

an uneasy combination of local powers determined to unseat the Cowperwood who threatens their own "territories" long established by gentlemen's agreement. Several of Cowperwood's opponents, like those of Yerkes, own controlling interests in rival traction systems. Of these men, only two have been offended in their personal lives. Editor Haguenin, whose daughter has an affair with Cowperwood, is resentful but ineffectual. Hosmer Hand, whose young wife is another of Cowperwood's paramours, is outraged, yet Dreiser takes pains to specify that what injures Hand the most is any financial loss, and in the American Match plot against Cowperwood the fact that Hand is "caught" for nearly \$1,500,000 is what turns his soul "gray as a bat's wing." Following disclosure of the Cecily Haguenin and Caroline Hand affairs, there are outbursts of indignation and the wounded men are incensed with Cowperwood, yet revenge based upon these betrayals is not cited later as any principal motivation in subsequent actions against him. Cowperwood's defeat is laid (1) to the concerted efforts of rivals to rid themselves at last of the danger to their own domination of Chicago, and (2) to a public outcry from civic reform inspired by William Jennings Bryan's populism and nourished by Citizens Committees and journalists. However, the Haguenin newspaper plays only an incidental role in this crusade. Ultimately the rise of the masses is decisive. But the citizenry have little interest in (or knowledge of) Cowperwood's sex life. Instead, they are motivated by their wish for comfortable, safe, and cheap streetcar service; beyond this, the era's militant interest in municipal ownership of public utilities is suggested.

To credit the financier's broken marriage with the ultimate disintegration of his estate has even less support in the *Trilogy*. While his break with Aileen may be "related to" the defeat of Cowperwood's final plans, so may a thousand other facts of the man's life, and something of a Procrustean effort is required in order to see sex or marriage as being in any sense decisive. Aileen, like her prototype Mary Adelaide Yerkes, never displays the slightest inclination to know the intricacies of her husband's business affairs, nor is her battery of lawyers any match for the shrewd legal brains of the corporations that ravage the estate. The Cowperwood fortune is dissipated because the financier dies—unhappily for him and fortuitously for others—in the midst of great plans under way but not yet consummated. His financial state is ambiguous and his creditors know it. His pile of wealth "up for grabs" determines the outcome, and not what was hoped for in life by Mrs. Yerkes or in fiction by Mrs. Cowperwood.

PHILIP L. GERBER  
State University of New York, Brockport

### Pamela

To the Editor:

In "Richardson's *Pamela*: An Interpretation" (*PMLA*, 88, 1973, 79–91) Stuart Wilson argues convincingly that the novel has a powerful psychological unity. He not only challenges those critics who contend that Richardson's work has a flawed bifurcation, but also defends *Pamela* against critics "in the tradition of Fielding" who believe the heroine "is the scheming moneygrubber who uses all her feminine wiles in order to marry the rich man" (p. 83). He asserts that the novel's text "provides no evidence to support this conclusion." Elsewhere he says that "there is no reason to believe that her ingenuousness, so often maligned as calculating, is anything other than genuine" (p. 80), and that the reward of Pamela's virtue "is not primarily her marriage to a rich patrician" (p. 91). Now it seems to me that Wilson is beating a dead horse; for I do not know of any modern critic (Wilson does not refer to any) who has seriously defended Fielding's view that Pamela consciously decides to scheme her way to fortune by dealing in her virtue as an exchange commodity. If this notion still needs to be challenged, then I thank Wilson for coming forward.

With respect to Fielding, however, I believe that this is too simple. It should be clear enough that Richardson did not intend to portray Pamela as a schemer, and it is a disservice to Fielding to conclude that he actually believed otherwise. Wilson, and many other critics, do not make clear that the problem must be more complex. It was in vehement reaction to *Pamela* that one of England's great writers launched his career as a novelist, and the reaction could hardly have stemmed from a mere misreading. What it did stem from, I suggest, is indicated by Wilson's own interpretation. He says that Pamela undergoes a "prolonged, intense, and disruptive emotional experience, one that severely affects her psychic balance" (p. 79) to the point where she comes "to project her fears externally" (p. 83) so that even her view of reality is distorted by emotional stress. Hence, since the novel is first-person narrated, the world of the novel is wholly subjective. I contend that not only did Fielding *not* fail to perceive this, but that *it is precisely Pamela's subjectivism, with its inherent ambiguity concerning human motives, that Fielding attacked*. Since the matter has not been treated critically before, I take the liberty of developing it somewhat. The nightmarish subjectivity of the novel's first half cannot be overlooked. Pamela's universe is claustrophobic, chaotic, arbitrary, and insofar as it is comprehensible at all it seems so only because of the irrational conspiracy of a malignant demon, Lord B., who is omnipotent, "a law unto himself," as Robert Donovan described him

(*Shaping Vision*, Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1966, p. 54). *Everything* in Pamela's world contributes: she remarks at least eight times in the first half to the effect that "here are strange pains taken to ruin a poor, innocent . . . young body" and that "all was deep dissimulation, and contrivance worse and worse." The second half of *Pamela* is quite another world. The malignant, subjective chaos of the earlier part has disposed and arranged itself into a harmonious order without enduring conflict or disruption. What has happened? Wilson remarks (and I agree) that the change takes place as Pamela's intense inner conflicts begin to resolve themselves. The point is that Pamela's universe becomes a paradigm of order and stability by sheer force of Pamela's own psychic nature, especially by force of what she innately holds to be absolutely certain, her virtue, her archimedean point from which she moves chaos to order. In this world human motives, and all else, degenerate into a frightening ambiguity, the ambiguity of the new "psychological" novel, which Fielding sensed.

At bottom Fielding took a stand against the moral consequences of a heroine who implied that reality was an affair of the feelings, and against an author who attempted to show that the darkness of the human heart could order the realm of common day. All of Fielding's fiction, and everything about it that is characteristically Fielding's, is a challenge to the solipsistic implications of Richardson's novel. His mode, from which he never deviated in his novels, asserted that an objective world, already established, exists which transcends the individuals within the world of his fiction. His world is fabricated; his characters are "already formed, already stamped with operative character" (Dorothy Van Ghent, *English Novel*, New York, 1953, p. 87). It is by giving his fiction a predominant sense of a "metaphysical" order that Fielding creates a nonsubjective, determinate world in conscious contrast to the order of reality implied by *Pamela*. The innumerable auctorial intrusions, the elaborate plot structurings, the obvious manipulations of his characters, and so on, serve to contribute to the visibility of the novel's maker as maker and of his level of reality. There is no question of whether Fanny or Sophia are virtuous—the author has made them so and has made clear to us that *he* has made them so. His novels' principle of coherence is external, objective, and autonomous; the archimedean point from where the story is moved lies most explicitly outside the wills and emotions of the characters themselves.

Fielding's imposing challenge did not of course signify in the long run; the psychological novel has won out, and we take its premises for granted. But that should not permit us to oversimplify his attack on *Pamela*. It was impelled by a profound concern for the moral dilemmas of a subjectivist outlook, an out-

look inherent in the secular world view of the modern age whose consequences included uncertainty and anxiety not only about the durability and stability of the world of men but also about whether a world common to men existed at all.

MEL A. TOPF  
*Roger Williams College*

### Relativity Theory in *Der Zauberberg*

To the Editor:

J. B. S. Haldane's rather arch remark that Shelley and Keats were the last English poets who were at all up to date in their chemical knowledge<sup>1</sup> tells us perhaps more about the scientific mind than about its poetic counterpart. In any case, Rudi Prusok's interesting speculations on science and relativity theory in Thomas Mann's *Zauberberg* (*PMLA*, 88, 1973, 52–61) show that the same sort of reproach cannot be directed at Mann.

The gross violation of our intuitive expectations by such phenomena as the contraction in size of rapidly moving bodies, the fact that a man running up an escalator moving at the speed of light would not arrive at the top any sooner than if he had stood still, the fact that clocks run more slowly when they move rapidly, so that a rapidly moving twin would age at a different rate than his stationary brother—all of these paradoxes represent apparent violations of the orderly laws of nature to which we are accustomed, of the same sort as the Holger episode, the composition of the prose poem on the sea, and the appearance of the apparition of Joachim in his World War I helmet in *Der Zauberberg*. And all of them are explained (to the extent that they can be explained logically or psychologically at all) by the same notion of subjectivity, of the interaction between the subject and the world that he apprehends, which is the basis of Einstein's relativity theory. The concept of synthesis, of integration of the apparently irreconcilable experiences of the Apollonian and the Dionysian, of the poles of total self-realization (Nietzsche) and total humility (Russia), as Mann once put it, lies at the very center of the *Zauberberg* and appears in the crucial chapters, "Schnee" and "Fragwürdigstes." Just as Castorp's mind is instrumental in explaining the composition of the poem or the apparition, so the relative motion of observer and observed determines the appearance and the laws of the physical system to be examined. As Eddington puts it, ". . . length is not a property of the rod; it is a relation between the rod and the observer. *Until the observer is specified the length of the rod is quite indeterminate.*"<sup>2</sup>