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Introductory critical studies

SAMUEL RICHARDSON

This book provides a concise introduction to Richardson, by combining a close reading of *Pamela*, *Clarissa*, and *Sir Charles Grandison* with a discussion of their central themes.

An outsider by birth, education and profession, Richardson found common cause with women in a world that needed change. Employing forms familiar to them, letters and tales of courtship and marriage, he urged his readers to train their powers of reason and morality by debating the issues of his novels. Dr Harris explores Richardson's vision that the relationship between men and women is as politically charged as that between monarch and subject. In *Clarissa* this relationship is imaginatively represented by means of the characters' archetypes – Eve, Lucretia and Queen Elizabeth on the one hand, Satan, Don Juan, Faust and King on the other. In *Grandison*, Richardson shows men what they must be if they wish to marry women like Clarissa, and argues that marriage, then the necessary female destiny, can only thus be made to work to women's advantage.

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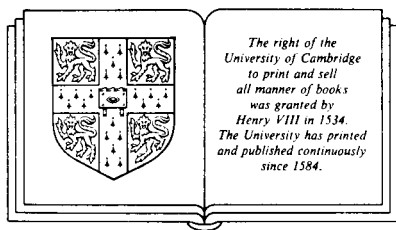
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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

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NEW YORK PORT CHESTER

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521315425

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First published 1987
Reprinted 1989
Re-issued in this digitally printed version 2009

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Harris, Jocelyn.
Samuel Richardson
(British and Irish authors : introductory critical
studies)
Bibliography.
Includes index.
I. Richardson, Samuel, 1699—1761 — Criticism and
interpretation. I. Title. II. Series: British and
Irish authors.
PR3667.H37 1987 823'.6 86—17126

ISBN 978-0-521-30501-3 hardback
ISBN 978-0-521-31542-5 paperback

Cambridge University Press
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For John, James, and Lison Harris

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Preface

References are to the first edition *Pamela* edited by T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel (Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1971), a photographic reproduction of the 1801 *Pamela in her Exalted Condition* (Garland, New York and London, 1974), a modernised first edition reprint in one volume of *Clarissa* edited by Angus Ross (Penguin and Viking, Middlesex and New York, 1985), the first edition reprint of *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* in three parts, edited by Jocelyn Harris (Oxford English Novels, London, New York and Toronto, 1972, repr. 1986), *Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson*, edited by John Carroll (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1964), T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, *Samuel Richardson: A Biography* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1971), and John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, edited by Peter Laslett (Cambridge University Press, New York, 1960, repr. 1965). Locke references are to section numbers.

It is a pleasure to recollect how many people have helped me during the Richardson years. My most long-standing debts are to Margaret Dalziel, Alan Horsman, Duncan Isles, and the late Geoffrey Tillotson, my most recent to Terence Moore, Claude Rawson, Pat Rogers and Angus Ross. Ian Donaldson, Margaret Anne Doody, Jonathan Lamb, Michael Neill, Ruth Perry, Peter Sabor, and Marijke Rudnik-Smalbraak were true friends who never changed the subject too soon. The University of Otago was generous with its leave, and Susan Ash, Annabel Cooper and Mary Sullivan gave essential aid, at the end. All error, though, is mine.

J. M. H.
Grenoble and Dunedin, 31 December 1985.

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A chronology of Samuel Richardson

- 1689 Born in Derbyshire, the son of a joiner
- 1701–2 Writes love-letters for neighbourhood girls and moral stories for friends. Educated at Merchant Taylors’?
- 1706–13 Apprenticed to John Wilde, a notable printer
- 1718 or 1719 Sets up own printing house in Fleet Street
- 1721 Marries his master’s daughter; five sons and a daughter will die in infancy, and his wife in 1731
- 1723 Establishes himself in Salisbury Court, and prospers. Soon printing for Parliament, the Society for the Encouragement of Learning, and the Royal Society; will edit as well as print works by Defoe, L’Estrange, and Sir Thomas Roe
- 1732 Writes *The Apprentice’s Vade Mecum* for the Stationers’ Company
- 1733 Marries again; a son will die in infancy and four daughters survive
- 1740 *Pamela* I–II published, an immediate success. Richardson revises it for the rest of his life
- 1741 Publishes *Familiar Letters*, from which *Pamela* had sprung
- 1742 *Pamela* III–IV
- 1747 (1 December) *Clarissa* I–II published, amid copious debates
- 1748 (28 April) *Clarissa* III–IV; correspondents beg for her life
 (6 December) *Clarissa* V–VII
- 1749–54 Debates on *Clarissa* and *Tom Jones* slide into the writing of *Sir Charles Grandison*
- 1750 Publishes *Meditations on the Sacred Books . . . mentioned in Clarissa*
- 1751 Contributes No. 97 to Johnson’s *Rambler*; publishes a volume of ‘restorations’ to *Clarissa*, which will be incorporated into the later revised editions
- 1753 Publishes *Sir Charles Grandison*, which he will at once start to revise; fends off an Irish piracy of the work

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A CHRONOLOGY OF SAMUEL RICHARDSON

- 1755 *A Collection of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments . . .
 Contained in the Histories of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir
 Charles Grandison*
- 1761 (4 July) Richardson dies, and is buried in St
 Bride's, Fleet Street