

PAMELA

or virtue rewarded

written by Samuel Richardson

Inspired an Italian TV series, *Elisa di Rivombrosa*.

Written by *Samuel Richardson* in 1740

High success →

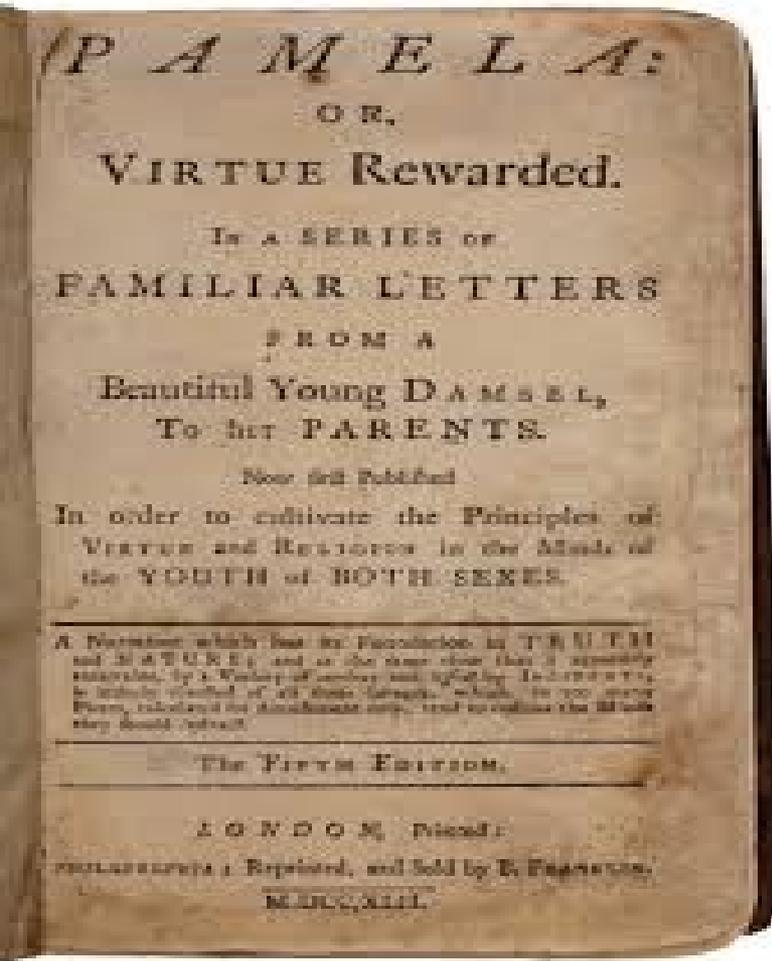
Also the sequel was written

**PAMELA , OR
THE VIRTUE
REWARDED**

This novel is made of a series of letters that *Pamela sent to her family*.

New type of writing:
epistolary novel.

Pamela's plot



Pamela is a very beautiful and virtuous girl, but unfortunately she's very poor. She is at the service of a wealthy English woman, **Mrs. B.** When she dies, Pamela goes to the service of her son, **Mr. B.**, who tries to seduce the young girl in every way. Pamela refused his avances many times, so the powerful man imprisoned her for forty days in order to convince her to accept.

Pamela is so desperate that she thinks of suicide, but she changes her mind thinking that maybe under Mr.B.'s cruel mask a good soul is hidden. Mr. B. also understands that his brutality will not lead to any result so he begins to court Pamela in a sweet and romantic way. In the end she accepts her master's second marriage proposal, living happily and accepted by the society of the time.

Main characters

Pamela

She is a **pretty, courageous and morally correct servant**. She's 15 years old and she is really devoted to her poor family and, in fact, she writes a great number of letters to her father and her mother.

Her family give her a **good moral education** and thanks to that, she could defend her purity in a lot of situations, for example the sexual advances of her master Mr.B.

Mr. B.

He's a **wealthy squire**. He is 25 years old and he becomes Pamela's master when his mother dies . His name is censored in order to the protect his identity, with the pretense of non-fiction. Mr.B has **libertine tendencies** shown in his attitude towards Pamela. In the beginning, in fact, he considers Pamela as one of his possessions, but in the end he understand the essence of the woman and he starts loving her.

Lady B.

She was the mother of Mr.B.. She was a **kind woman** and she was always really friendly to Pamela. Before dying she told her son to look after Pamela.

Mr. John Andrews

He's Pamela's father. He's **virtuous** like his daughter. He was a teacher, but life was not easy for him , so his family became poor **and he had to become a farmer to sustain his family.**

Themes

- **Sexual politics**
- **Class Politics**
- **Realism and country life**
- **Psychology and the Self**
- **The Nature of Virtue**
- **The Integrity of the Individual**

Sexual politics



Richardson's idea: marriage isn't the right reward for virtue.

Class Politics classes



18th century was an age of social climbing and improvement. The author focuses on the origins of Pamela, that now is a servant, but her family hadn't always been poor. **She had an education, but it didn't save her from being a servant.**

Noble classes were always cruel with poor classes, violating the duty to protect weak people, as Mr. B does, violating Pamela.

Realism and country life

18th century literature generally tended to idealize the rustic and simple life, identifying the country girls with natural beauty and pastoral innocence.

BUT RICHARDSON



changes this tradition

PSYCHOLOGY AND THE SELF

Richardson explores human psychology, thanks to his **new narrative method**, that permits to keep the impulse of the moment.

The Nature of Virtue

Richardson was always accused to define virtue in a too strict way ,only as the physical condition of virginity.

IN PAMELA VIRTUE has got a MORAL CONNOTATION .

The integrity of the individual

Richardson's characters are always fighting with their passions and desire to keep intact their integrity.

Pamela → she must offend her master to defend her purity and be

REWARDED