Alan T. McKenzie

The Physiology of Deceit in Fielding's Works

As unwilling to be imposed upon as the most sceptical of his contemporaries, and with an eye for deceit sharpened both behind the stage and upon the bench, Henry Fielding developed one of the general concerns of his age into high art. He equipped many of his characters with certain passions and their attendant physiology—just enough to generate deceit, discomfort, and, eventually, discovery. The mechanism of the passions is not, I need hardly add, something Fielding invented; he relied on the tradition of faculty psychology originated by Aristotle and modified by the stoics, Galen, Descartes, and many others. These passions came to him as thoroughly analyzed and intricately systematic components of character. He instilled them in his characters as responses to actions and objects, and by way of distillations from the blood. In passage after passage the vital spirits go about their business, carrying messages of satisfaction or distress within the body and producing indications of these sensations without. I propose to demonstrate, by both citation and anlaysis, that Fielding turned to the physiology of deceit at crucial moments in every book, and that he relied far more on physiology than has been previously suggested. The psychological tradition in which he chose to work provided sufficient intricacy to suit his genius and his integrity, and to fulfill both artistic and moral purposes.[1]

I shall argue that Fielding found the physiology of passion dramatic and that he rendered it forensic. Alert, in his earliest works, to the dramatic possibilities inherent in the changes passion induced in both voice and countenance, he made the display of passion highly, perhaps excessively, theatrical. He sometimes overdrew the passions for comic effect, as in the "agonies" of Lady Booby, the "Ebullience" of Parson Adams, and the sudden humours of Squire Western, and he sometimes overdid the blushing of his heroines. Nevertheless, as his discursive treatments of passion and deceit in the "Preface" to *Joseph Andrews* and the "Essay on the Characters of Men" indicate, he understood very well both the passions and their potential for his art. The most thorough and effective exploitation of his doctrine is evident, as we might expect, in *Tom Jones*, but passion and deceit are hard at work in several crucial passages in *Jonathan Wild*. The concern lingers, perhaps a little feebly in *Amelia* and the *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*.

In all his works those characters who can simulate or suppress their displays of passion are always to be distrusted by the narrator, as well as by those characters and readers who wish to thrive in the world Fielding creates. In characters with a capacity for evil the connections between the heart within and the face and voice without can (for a while) be interrupted at will, enabling those characters to perpetrate much imposition. Then, without fail, some passion that begins on the outside, in response to external circumstances, grows so overwhelming that it restores the severed connections, and informs the bad heart of something it does not wish to know. The working of passion in these characters is usually accompanied by considerable, but comic, internal discomfort, implicit in figures of speech suggesting boiling, chagrin, pangs, struggles, and flame—all figures derived from the physiology of passion, and most used with some sense of that derivation by Fielding. In the good characters, on the other hand, the physiological connections are easy and regular, and the attendant sensations pleasant. What goes on in the heart is readily and agreeably communicated to the face, and never distorts the voice. Thus Fielding employs the passions to send signals from one character to another, from some characters to themselves, and from all of his characters to some of his readers. Sometimes the passions send messages of character, sometimes they send hints of plot, and sometimes they make moral statements. In every case, they bend the precepts of Eighteenth century physiology to Fielding's wise and humorous purposes.

Jonathan Wild was blessed by mother nature and the generic requirements of rogue biography with many attributes that qualified him for greatness—among them ingenuity, ambition, dexterity, avarice, and insatiability, together with "a wonderful knack of discovering and applying to the passions of men . . ." and, most applicable to the present purposes, that great art which the vulgar call "dissembling" and great men call "policy". His ability to render his own passions impenetrable, frequently remarked upon by Fielding and never, as far as I can see, made much of by critics, underlies all of Wild's success. It must have made that success most alarming in an age unwilling to be imposed upon.

This skillful severing of the connections between a passion within and the display without concludes Wild's fifteen maxims for the attaining of greatness: "15. That the heart was the proper seat of hatred, and the countenance of affection and friendship" (pp. 202-203). It reappears in the passage from which I have taken my title: "Thus did our hero execute the greatest exploits with the utmost ease imaginable, by means of those transcendent qualities which nature had indulged him with, viz. a bold heart, a thundering voice, and a steady countenance."[2]

I isolate that phrase because it implies the physiological interdependence among three parts of the body, one hidden (except from an omniscient narrator), and the other two quite conspicuous. The heart is the seat of the passions; it communicates, and often betrays, their presence and identity by altering the flow of the vital spirits. These vital spirits, distillations from the blood, course about in direct response to a passion, altering the muscles, and thus the face, and the vocal chords, and thus the voice. The unnatural few who can prevent or simulate these effects are wonderfully equipped to impose upon the rest of us, and wonderfully equipped to act as villains in Fielding's works. He comments on Wild's talents in this respect again and again, using phrases like "with wonderful greatness of mind and steadiness of countenance," "with the notable presence of mind and unchanged complexion so essential to a great character," and "He was greatly superior to all mankind in the steadiness of his countenance, but this undertaking seemed to require more of that noble quality than had ever been the portion of a mortal" (pp. 69, 70, and 108-109). Wild summons up all of his unnatural prowess in a scene in which he discovers that his pocket has been picked by the sister of his beloved:

> However, as he had that perfect mastery of his temper, or rather of his muscles, which is as necessary to the forming a great character as to the personating it on the stage, he soon conveyed a smile into his countenance, and, concealing as well his misfortune as his chagrin at it, began to pay honourable addresses to Miss Letty. (p. 63)

Fielding's knowledge of what goes on both on and off the stage is implicit in the notion of "forming" a great character, while the hint in "or rather of his muscles" is taken up in the friction and discomfort implicit in "chagrin" in this passage.

The most intriguing incident in which Fielding manipulates Wild's management of the display of his passions is one in which Wild loses his characteristic "assurance." He has just been set adrift in a small boat, "without oar, without sail," and with only "half-a-dozen biscuits to prolong his misery." He resorts first to blasphemy, then to a posturing defiance, and finally to what he thinks will be suicide:

> At length, finding himself descending too much into the language of meanness and complaint, he stopped short, and soon after broke forth as follows: "D—n it, a man can die but once! what signifies it? Every

> man must die, and when it is over it is over. I never was afraid of anything yet, nor I won't begin now; no, d—n me won't I. What signifies fear? I shall die whether I am afraid or no; who's afraid then, d—n me?" At which words he looked extremely fierce, but, recollecting that no one was present to see him, he relaxed a little the terror of his countenance, and, pausing a while, repeated the word, d—n! (pp. 88-90)

The effect of this wonderfully theatrical passage depends on the absence of an audience and the presence of the vital spirits. (I pass over the theological implications of all that "Damning" in the face of death and omnipotence.) As I read it Wild begins confidently enough, with much boldness in his voice. Then, as his words find no audience to convince, they succeed only in unconvincing their speaker. Finally, his facial expression begins to fail, also for lack of an audience. And Wild needs his facial expressions to help him to stimulate within the passion he has simulated without. As he relaxes a little the terror of his countenance, his vital spirits dissolve his spurious inner strength, and imperil his soul. As his voice falters and his countenance slackens, his heart grows much less bold. The "wonderful resolution" with which he casts himself headlong into the sea is really only confusion mingled with despair.

Wild survives, but he lives "under a continual alarm of frights, and fears, and jealousies," (. 138) until his transgressions grow too evident even for the Eighteenth-century judicial system. His transgressions eventually find their way, quite naturally, into his countenance.

> . . . but, when one of the keepers . . . repeated Heartfree's name among those of the malefactors who were to suffer within a few days, the blood forsook his countenance, and in a cold still stream moved heavily to his heart, which had scarce strength enough left to return it through his veins. In short, his body so visibly demonstrated the pangs of his mind, that to escape observation he retired to his room, where he sullenly gave vent to . . . bitter agonies . . . . (pp. 157-58)

I regard that passage as a triumph of physiology over deceit, and perhaps also over art. Nonetheless, it would be unfortunate if we were to allow the contrivance and the melodrama to obscure the deft theatrical awareness (in both character and narrator) in "to escape observation" and the hint of physiological discomfort in "bitter." Fielding soon developed formal and stylistic subtleties not evident here, but he never abandoned his concern with either physiology or deceit or his assumption, both moral and aesthetic, that the connections between the two were strong and exploitable. We will come shortly to two comparable passages from *Tom Jones*—one even more theatrical, and also set in a prison, and the other comparable in administering a strong dose of well-deserved and self-inflicted bitterness to a villain. Both passages will draw additional strength from a much more sophisticated plot and a much more penetrating narrator.

Jonathan Wild is certainly an early work, written well before its publication in 1743. And while this convenient (but still impressive) manipulation of passion suggests as much, the play of passion both on and behind the face had always struck Fielding as a source of drama and humour. He exploits several other possibilities in his plays, all of them earlier than *Jonathan Wild.* In them he works often and well with one manifestation of passion he had little occasion for in Jonathan Wild—blushing. This coursing of the blood and the vital spirits toward the skin in response to the passions of shame or embarrassment is usually reserved for his female characters, and was, I suppose, rendered more noticeable by the decolletage then very much in style. Indeed, I suspect that the fashion was a response to the social demand for frequent evidence of modesty. Thus Huncamunca, when "The burning Bridegroom" hints at his intentions toward "the blushing Bride" (notice the physiology at work in the participles): "O fie upon you, Sir, you make me blush." To which Tom Thumb in tiny voice replies: "It is the Virgin's sign, and suits you well—".[3] I pass over several other passages, most notably in *The Modern Husband,* to mention the auction scene in *The Historical Register for the Year 1736*, a scene in which Fielding goes beyond, as well as behind, the fan and the mask as instruments of imposition to suggest that those demireps who have rendered themselves *unable* to blush ought to employ these devices to hide that inability. As we shall see, Fielding believed in blushing, and required it, perhaps a little too often, in his heroines. It proved them physically incapable of deceit.

The passions in *Joseph Andrews* are all so straightforward that there is much physiology and little deceit. Lady Booby's passions are so potent that she cannot control them, much less dissemble them. She usually takes her passions to bed, where their failure to secure an object becomes all the more comic, comedy echoed in the physiology lurking behind their "boiling": "She then went up into her Chamber, sent for *Slipslop,* [and] threw herself on the Bed, in the Agonies of Love, Rage, and Despair; nor could she conceal these boiling Passions longer, without bursting."[4] Joseph's passion and nature are so innocent that concealment is out of the question. When he visits "her in whom his Soul delighted" (p. 295) the whole world knows of, and shares, that delight. Fanny blushes so convincingly that she brings out that lamentable propensity for priggishness in her lover:

> . . . an Admiration at his Silence, together with observing the fixed Position of his Eyes, produced an Idea in the lovely Maid, which brought more Blood into her Face than had flowed from *Joseph's*

> Nostrils. The snowy Hue of her Bosom was likewise exchanged to Vermillion at the instant when she clapped her Handkerchief round her Neck. *Joseph* saw the Uneasiness she suffered, and immediately removed his Eyes from an Object, in surveying which he had felt the greatest Delight which the Organs of Sight were capable of conveying to his Soul. (p. 305; IV.vii)

It is, of course, the vital spirits that convey Joseph's delight from his eyes to his soul. Whether Fielding meant wickedly to imply that another organ might one day convey greater delight to Joseph's soul I cannot say, but only a prig would overlook the possibility.

Parson Adams's heart is so pure, and his physiology in such good order, than when he finds himself yet again indebted to an old pedlar, he cannot conceal his gratitude: ". . . he felt the Ebullition, the Overflowings of a full, honest, open Heart towards the Person who had conferred a real Obligation, and of which if thou can'st not conceive an Idea within, I will not vainly endeavour to assist thee" (p. 310; IV.viii). Because of the goodness of his heart, Parson Adams feels that response throughout his system. Stimulated by an object ("the Person who had conferred. . .") his heart, "full" and "open", sends forth an "Ebullition" of vital spirits, which makes its appearance in his countenance and his manner. Here again, the fullness and openness of the heart and its Ebullition and overflowing are drawn, even overdrawn, from the realm of the physiology of passion. And again, it is only the bad characters who manage, for a while, to redeploy their vital spirits. When Leonora, is caught by her fiance with a rival, she greets him with "A long Silence." "At length *Leonora* collecting all the Spirits she was Mistress of, addressed herself to [Horatio], and pretended to wonder at the Reason of so late a Visit" (p. 113; II.iv). Her ability to become Mistress of her spirits signals Leonora's decline; now she can impose on those around her—but not on the narrator. Similarly, the "roasting" Squire, "having first called his Friends about him, as Guards for the Safety of his Person, rode manfully up to the Combatants, and summoning all the Terror he was Master of, into his Countenance, demanded with an authoritative Voice of *Joseph*, what he meant by assaulting his Dogs in that Manner" (p. 242; III.vi). The commas make it clear that the Squire's heart is by no means bold. As Horatio has already proven to Bellarmine: "the Seat of Valour is not the Countenance, and many a grave and plain Man, will, on a just Provocation, betake himself to that mischievous Metal, cold Iron; while Men of a fiercer Brow, and sometimes with that Emblem of Courage, a Cockade, will more prudently decline it" (p. 115; II.iv). The cockade is an emblem of courage in the same way that the fan is an emblem of modesty. It can be displayed, but it is separate from the body and therefore not validated by physiology.

To these scattered indications of an underlying and continuous attention to physiology and deceit Fielding adds the consideration of the subject in the "Preface" to *Joseph Andrews*. The passages, excessively well known, wherein he announces that "The only Source of the true Ridiculous . . . is Affectation" and that "Affectation proceeds from one of these two Causes, Vanity or Hypocrisy: for as Vanity puts us on affecting false Characters, in order to purchase Applause; so Hypocrisy sets us on an Endeavour to avoid Censure by concealing our Vices under an Appearance of their opposite Virtues" (pp. 7-8) are followed by two others, less well known, but very much to the present purpose, as they address themselves to the physiology underlying both kinds of deceit. The innocent kind of affectation, vanity, "hath not that violent Repugnancy of Nature to struggle with, which that of the Hypocrite hath," so that the affectation of liberality "sits less awkwardly on [a vain man] than on the avaricious Man, who *is* the very Reverse of what he would *seem* to be" (p. 8). It is, I take it, physiology that makes affectation sit awkwardly on one in whom it provokes a struggle. The vital spirits can be more readily summoned to displays of vain passions than hypocritical ones.

Fielding extended his discursive treatment of this concern in his penetrating "Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men". Written, as he says, to champion "the innocent and undesigning, and . . . to arm them against Imposition," it asserts that "the Passions of Men do commonly imprint sufficient Marks on the Countenance; and it is owing chiefly to want of Skill in the Observer, that Physiognomy is of so little Use and Credit in the World."[5] The marks that physiology imprints are so faint, and skilled observers so rare,that most of us are better advised to watch men's actions than their faces, and to watch their private actions, rather than those they perform in public (as in the public-private displays that betrayed Jonathan Wild). Even then, it will never be easy to avoid imposition: ". . . but while Men are blinded by Vanity and Self-Love, and while artful Hypocrisy knows how to adapt itself to their Blind-sides, and to humour their Passions, it will be difficult for honest and undesigning Men to escape the Snares of Cunning and Imposition . . ." (p. 174).

The engaging and penetrating analysis to which Fielding subjects the generous provision of human nature provided in *Tom Jones* relies extensively and cunningly on the treatment of physiology. The leisurely unfolding of character into the sophisticated leverage of plot confirms the analysis of passion as an essential, fruitful, and revealing component of humanity. The confusion engendered by the deceptive display of passion generates much of the novel's intricacy, providing hints for the alert reader and significance to the understanding one. For example, the reader who understands a little physiology will appreciate the cleverness of the "hearty" in: "the good Lady [Bridget Allworthy] could not forbear giving [the foundling] a hearty Kiss, at the same time declaring herself wonderfully pleased with its Beauty and Innocence."[6] This passage uses the physiology implicit in that "hearty" as subtly as another one on the same page uses the subjunctive: "Her Orders were indeed so liberal, that had it been a Child of her own, she could not have exceeded them. . . ."

Squire Western, the least deceitful character in the novel, "had not the least Command over any of his Passions; and that which had at any Time the Ascendant in his Mind, hurried him to the wildest Excesses" (p. 296; VI.vii). It is just this direct response of his passions that makes Squire Western so impetuous, so troublesome, so undeceitful, and so endearing.[7] The connections between his body and his passions are emphasized in his maxim "*that Anger makes a Man dry*" (p. 304; VI.ix), drawn from the lore of the four humours (choler being the one that is hot and dry). The passions had only recently outgrown this doctrine, and Western is surely the most humorous, in the original sense of the word, character in the novel. Conversely, his sister Di, to whom he is constantly opposed, temperamentally and artistically, feels only the passions of pride and its concomitant, contempt, and she manifests these passions in her language rather than in her body. The fair Parthenissa remains, as always, untouched. Yet there is one passage in which she gets the better of her contempt by using her digestive juices as a solvent on her vital spirits: " 'Hold a Moment', said she, 'while I digest that sovereign Contempt I have for your Sex; or else I ought to be angry too with you. There—I have made a Shift to gulp it down" (p. 276, VI.ii). This triumph of physiology over good manners and good sense is Di Western's only meal in a very festive novel. It also, I might add, precedes her triumphant announcement that Sophia must be in love with the unspeakable Blifil.

With Lady Bellaston the physiology of passion, but not of deceit, grows most intriguing. The convenient and controllable detachment of her heart from her body is expressed in everything that Lady Bellaston does and everything that Fielding says about her. Her occasional "hurries of spirit" are never occasioned by love, and the only real manifestation of passion that the reader sees comes not from her heart, but her purse, in the form of the "wages" she bestows on Tom. Only once is the flame in her heart conveyed into her countenance and her voice. It is in a passage rendered theatrical by the display of passion, in both face and voice, in front of a curtain. It is anger rather than love that is being displayed, and it is being displayed because *she* has been deceived:

> Lady *Bellaston* now came from behind the Curtain. How shall I describe her Rage? Her Tongue was at first incapable of Utterance; but Streams of Fire darted from her Eyes, and well indeed they might, for her Heart was all in a Flame. And now as soon as her Voice found Way . . . she began to attack poor *Jones*. (p. 747; XIV.ii)

Sophia has not detached her heart from her body. Indeed, she blushes in nearly every appearance she makes in the novel. Perhaps it is the readiness with which her heart fires her blood and dispatches her vital spirits toward her epidermis that makes her so charming, so amiable, and sometimes so tedious? It is probably this hurry of spirit, doubtless inherited from her father, that lies behind her convenient fainting spells. I cite but one passage from the dozen or so available:

> He then snatched her Hand, and eagerly kissed it, which was the first Time his Lips had ever touched her. The Blood, which before had forsaken her Cheeks, now made her sufficient Amends, by rushing all over her Face and Neck with such Violence, that they became all of a scarlet Colour. She now first felt a Sensation to which she had been before a Stranger, and which, when she had Leisure to reflect on it, began to acquaint her with some Secrets which the Reader, if he doth not already guess them, will know in due Time. (p. 168; IV.v)

Sophia's physiology conveys messages from the outside in, confirming and assisting the work of the omniscient narrator as it does so. Moreover, the contrast in their physiologies evident in these two passages in which Tom is the object of their respective passions figures in most of the scenes between Sophy and Lady Bellaston, underlying, explaining, and dramatizing each of their conflicts (see, for example, XIII.xi and XV.iii).

Parson Supple, quoting, as is his wont, Juvenal, tells us all there is to be told about the manifestation (in the sense in which I have been discussing it) of Tom's passions: " 'I wish, indeed, he was a little more regular in his Responses at Church; but altogether he seems *Ingenui vultus puer ingenuique pudoris.* That is a classical Line . . . and being rendered into *English* is, A Lad of an ingenuous Countenance and of an ingenuous Modesty . . . ' " (pp. 189-190; IV.x). Tom's spirits, always violent, and always evident, give him away in each of his (well-intended) attempts at deceit; they prevent him from concealing his goodness from Allworthy, his love from Sophia, and his change of heart from Lady Bellaston. She comes to visit him in what she expects to be a sickbed, but he forgets "to act the Part of a sick Man," and greets her with "good Humour," instead of "Disorder," in his countenance (p. 810; XV.vii). The many connections between Tom's mind, heart, and body are precisely those connections that Lady Bellaston has so successfully and repellently interrupted in herself.

I conclude this discussion of *Tom Jones* with two scenes that take us back, each in its own way, to much that has already been said. The first exploits the theatricality of the passions, and the second employs them as tools of jurisprudence. Together they evoke Fielding's apprenticeship behind the stage and his career upon the bench. But while both scenes reproduce elements we encountered in *Jonathan Wild*, these scenes both depend on and contribute to the plot, making more than merely theatrical use of the elements in them: the prison, the despair, the reversals of passion and fortune, and the passionate responses in voice and countenance. Fielding has come a considerable artistic distance from that early work, yet he has brought the passions and their physiology with him.

In the first scene Partridge reveals to Tom, already in prison for murder, an even more disturbing offense. The scene is played as a very tragic one with Terror, Fear, Horror, and Amazement on the faces, in the voices, and in the hearts of both men. It is a clever parody of the way such scenes were played in those days, and it includes several sly references back to the scene (XVI.v) where Tom watches Partridge watch Garrick as Hamlet start at his father's ghost.[8] There is no boldness, thunder, or steadiness in this scene; the only deceit is in Fielding's plot. Indeed, it is the Narrator's studied attention to the theatricality of the passions in this scene that makes it bearable, even pleasurable, to read. If Fielding is playing with us, he is at least doing so honorably and consistently:

> While *Jones* was employed in those unpleasant Meditations . . . *Partridge* came stumbing into the Room with his Face paler than Ashes, his Eyes fixed in his Head, his Hair standing an [sic] End, and every Limb trembling. In short, he looked as he would have done had he seen a Spectre . . . .
>
> *Jones*, who was little subject to Fear, could not avoid being somewhat shocked at this sudden Appearance. He did indeed himself change Colour, and his Voice a little faultered
>
> . . . .
>
> '. . . as sure as I stand here alive, you have been a-Bed with your own Mother.'
>
> Upon these Words, *Jones* became in a Moment a greater Picture of Horror than *Partridge* himself. He was indeed, for some Time, struck dumb with Amazement, and both stood staring wildly at each other. (p. 915; XVIII.ii)

As Fielding says near the end of this scene: "The Pencil [i.e., the brush, and probably Hogarth's brush], and not the Pen, should describe the Horrors which appeared in both their Countenances."

In the other scene that seems to me to continue the excellence and confirm the maturity of Fielding's attention to the physiology of passion and deceit, Blifil, who has always used "the sober and prudent Reserve of his own Temper" (p. 253; V.ix) to control the manifestations of his own (quite manageable) passions, is finally betrayed by his own physiology. Is not this the perfect agent to undo the impositions of a young man as selfish as Blifil has always been?

> There is nothing so dangerous as a Question which comes by Surprize on a Man, whose Business it is to conceal Truth, or to defend Falshood .... Besides, the sudden and violent Impulse on the Blood, occasioned by these Surprizes, causes frequently such an Alteration in the Countenance, that the Man is obliged to give Evidence against himself. And such indeed were the Alterations which the Countenance of *Blifil* underwent from this sudden Question, that we can scarce blame the Eagerness of Mrs. *Miller*, who immediately cry'd out, 'Guilty, upon my Honour! Guilty, upon my Soul!' (p. 932; XVIII.v)

Whereas, earlier in the novel the passions gave rise to the plot, here, in both these scenes from its conclusion, plot and passion are perfectly fused—a fusion effected by physiology and manifested in the voice and the countenance.

I pass quickly over *Amelia*, in which the physiology figures occasionally, but without the regularity, the subtlety, or the effect we have seen previously. The passions that prevail in this novel lend themselves a little too readily to analysis, even by a booby like Booth, who insists that the doctrine of the passions has always been his favorite study (III.iv). Sometimes the physiology gives rise only to melodrama: " 'There lodged in the same house—O Mrs. Booth! the blood runs cold to my heart, and should run cold to yours, when I name him ...."[9] In an earlier passage, equally physiological and even more melodramatic, the spirits that desert Booth seem already to have failed his creator: "A deep melancholy seized his mind, and cold damp sweats overspread his person, so that he was scarce animated; and poor Amelia, instead of a fond warm husband, bestowed her caresses on a dull, lifeless lump of clay" (VI, 184; IV.iii). In passages like these the passions are no longer clear and distinct ideas in the narrator's mind. They have become mere sensations in the character's body. They are confirmed by physiology, but they are no longer validated by a forceful tradition.

I conclude with a passage from Fielding's last work, the posthumous *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*. In this work Fielding asserts that:

> ... nature is seldom curious in her works within, without employing some little pains on the outside; and this more particularly in mischievous characters ....

> This observation will, I am convinced, hold most true, if applied to the most venomous individuals of human insects. A tyrant, a trickster, and a bully, generally wear the marks of their several dispositions in their countenances; so do the vixen, the shew, the scold, and all other females of the like kind.[10]

While Fielding is here discussing permanent temperament instead of fleeting passions, and is therefore concerned with settled manifestations, the venom that settled these marks on the countenance was distilled from physiology, it was put there by nature, and, presumably, it causes discomfort and inconvenience to the character through whom it courses as well as to those on whom it is brought to bear. Here, as elsewhere, physiology provides a warning to those who attend to it, and as always in Fielding's works, an opportunity for artistic comment.

From his earliest work until his very last piece, then, Fielding saw fit to attend to physiology, and to urge his readers to do likewise. He seems to have found the vital spirits exactly that, a convenient and potent device for bringing characters, and the books in which they figure, to life. They do the work of an omniscient narrator, conveying into the countenance and the voice the nature and intensity of internal responses. Those who manage to interrupt or dissemble these conveyings eventually undo themselves. The inattentive and uninformed, whether reader or character, will be imposed upon. The rest of us might well be impressed with the skilfulness and ingenuity with which Fielding manipulates the passions.

NOTES

1. There are numerous accounts of this intricate tradition, among them: Geoffrey Bullough, *Mirror of Minds: Changing Psychological Beliefs in English Poetry*, London: Athlone Press, 1962, and George S. Rousseau, "Nerves, Spirits, and Fibres: Towards Defining the Origins of Sensibility," in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century, III: Papers Presented at the Third David Nichol Smith Memorial Seminar*, ed. R. F. Brissenden and J. C. Eade, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973, pp. 137-57. For Fielding and faculty psychology see Martin Battestin, *The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art: A Study of Joseph Andrews*, Middleton [Conn.]: Wesleyan University Press, 1959, pp. 58-74; Morris Golden, *Fielding's Moral Psychology*, Amherst [Mass.]: University of Massachusetts Press, 1966, pp. 20-41; and Henry Knight Miller, *Essays on Fielding's Miscellanies: A Commentary on Volume One*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 189-228.
2. *The Complete Works of Henry Fielding, Esq.*, ed. William Ernest Henley, New York: Croscup & Sterling, 1902, II, 28, 73. Hereafter cited as "Hentley Edition."
3. Henry Fielding, *Tom Thumb and the Tragedy of Tragedies*, ed. L. J. Morrissey, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970, p. 35 (II.viii).
4. Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*, ed. Martin C. Battestin, The Wesleyan Edition of the Works of Henry Fielding, Middletown [Conn.]: Wesleyan University Press, 1967, p. 326 (IV.xiii). For Joseph's priggishness see J. Paul Hunter, *Occasional Form: Henry Fielding*

and the Chains of Circumstance, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975, pp. 95-100.

5. *Miscellanies by Henry Fielding, Esq.; Volume One*, ed. Henry Knight Miller, The Wesleyan Edition of the Works of Henry Fielding, Oxford: Wesleyan University Press, 1972, pp. 153, 157.
6. Henry Fielding, *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling*, ed. Martin C. Battestin and Fredson Bowers, The Wesleyan Edition of the Works of Henry Fielding, Middletown [Conn.]: Wesleyan University Press, 1975, pp. 45-46 (I.v).
7. For this aspect of Squire Western see Robert Alter, *Fielding and the Nature of the Novel*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp. 91-94.
8. See Alan T. McKenzie, " 'The Countenance You Show Me': Reading the Passions in the Eighteenth Century," *The Georgia Review*, 32, (1978), 758-73.
9. Henley Edition, VII, 41 (VII.vi); the next quotation is from VI, 184 (IV.iii). For the passions in *Amelia* see Tuvia Bloch, "*Amelia* and Booth's Doctrine of the Passions," *SEL*, 13 (1973), 461-73 and Frederick G. Ribble, "The Constitution of the Mind and the Concept of Emotion in Fielding's *Amelia*," *PQ*, 56 (1977), 104-22.
10. Henley Edition, XVI, 236.