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satire, for instance, is said to make 'the earlier lyrics look fragile and dilettante by comparison' (p. 76). The analysis of individual works turns out to be most convincing and impressive in the detailed descriptions of the two chapters on Rochester, although one might differ on a number of points.

Dr. Farley-Hills thanks Karl Capper-Johnson in his preface 'for placing the dots correctly'. This is not altogether justified as the transcriptions, especially from older editions, are full of (little) mistakes. The dates are not always reliable (e.g. '1972' instead of '1927' on p. 197), and some of the titles have been altered (*Meeting of Ulysses and Penelope* instead of *The Innovation of Penelope and Ulysses*). But these are minor complaints about a very readable and useful book.

HELMUT CASTROP

Samuel Richardson's Theory of Fiction. By DONALD L. BALL. Pp. 324. The Hague: Mouton, 1971. Fl.36.00.

Samuel Richardson. The Triumph of Craft. By ELIZABETH BERGEN BROPHY. Pp. xviii+134. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1974. \$7.25 net.

A Natural Passion. A Study of the Novels of Samuel Richardson. By MARGARET ANNE DOODY. Pp. xii+410. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974. £8 net.

Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist. By MARK KINKEAD-WEEKES. Pp. x+506. London: Methuen, 1973. £5.20 net.

These four books on Richardson have the character of 'second-generation' criticism. Once there were the originators, Downs, McKillop, Sale, Watt. Now, in the reassuring company of the massively authoritative Eaves and Kimpel, come the students, the researchers, revisers, correctors, those who have a responsibility not only to Richardson but to Richardson studies. Thus these four books are written with a full sense of what has already been written about Richardson, and what has not yet been written. They take on what is left to take on: Richardson's theory of fiction (Ball), or the 'iconography' of his visual imagery (Doody); or they set out to correct prevailing misconceptions: the 'pre-occupation with Richardson's unconscious' (Brophy); or outline a more profitable way of reading the novels (Kinkead-Weekes). They all start from the assumption that Richardson was a conscious artist who perfected his own technique for his own deliberate purposes. This discovery of the real Richardson is a rediscovery, a retort to the established critics and a redirection of our attention. Well and good. That is the usefulness of 'second-generation' criticism, to insist on the 'yes but . . .', to remind the critic of his responsibility to scholarship. But it cannot be said that all our four writers do this with equal success.

We feel bound to ask, for instance, as we observe Donald Ball's meticulous cataloguing and categorizing, and his steady refusal to take anything for granted, what *use* his book can be. His intention is to provide a comprehensive and detailed analysis both of Richardson's theory of fiction and of his practice as a novelist. He goes about this in a thoroughly systematic way, first tracking down

all of Richardson's explicit utterances about his art and then examining his actual practice under four main headings: Narrative Structure (a term, as Mr. Ball admits, not in Richardson's vocabulary: 'His term that most closely approximates NARRATIVE STRUCTURE is STORY'), Epistolary Technique, Characterization, Presentation of Moral Doctrine. Mr. Ball scrupulously determines the limits and the form of his inquiry, and sticks to them. His method is scientific: that is, naïve. He rules out questions of value. His not to reason why; his work is that of classifying and enumerating: a narrative has five main events, letters are of three main kinds (characteristic, dramatic, and narrative), characters are primary, secondary, minor, or nominal. The significant things are those that can be quantified: 'the extent to which . . .', 'the relatively small amount of . . .', even 'a slightly compelling dramatic situation'. Counting is the essence of the matter: sixty-two narrative devices (sixteen of which appear for the first time in *Pamela II*, which can then 'from a simple device count' be shown to have more influence on *Clarissa* than on *Grandison*); 'seventeen distinct letter types' in *Pamela*, increasing to 42 'types and devices' in *Clarissa*; a total of 75 characters in *Clarissa* 'with two primary, two secondary, thirty minor, and thirty-one nominal' (and ten 'don't-knows'?). The book's conclusion is that 'of forty statements of theory, Richardson practised all but six', strongly supporting eleven and further developing nine. Q.E.D. And yet I do not believe that an enterprise of this kind need be otiose. I hoped to find that the sustained naïvety of this method would throw into relief new and revealing aspects of the novels. In the event it hardly serves even to do justice to what is familiar, and quite fails to come to terms with notorious problems such as, for instance, the moral ambiguity of the novels. Mr. Ball's subject is 'technique' and that subject, it soon dawns on us, begs all the important questions about meaning and value.

As it happens, this is the subject of Elizabeth Brophy's book also: Richardson's technique, his craftsmanship, his 'deliberate aims' as an artist. Also her presentation of the theme is in many ways strikingly similar to Ball's. Like him she begins with an account of Richardson's theory, his 'artistic precepts', and then examines the novels 'to see whether Richardson's practice did fulfill [*sic*] his ideas'. Like him she concludes that the novels do bear out the precepts, and (more boldly) she maintains that this gives us an 'insight into the best way to approach his work'. I think she can be said to have made good her claim. She handles the material more effectively than Mr. Ball does. She makes a book out of his thesis. She works to his brief with persuasive advocacy. Not only that, but she defines her themes with more literary tact. In place of the arbitrary divisions adopted by Mr. Ball she has a freer, more flexible discussion of Richardson's artistry. Her four chapters on 'Precept', forming Part I of the book, start with a demonstration of his seriousness as a writer, his 'commitment' to his art, and relate this first to his *moral* seriousness and then to his desire to engage the reader's attention and sympathy, especially by means of the epistolary form. This works well: it arises naturally out of legitimate questions about Richardson's work, and it puts to good use the comprehensive collection of all Richardson's most important utterances about his art. Yet it will hardly alter our view of Richardson. It is shrewd, observant, lucid—as indeed is the criticism of the

novels in Part II, the discussion of Richardson's 'Practice'. But it does not go deep enough to cope with some fundamental issues (is Pamela's moral sense in question?—the answer is that she has 'integrity'), and it is not without some touches of cheapness (we can side with Clarissa's intelligence and perceptiveness because 'most readers prefer to be thought intelligent and perceptive'). This is a modest book (at least I hope it is), decently kept to less than 50,000 words, not (as the blurb claims) 'challenging', but sensible and informative.

Margaret Anne Doody's book, by contrast, is long (nearly four times as long), ambitious—and brilliant. It is too long, because its length is determined at least in part by its origins as a doctoral dissertation. It touches on nothing that it does not expatiate on. Mrs. Davys's *The Reformed Coquet*, Mrs. Barker's *Love's Intrigues*, Charles Johnson's *The Country Lasses*, Allestree's *The Gentleman's Calling*, these and many other works (which do offer illuminating parallels to Richardson) keep *usurping* attention: when they crop up they become the centre of a new argument. (An admirable exception is the extended and fruitful examination of Lovelace's relation to the heroes of Restoration tragedy: there the material is deftly arranged so as to keep Lovelace himself at the centre and the major theme intact.) In a similar way the book as a whole keeps straying from the central topic. The 'natural passion' of the title is love, and 'the love relationship is the focal point of Richardson's imagination'; each novel is seen as an answer to questions about the 'natural passion'—'What is love? And what is meant by "natural"? Is "nature" good or bad? or partly both? or neutral in the fray?' There is certainly a good deal in the book that counts as a development of these themes. But there are occasions when one returns to them apparently by accident rather than design (as in the discussion of *Pamela II* for instance) and there are whole sections (the 'deathbed theme', the house imagery, the visual emblems) where the theme is in abeyance. Yet such things hardly matter in this case. Miss Doody's book is valued precisely because of its abundance, the fertility of its ideas, its energy of discovery. There is absolutely nothing meagre or strained about it. Miss Doody squanders her insights: 'Richardson's perceptions are . . . intuitively ironic. Love is a major irony'; 'Richardson's epistolary form is an image of freedom' (there is room for argument here, but no time: Miss Doody is urging us on to consider 'God as consciousness'); the central figures are 'immoderate people in a world which counsels a debased moderation'. And it is not just that she is always saying good things: many of the major topics of the book (particularly the discussion of the visual and emblematic imagery) represent major new developments in Richardson criticism.

At the same time they are not really a radically new approach to Richardson. They are the product of a vigorous intelligence acting upon hints and clues available to us all. But the excellence of Mark Kinkead-Weekes's book is of a different order. He is of course the most 'seasoned' of our four authors, and his quietly spoken book is the most magisterial—and quite the longest. But this book needs its length, and uses it. As in Richardson's novels the length is a corollary of the unity, the intensive development of a single theme. And it is in that way a factor of the book's originality. For Mr. Kinkead-Weekes is asking for a new method of reading Richardson, a way of 'reading to the moment'

analogous to Richardson's method of writing. Like Mr. Ball and Professor Brophy, but with more insight into what is involved, he wants to get back to what Richardson was actually doing, on the assumption that Richardson was by no means 'so artless as he looks'. Hence the length. The 'reading' has to be commensurate with the text, it has to follow the 'day-to-day fluctuations' and the gradual development of the meaning through all the events. And this is something that Mr. Kinkead-Weekes does in a masterly way. His 'reading' of the novels is quite simply the best that I know, utterly faithful and observant, and thus the best possible (indeed the only possible) vindication of his thesis. All the same I do not in the end find myself convinced. True there is in Richardson's stories a disconcerting capacity for change. Often what seems like an established fact turns out to be only provisional. 'Readers must have their wits about them,' Mr. Kinkead-Weekes says of one episode, 'for the whole truth only appears when the separate accounts of these scenes are pieced together.' This need to reserve judgement is felt as strongly with *Clarissa* as with, say, *Antony and Cleopatra*. As Mr. Kinkead-Weekes points out, it is not just empty adulation to say that Richardson is Shakespearean.

But it is here that the theory becomes suspect. For, if Richardson is in this sense 'dramatic', he no more needs a special kind of reading than does Shakespeare. Indeed Mr. Kinkead-Weekes does not exclusively read 'to the moment'. Take his account of Lovelace for instance. We are reminded that first impressions of Lovelace are not reliable, that they are 'a trap for the unwary and superficial', as they were when the book first appeared. But, though a step-by-step account is needed to reveal the trap and show how it may be avoided, it is not needed to describe Lovelace. And in fact Mr. Kinkead-Weekes does find it possible to describe the total 'complexity' of Lovelace not as a process but as a completed picture. His method of reading *must* of course be the method of *reading* (just as a play on the stage must be enacted moment by moment). But it is not therefore the only, or even the right method for *describing* the book. If, on the other hand, Mr. Kinkead-Weekes wants to *describe the reading* of the books I believe he will have to reckon again with my arguments about *Clarissa* (arguments he disputes with great cogency and force, I am bound to admit) that the 'moments' of the novel are critical moments, fraught with anxiety, and inflicting severe damage on the continuity of experience both for the characters and the readers. Here, it seems to me, is the reason why the 'drama' is expressed in letters; and here, since the characters in the story are readers as well as writers, reading to the moment is a reading process that *must* be described.

JOHN PRESTON

Virtue in Distress. Studies in the Novel of Sentiment from Richardson to Sade. By R. F. BRISSENDEN. Pp. xiv+306. London: Macmillan, 1974. £5.95 net.

Virtue in Distress is a study of eighteenth-century sentimentalism and of the most important novels to which it gave rise. It contrives to be both scholarly and