Now best known for three great novels – *Tom Jones*, *Joseph Andrews* and *Amelia* – Henry Fielding (1707–1754) was one of the most controversial figures of his time. Prominent first as a playwright, then as a novelist and political journalist, and finally as a justice of the peace, Fielding made a substantial contribution to eighteenth-century culture, and was hugely influential in the development of the novel as a form, both in Britain and more widely in Europe. This collection of specially commissioned essays by leading scholars describes and analyses the many facets of Fielding’s work in theatre, fiction, journalism and politics. In addition it assesses his unique contribution to the rise of the novel as the dominant literary form, the development of the law, and the political and literary culture of eighteenth-century Britain. Including a Chronology and Guide to Further Reading, this volume offers a comprehensive account of Fielding’s life and work.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOTE ON EDITIONS USED

Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from Fielding will be from the Wesleyan Edition of the Works of Henry Fielding, Executive Editor W. B. Coley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967–), and page references will be to the relevant volumes of that edition. Sectional references to book, chapter, act, or scene will be provided for readers using other editions. Parenthetical references in the text will therefore give page numbers in the Wesleyan Edition, followed by book and chapter (or act and scene) numbers, e.g. 96; II. iv. The Wesleyan Edition to date includes (for full publication details, see Guide to Further Reading):

*Amelia*, ed. Martin C. Battestin
*Contributions to the Champion*, ed. W. B. Coley
*Covent-Garden Journal*, ed. Bertrand A. Goldgar
‘An Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers’ and Related Writings, ed. Malvin R. Zirker
*The History of Tom Jones*, ed. Martin C. Battestin
*The Jacobite’s Journal*, ed. W. B. Coley
*Miscellanies*, vol. 1, ed. Henry Knight Miller
*Miscellanies*, vol. 11, ed. Bertrand A. Goldgar and Hugh Amory
*Miscellanies*, vol. 111, ed. Bertrand A. Goldgar and Hugh Amory (includes *Jonathan Wild*)
*Plays*, vol. 1, 1728–31, ed. Thomas Lockwood
*The True Patriot and Related Writings*, ed. W. B. Coley

**CHRONOLOGY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1707</td>
<td>22 April, HF born at his maternal grandfather’s house, Sharpham Park, near Glastonbury, Somerset</td>
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<tr>
<td>1710</td>
<td>November, Sarah, the third of HF’s four sisters, born at the family estate at East Stour, Dorset</td>
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<tr>
<td>1714</td>
<td>Death of Queen Anne, accession of George I. Alexander Pope, <em>The Rape of the Lock</em>, published</td>
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<td>1715–20</td>
<td>Pope, <em>The Iliad of Homer</em> (translation), published</td>
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<tr>
<td>1718</td>
<td>April, death of HF’s mother, Sarah Gould Fielding. Within a year HF’s father Edmund Fielding remarries and an acrimonious battle with Lady Gould, the children’s maternal grandmother, for the custody of the children begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>1719–24</td>
<td>Education at Eton. Among his fellow students is George Lyttelton, a friend and patron in HF’s later life</td>
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<tr>
<td>1721</td>
<td>September, birth of HF’s half-brother John, who later worked with HF and succeeded him as magistrate at Bow Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>1724</td>
<td>Defoe, <em>Roxana</em>, published</td>
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<tr>
<td>1724–6</td>
<td>Defoe, <em>Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain</em>, published</td>
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CHRONOLOGY

1725 May, Jonathan Wild hanged at Tyburn
1725–6 Pope, *The Odyssey of Homer* (translation), published
1726 Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, published
1727 Death of George I, accession of George II
1729 Return to London from Leiden. April, Pope, *Dunciad, Variorum*, published
1730 *The Temple Beau* (January), *The Author’s Farce* (March), *Tom Thumb* (April), *Rape upon Rape* (later known as *The Coffee-House Politician*) (June) performed
1731 *The Tragedy of Tragedies: Or, the Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great* (March), *The Letter-Writers* (March), *The Welsh Opera* (April) performed; *The Grub-Street Opera* rehearsed but not performed
1732 *The Lottery* (January), *The Modern Husband* (February), *The Covent-Garden Tragedy* (June), *The Old Debauchees* (June), *The Mock-Doctor* (from Molière, June) performed
1733 February, *The Miser* (from Molière) performed
1734 *The Intriguing Chambermaid* (January), *Don Quixote in England* (April) performed. November, marriage to Charlotte Cradock at Charlcombe, just outside Bath
1735 *An Old Man Taught Wisdom* (January), *The Universal Gallant* (February) performed
1737 *Eurydice* (February), *The Historical Register for the Year 1736* (March), *Eurydice Hiss’d* (April) performed. Passing of Licensing Act, effectively ending HF’s career as a playwright. HF becomes a law student in the Middle Temple
CHRONOLOGY

1739–41 Edits the *Champion*, a paper politically opposed to Walpole

1740 June, called to the Bar. *The Military History of Charles XII, King of Sweden*, by M. Gustavus Adlerfeld (HF translation) published. Colley Cibber, *An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber, Comedian*, and Samuel Richardson’s novel *Pamela* published. December, beginning of the War of Austrian Succession, which continues until 1748

1741 April, *An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews*, HF’s parody of Cibber’s *Apology* and especially Richardson’s *Pamela*, published anonymously. December, sequel to *Pamela* (vols. iii and iv), published. HF seems to break with Opposition and to side with Walpole’s government


1743 February, *The Wedding-Day* performed. April, *Miscellanies* published in three volumes, including poems, plays, essays, the otherworldly fiction *A Journey from this World to the Next*, and, occupying the whole of the third volume, *The History of the Life of the Late Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great*. October, Pope, *The Dunciad, in Four Books* (final version), published


1745 The ‘Forty Five’, the invasion by the ‘Young Pretender’ Prince Charles Edward Stuart attempting to restore the long-exiled Stuart monarchy with the aid of Jacobite supporters in Britain. November 1745 to June 1746, HF edits *The True Patriot*, a pro-Hanoverian paper opposing the rebellion

1746 April, final defeat of the Jacobites at Culloden
1747
April, Sarah Fielding’s *Familiar Letters between the Principal Characters in ‘David Simple’ and Some Others* published, with a Preface and some other contributions from HF. November, marries Mary Daniel, formerly his first wife’s maid, now pregnant with his child. December 1747–November 1748, HF edits *The Jacobite’s Journal*. December 1747, the first part of Richardson’s novel *Clarissa* published.

1748

1749

1750
February, the opening of the Universal Register Office, a clearing house for employment, sales, exchange and property transactions, managed by HF and his half-brother John. July 1750–January 1751, three of HF’s four sisters die in London. 1750–2, Samuel Johnson’s *The Rambler* published.

1751

1752
January–November, edits *Covent-Garden Journal*.

1753
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1754</td>
<td>March, revised edition of <em>Jonathan Wild</em> published. HF’s health, poor for several years, deteriorates to the extent that he has to resign his office as magistrate. June–August, HF travels to Lisbon in hopes the Portuguese air would improve his health. 8 October, dies at Junqueira near Lisbon</td>
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<tr>
<td>1755</td>
<td>February, the <em>Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon</em> published</td>
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