser extent--enact the decorous moral life of naked virtue with its functional suspension of the erotic over against the virtuous, Tristram Shandy, in Tristram's repeated invitation to his reader to linger over the appearance of such women as the innkeeper's daughter at Montreuil and the widow Wadman, toys incessantly with the form of that same image. Sterne does not look through the body to the moral paragon; instead he fully and dramatically exploits the erotic potential stored in the chaste figure of the virtuous woman. By this means the inanimate image of the classical body is overborne by the living needs of the grotesque body. The classical body is opened, paradoxically, to the claims of the grotesque body and made ultimately to participate in the episteme of the grotesque. Sterne's sad, giddy novel makes courtesy give way entirely to a kind of humane anarchy.
Chapter Seven

Conclusion

This thesis has aimed to examine the appearance of the grotesque body in certain eighteenth-century English novels in the context of the appearance of the grotesque body in the literature of courtesy. In his examination of the grotesque body in Rabelais, Bakhtin formulates the idea of the classical and the grotesque body. Bakhtin's view of the politics of carnival leads him to conceive of the grotesque body as fundamentally and energetically subversive--its appearance is affirmative and transformative. However, when the functioning of the representation of the grotesque and classical bodies is examined in certain eighteenth-century novels, it is clear that the grotesque body does not possess this unbounded energy. It is rather, as I have shown, just as it is in the literature of courtesy, continually contextualized by the classical body and by the important ideological values attached to that body. The grotesque moves in these novels only in order that it be distinguished, evaluated, and confined. And even in a novel as apparently transgressive as Tristram Shandy, in which the grotesque body does enjoy a comparative freedom, that freedom is mired in the obscurity of the grotesque’s endless materiality. Grotesque "freedom" occurs only within the straitened purgatory of the material self.
This study has not been about the grotesque image in itself. The distinction Lascault makes in respect to the image of the monster that such an image has a diachronic aspect, a history, holds equally for the grotesque. It has been more instructive to examine the grotesque as an assemblage of distinctive objects than as an instant of inscrutability, an interval that "impales us on the present moment" (16) as Harpham puts it. In chapter two, I introduced Iser's notion of the repertoire and Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossia into my account of the determined nature of the grotesque. The repertoire, it will be recalled, consists of "material selected from social systems and literary traditions" (86). Heteroglossia has a similar nature. It is: "the fleeting language of a day, and epoch, a social group, a school, and so forth" ("Discourse in the Novel" 272). And the objects imbedded within it are animated by "a dialogic interaction... between various aspects of [their] socio-verbal intelligibility" (277). The grotesque is thus determined by both its literary and its social context. It is embedded in what Foucault calls a "discursive constellation". In Nadia Khouri's archaeological approach to the grotesque, two types of grotesques are identified on the basis of how they function. Khouri's interest is in identifying "the ideological process which selects and joins [the elements of the grotesque
image)" (13); and she subsequently identifies two basic orientations of the grotesque. There is a "grotesque of continuity which positively integrates rational and sub-rational" and "a grotesque of discontinuity which mingles material elements only to distinguish their connectedness" (16). The use of the grotesque "denotes a specific attitude which has been set within a vertical system of values" (6). According to Khouri’s view, the rhetorical structure that balances the grotesque against the classical body would exemplify the grotesque of discontinuity. Khouri’s ideas have proven useful to my conception of the grotesque as a determined phenomenon.

In establishing a context for the appearance of the grotesque body in these novels, I have made use of Bakhtin’s distinction between the classical and the grotesque bodies. The classical body is characterized by its "closed, smooth, and impenetrable surface", and the grotesque body by its "excrescences (sprouts, buds) and orifices" (318). Stallybrass and White’s elaboration of the significance of the classical body has proved particularly useful in understanding the role of the antithetically oriented grotesque body. Their evocation of the classical body of ancient statuary and its function in arresting the admiring gaze has proven especially suggestive: "the classical statue is the radiant centre of a transcendent individualism, ‘put
on a pedestal, raised above the viewer and the commonality and anticipating passive admiration from below. We gaze up at the figure and wonder" (21).

It is this iconic centrality of the classical body that is so important to what amounts to the cohesive project of the literature of courtesy. The aim of such works as Bellegarde’s *Reflexions upon Ridicule*, Giovanni Della Casa’s *Galateo*, and Adam Petrie’s *Rules of Good Deporment*, or of *Good Breeding*, and Fielding’s various essays on courtesy is to instruct their readers in the appropriate comportment of the body in social intercourse. It is instruction that has both a moral and mechanical component--though, as we have seen, morality tends to be enlarged by the discipline of appropriate physical conduct. Della Casa’s assertion is illustrative:

"For gaining the Reputation of a Person well-bred"--as Della Casa makes plain, courtesy literature is associated with elite culture, but also serves the interests of those social groups whose legitimate claims to expanding influence and responsibility are expressed specifically in terms of their social status vis à vis the elite. Mr. Seaford’s claims for the respectability of the merchant class and Parson
Primrose’s assertion that "In this middle order of mankind are generally found all the arts, wisdom, and virtues of society. This order alone is known to be the true preserver of freedom, and may be called the People" (97) both attest to the social aspirations of the middle ranks. But a curiosity of the literature of courtesy is the creation of the illusion that the cultivation of a decorous manner might translate into a concomitant improvement in social mobility. However, Bellegarde’s observation that "Persons of noble Blood are more easy, sociable and affected, than others rais’d from the Dunghill by their own Skill and Chance; that Air of Greatness they assume, prevents not our discovering them through their borrow’d Outside" (72) suggests that the disciplined body is a natural attribute of the great, and that the affectation of its manner by those of lower social rank is exposed by their essential unsuitedness. The justice of Stallybrass and White’s remarks about the influence of the classical body is nowhere so evident as here where the values of the classical body are clearly exclusionary, and expressions of a fixed social order. The grotesque body delineates limitations and constraints, not freedoms and powers.

Courtesy literature thus demonstrates the exemplary usage of the rhetorical structure that holds the classical and grotesque bodies in significant antithesis. Most
importantly, this literature demonstrates the use of the grotesque body to express the classical body and its values of decorum, inoffensiveness, elegance, order, and pleasurable sociability. In the literature of devotion, this structure appears in the loathing directed at the inherently loathsome body and legitimized by the pursuit of spiritual improvement. And as I have shown in chapter three, in other kinds of intellectual discourse different aspects of the grotesque body are continually brought into play to illustrate the value of the moral life and the association of that life with the beautiful and the well-formed. Most important to an understanding of the functioning of this rhetorical structure is the observation that the classical body, whose values are repeatedly invoked through the disposition of the grotesque body, tends not to be represented. This is particularly evident in the literature of devotion, where the devaluing and grotesquing of the body occurs in order to direct attention to the values of spiritual life. But even in the writing of Bellegarde and Della Casa it is primarily the life of the grotesque body that is the object of the writers' attention, and it is through the evaluation and ridicule of this body that the decorous life of the classical body is implied. In each case the play of the grotesque body is contained within a static order centred on the classical body.
In the novels I have been examining, this rhetoric of containment gives rise to two effects. On the one hand, the grotesque body is used to express the central classical order. In this case, the novelist carefully distinguishes between the grotesque body and the values attached to it and the classical body and the values attached to it. And very much like the occurrence of the exemplary rhetorical structure in the literature of courtesy, the grotesque body is the chief focus of representation, while the classical body takes a position in the background. In the novel, representational emphasis takes both the form of expressively drawn portraits of the grotesque characters and the frequent attention lavished on the grotesque body in dramatic activity. In *Joseph Andrews*, the primary attention of the night episode is given to Abraham Adams, Mrs. Slipslop, and Beau Didapper. The significance of that dramatic episode--its farcical animation of the sexual attraction between Fanny and Joseph that has been obstructed by the mistaken certitude that they are brother and sister--is largely developed through the grotesque and unmannerly activity of the three farcical characters. By contrast, the activity of Fanny and Joseph and of Lady Booby in the episode is consistent with the values of restraint and decorum associated with the classical body. These latter three characters are notable in the episode for the very
narrow scope of their physical activity and for the fact that it is ultimately their presence and activity that contains, orients, and ultimately diffuses the energetic grotesquerie of Adams, Slipslop, and Didapper.

Similarly, the grotesque body in *Humphry Clinker* enjoys a great degree of dramatic attention, while the classical body, represented in the persons of Lydia Melford and George Dennison, is removed to the background. Interestingly, where the preeminence of the classical body is signalled in *Joseph Andrews* by the set piece descriptions that linger over the attractive bodies of Joseph and Fanny, its preeminence in *Humphry Clinker* is manifested in the extended game of George Dennison’s identity, which for Jery and Matthew is the source of a great deal of politically oriented anxiety, and which for Lydia continually reanimates her romantic desire. As the revelation of George’s identity is held off by a long series of deferrals, the novel’s many grotesque characters actively move in the space kept clear by that recession. However, by virtue both of Jery and Matthew’s pursuit of the ideal of the properly civil society and of Matthew’s increasing association of that ideal with the experience of a wholly sensuous natural, rural environment, the grotesque of the body is continually set against values associated with the classical body. This is especially the case with Lydia’s close connection with the
growing importance of the salutary influence of the natural environment. The son of the nearly perfect country gentleman, Charles Dennison, George finally constitutes the embodied the ideal of the well ordered society. He ultimately attracts the admiring gaze not only of Lydia but of Jery as well.

The other effect of the rhetoric of containment is also apparent in Humphry Clinker, as it is also in Tristram Shandy as well. This effect involves the adjustment of the nature of the classical order to accommodate the kinds of grotesque life lived by the body. In Smollett’s novel, this adjustment preserves the containment effected by the classical body while allowing access to its values by a body susceptible to the energy of grotesquerie. The comic characters of Humphry Clinker and Winifred Jenkins dramatize this kind of authorized movement. Both these characters live very much through the body, and are continually, through their language or their activity, associated with aspects of the body. The robustness and honesty of their existences, however, are closely consistent with such themes as they are attached through the classical body to ideals of a virtuous, rural society. And it is significant that Humphry and Win are "rewarded" for their natural goodness by promotion into the family. It might in fact be advanced that this elevation of the ordinary body constitutes an
acceptable fantasy of social promotion in which the body retains its affiliation with the order of the grotesque while nevertheless enjoying association with the values of the classical body. Bellegarde's and indeed Bramble's uneasiness about unrestrained social mixing is alleviated because this promotion does not occur through a duplicitous assumption of the veneer of manners, but rather through the recognition from above of a certain kind of merit--Humphry and Win move from service on the margins of the family to a position of moderate influence within it. As Mrs. Loyd ("late Jenkins" as Tabitha puts it (November 20, 336)), Win is quick to assert the potential influence, exercised through "good will and protection", her position commands.

If Smollett's dramatization of the rising fortunes of Humphry and Win represents a moderation of the exclusionary nature of the rhetorical structure balancing the grotesque and classical bodies, and thus an abatement of the obsessive connection of manners and morals so characteristic of the literature of courtesy, then Sterne's anatomy of the curiously detailed world of the Shandys represents a complete reorientation of that pattern. Humphry and Win find a place within a larger household whose order is of a piece with a universal social order. But the Shandy household is governed by the misrule of the variously impotent Shandy men. It projects no society in which the
stratification of rank might assume a meaningful dramatic dimension. In Tristram's world the body exists as an abysm of particularity--"a dark covering of uncrystallized flesh and blood" (I.xxiii; I:83)---in which man's various desires are hopelessly lost. As we have seen, Sterne's use of Della Casa's Galateo focuses on problems of irrelevance and disruption, and I suggested near the end of the previous chapter that Sterne's book might properly be regarded as a work of anti-courtesy. Sterne is neither interested in the prerequisites of the various classes nor, and perhaps consequently, concerned to keep the grotesque and the classical bodies at a respectful and useful distance from one another. The classical body does come into the novel, but transformed from its typical appearance. Stallybrass and White remark upon the essential passivity of that body as it is represented in statuary, and that passivity is central to the reception of the classical body--Fielding's repeated use of the desirable body of a naked woman as a figurative expression of the innate charms of virtue catches both at the passivity of the classical body and its potential eroticism. As I suggested earlier, both Fielding and Smollett exploit this doubleness at various times with Fanny and Lydia, but ultimately observe the appropriate decorums. The sexuality of both these characters is observed from a respectful distance. Sterne, however,
exploits the erotic potential of the classical body, and in doing so draws it within the compass of the grotesque body. On the one hand, the gaze that observes this body sees only its erotic nature. This is not courteous contemplation, but playfully libidinous leering. On the other hand, the body so viewed is physically opened, energetic, and possessive—references to the female genitalia abound, and the Beguine’s fingers move ably along Trim’s leg, while the widow Wadman’s curiosity about the nature of Toby’s wound is unrelenting. The inviolability of the classical body is further eroded by Tristram’s choice of figure, which draws the desirable body into the world of the quotidian material minutiae that constitute such an important part of the Shandys’ universe—buttonholes, slits, and covered-ways. If I call Tristram Shandy a work of anti-courtesy it is because of this habitual overturning of the decorums that tend to proceed from the classical body isolated in its distinctive sphere. The body that appears in the novel is observed so closely as to be trapped in its particularity, and the mind that would escape that body, animated by desire for the erotic body, does not perceive that body as a passive and inaccessible icon, but fixates on how that body may be entered, fixates, therefore, on the grotesque characteristics of that body and figures its flesh as rooted in the continuum of the commonplace.
The focus of its attention inimical to the order of courtesy and therefore bypassing the order of the rhetorical structure setting the grotesque against the classical body, *Tristram Shandy* nevertheless demonstrates the fecundity of that structure, and its utility in ordering eighteenth-century fictional space. By comparison, *Joseph Andrews* and *Humphry Clinker* employ that structure in as conventional a manner as its appearance in the literature of courtesy—the classical and the grotesque bodies delimit the scope of moral inquiry and do in fact in a large measure determine its outcome. Their world is, as Matthew Bramble desires, judiciously ordered. And that order is largely manifested in the way individuals behave in relation to one another. *Tristram Shandy* is equally dependent on this rhetorical structure. But throwing principles of order to the wind, so to speak—"wit and judgment in this world never go together; inasmuch as they are two operations differing from each other as wide as east is from west. So, says Locke, so are farting and hickupping, say I" (III. Preface; I:227) —Tristram is left only with the body itself, a thing that cannot be invested with the values that might otherwise regularize its chaotic life. The desire that orders Fielding's fictional universe by faithfully observing distinctions between high and low collapses the poles of
Sterne's world by perceiving all bodies inescapably participating in the body's grotesque and aimless existence.
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