AUTHORITY FIGURES IN HENRY FIELDING'S
JOSEPH ANDREWS, TOM JONES AND AMELIA

by

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ABSTRACT

It was noted that the characters in Fielding's novels cast in authority roles, mainly clergy, magistrates, squires and parents, are used for some of the same purposes as is the persona or narrative voice, but are distinct from it. There is a fairly clear dichotomy between evil or false character authority figures and good or true character authority figures, the latter of which are used as spokesmen for and examples of Fielding's religious and ethical beliefs. It was also noted that there is a trend away from the prominent "good man" as a major authority figure in *Joseph Andrews* which culminates in an austere major authority figure who is frequently absent from the action in *Amelia*, and that there is a growing number and prominence of evil or false authority figures. This thesis undertook to examine the nature and extent of the influence of the character authority figures on the world view and tone of each novel.

First, the thesis established the ethical and religious values which Fielding uses his authority figures to support. That Fielding was widely read in both religious doctrine and classical ethics is evident from his fictional and critical writings and from the contents of his library at his death. Fielding's character authority figures especially reflect his beliefs and his gradual movement away from an optimistic world view.

The authority figures in the three major novels were then examined in terms of Fielding's values. The comic features of Parson Adams, the major authority figure in *Joseph Andrews*, were reconciled with his position as an ethical and doctrinal touchstone, and a latitudinarian interpretation of New Testament theology was found to be a major basis for Adams' authority. The
effect the minor authority figures have on authority was also established, again in terms of latitudinarian Christian doctrine. *Tom Jones* was examined in terms of its occasional focus on authority and on the major authority figure, Squire Allworthy, as a Providential agent. Allworthy, as a good man, a patriarch, a magistrate and a guardian, was also shown to be the examplar for social, religious, judicial and parental authority in the novel. He is, however, more detached from the action and less loveable than Adams was, and this distancing of the major authority figure from the other characters and from the reader helps to make *Tom Jones* less comic and less optimistic than is *Joseph Andrews*. *Amelia* is filled with evil and false authority figures, and it was shown that the major good authority figure, although intended as a good man and a Providential agent, is not successfully presented as such and is also too detached from the action to provide a consistent sense of a controlling authority figure by whose mediation the sympathetic characters will be protected or ultimately rescued.

The thesis showed that the character authority figures in *Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones* and *Amelia* are instrumental in establishing the world view. The success or lack thereof of the presentation of the major authority figure as a Providential agent and as a "good man" and his amount of participation in the plot are important contributing delements to the degree of optimism in each novel.
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THE SETTING: RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL BACKGROUND

Fielding's major works, *Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones* and *Amelia*, each contain one character who is a major authority figure, and who, as a spokes­man for Fielding's moral, ethical and religious beliefs, contributes to the philosophical bases and world view of the novel and also establishes the tone to some degree. The world view is slightly different in each novel, because different aspects of the bases are emphasized, and because the treatment of the spokesmen for and examples of Fielding's moral stance, the major authority figures, changes with Fielding's outlook and literary intentions. The authority figures, of course, are not the only, or even the main factors establishing the world views of the major novels, but they are important, contributing elements. The purpose of this thesis is to show that, in Fielding's major novels, the treatment of authority figures is instrumental in establishing the tone and world view of each novel to the extent that the successful presentation of the main authority figure in each novel as a good man, and as a representative of Providence, is necessary to the creation of an optimistic and comic world. In fact, the different treatment of authority figures helps to establish a different, didactic content and alters the tone and level of comedy, mirroring Fielding's growing seriousness and intellectual pre-occupation.

A "complete works" was not used as the text for this thesis because more recent individual editions seemed more trustworthy (especially the incomplete Wesleyan edition). Accordingly, the Wesleyan edition of *Tom Jones*,
1974, edited by Martin C. Battestin and Fredson Bowers, was used, but the Wesleyan edition of *Joseph Andrews* was not readily available. Therefore, the Crowell Critical Library edition of *Joseph Andrews*, based on Fielding's first edition but including all alterations of subsequent editions (using a system of different brackets), edited by Sheridan Baker, was chosen. The third edition has been followed wherever applicable. No trustworthy critical edition of *Amelia* was available, so the last reprint (1974) of the 1930 edition of the Everyman edition was used since it was both reasonably recent and readily available.

This thesis will focus only on the authority figures who are characters in a novel. There are two types of authority in Fielding's novels. One is the persona, an authority "par excellence," controlling, to a large extent, the readers' reactions to characters and events and establishing, to a large extent, the tone and message of each novel. The almost continual and marked presence of the persona is a hallmark of Fielding's writing and has been the source of considerable critical attention, especially since Fielding almost demanded critical comment on this feature. The other type of authority present in Fielding's novels is that embodied in conventional "character" authority figures: characters in the novels cast in the authority roles commonly found in society (clergymen, magistrates, parents *et cetera*), who are authorities in the sense of controlling or modifying the actions of the other characters. It is true that the persona occasionally becomes almost a character in the novel (at least in *Tom Jones*), but the persona is not a character in the sense of being part of the plot or within the ken of the other characters. It is an authority, rather than an authority figure. Some critical attention has been paid to the authority figures in Fielding's
novels, but usually such consideration has been either simply a character analysis or incidental to a discussion of the persona as an authority. The authority figures, however, are not miniature, costumed personas; they are a different technique which Fielding uses as another method to convey his ideas, and as a different vehicle for Fielding's intentions they deserve individual treatment. The purpose of this thesis is to establish the importance of the character authority figures to the world view of each novel. Most critical discussion of the atom "authority" in Fielding's novels has concentrated on the nucleus: the persona. This discussion will focus on the electrons -- the authority figures -- and considerations of the persona will be incidental and as required to establish the background of the ethics and morality furthered by the character authority figures.

Only the major works will be considered, because the plays and minor works, and obviously the journalistic material, have neither rounded world views nor the acceptable authority figures likely in a reasonably detailed and non-satiric portrait of society. The Voyage to Lisbon, of course, as a diary account rather than a work of fiction, clearly does not present "character" authority figures. The minor works, especially the plays, concentrate on a fragment of life for generally satiric purposes, but do not establish a complete "real world" setting. The lack of a detailed picture of society is intentional and not just the result of brevity, a possibility if only Fielding's plays were considered, because Jonathan Wild, Shamela and Journey from this World to the Next do not present believable worlds either. Fielding's major works, then, may be treated as distinct from the rest of his writings, at least insofar as elements of a fictional, detailed and non-satiric world view are concerned.
Given Fielding's temperament and philosophical and religious interests, it is difficult to imagine how he would write a non-satiric novel without good and at least partially influential authority figures. In the first place, the real world abounds with authority figures. Fielding's façade, stated or implied, of writing a "history" requires the presence of authority figures unless a statement is intended about a lack of real or good authorities in the real world. In the second place, authorities enforce traditional, conservative values: values in which Fielding believed. Finally, authority is necessary to a belief that things are under control, which is, in turn, necessary for logical optimism (in the mundane rather than philosophical sense of the term).

With two assumptions, the endings of Fielding's novels, and the general optimism of *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*, become logical, even inevitable. If Fielding believed, first, that a benevolent God or Providence exists, and second, that Providence takes an active part in events through mortal agents, then the good must be protected and the evil punished. Of course, Fielding was not blind to the misfortunes of the virtuous and successes of the corrupt in real life, and made clear that he did not believe appropriate rewards and punishments necessarily took place in this world. However, Fielding was not willing to let his virtuous characters suffer their fates likely in the real world, partially, at least, because to do so would be to discourage virtue, and sooner or later he rescued them from serious misfortunes. However, Fielding also insisted that his characters be prudent if they were to avoid hardship and misfortune; virtue, or goodness without this safeguard is consistently shown as pathetically inadequate. Fielding was, of course, on solid theological ground with numerous Scriptures inculcating his view, and he added a logical
balance to simple goodness. Nonetheless, the unrealistic plot structures required agents to carry out or instigate the eleventh-hour rescues and Fielding uses the narrator and the good authority figures to replace the supernatural assistants he specifically rejected (such as ghosts and fairies) and any direct Divine intervention which would be somewhat out of place in his novels. Supernatural enemies, of course, are replaced with bad authority figures. In other words, it would seem that authority figures are one element of the reconciliation of an optimistic moral and philosophical stance with the real world.

Fielding's upbringing did not include any periods of specific or intense religious or ethical training, but even a cursory glance at Fielding's novels and critical writing indicates his thorough knowledge of, and profound respect for, religion and ethics. Moreover, as Michael Irwin has pointed out in The Tentative Realist, "since English society at the time was predominantly Christian, philosophical, moral and even political theory were largely subsumed under religious thought," though there were very notable exceptions to this generalization, but unless Fielding had made a definite decision to reject Christianity, his ethics and philosophy would have been largely Christian.

Moreover, Fielding's essays in the Champion, and sometimes in the Convent Garden Journal, prove that "for a layman, he was more than ordinarily expert in theological matters" and "had evidently devoted an appreciable amount of study to the subject of religion." His knowledge enabled him to expound competently on a wide range of, mainly, New Testament teachings (e.g., Champion, 8 Jan., 1740, 5 Apr. 1740, 29 Mar., 1740), and to argue fairly convincingly on "the immortality of the soul, and the certainty of a future state." That Fielding supported his faith with study is indicated
by his library, which, at his death, included several editions of the Bible, several commentaries, the sermons of Tillotson, Barrow and South, and "a great number of treatises on topics connected with religion."5

If his interest and the depth of his study were a little unusual, the form of his religion was not. He seems to have believed prejudiced accounts about Romanism, and accordingly hated it, and considered Methodism to be a classic case of being "righteous overmuch." He followed the Church of England and "accepted in substance the orthodox creed as interpreted by the more conservative of the latitudinarian churchmen of the time."6 Following the latitudinarians, he put his emphasis on the practice of faith in the form of good works, especially charity, and seems to have concerned himself little with the details of the faith motivating good actions. Dogmatism was, therefore, never a serious part of his writing, and, indeed, served as a subject for satire.

Concerning ethics, Fielding did not work out a coherent system of his own, or strictly follow that of anyone else. F. Homes Dudden claims that Fielding's "ethical doctrine was mainly derived from the Bible, the writings of Cicero, and Lord Shaftesbury's Inquiry concerning Virtue,"7 many of Fielding's ideas seem to echo Butler's "Sermons," and most, if not all, of Fielding's ethical statements are traceable to well known contemporary thought. However, in an apparent attempt to inculcate a few main ethical principles into his readers, Fielding concentrated on the importance of good nature and on the beauty of virtue and its inherent rewards, with the corollary: the ugliness of vice. Moreover, just as Fielding emphasized a practical religion, he argued for practical virtue. Abstract speculation, or the appearance and forms of virtue, were of no interest to him; he sought to prove that these
had no relation to real virtue, and were, in fact, likely to be found in villains. Real virtue, on the other hand, was a contributing element, with sincere religion, to lasting happiness and satisfaction.

Fielding's most frequent method of demonstrating the practical values of sincere religion and virtue was to demonstrate his beliefs and theories through the actions and attitudes of his major authority figures. They were his examples: "for an example is a kind of picture, in which virtue becomes, as it were, an object of sight, and strikes us with an idea of that loveliness which Plato asserts that there is in her naked charms," and the majority of doctrine, religious or ethical, put forth by Parson Adams, Squire Allworthy and Dr. Harrison seems to be Fielding's own. Their actions, likewise, are intended to support and demonstrate the practicality of religion and virtue. The minor good authority figures assist in the demonstration of virtue, while the evil authority figures reveal the unattractiveness of vice. The most prominent authority figures in Fielding's novels are clergy, magistrates and patriarchs, including squires insofar as they act as father figures for an area; neither rank nor wealth by itself is a sufficient basis for authority.

There seems to be, in Fielding's writing, a sense of an ideal authority by which the reader may judge the authority figures in the novels. This concept of an ideal authority is reminiscent of one element in Plato's philosophy: just as Plato describes a table on earth as a copy of an ideal -- the concept of "table" -- so Fielding seems to see his authority figures as copies (they may be good or bad copies) of an ideal authority. Since ideal authority is often personified as God in Christian (et al.) terms, or "supreme providence" characterized as "divine reason, creative reason, nature [or] the spirit or purpose of the universe" in Stoic terms, and since Fielding was strongly
influenced by both Christianity and classical Stoicism, it is inevitable that the ideal authority behind his authority figures be reminiscent of the Christian and Stoic concepts. Fielding keeps this ideal in sight in all three novels by repeated references to God and Providence with some application to the main authority figures (especially in *Tom Jones*). The concept of authority is the model for authority on earth (Fielding gives divine attributes to his authority figures to justify their actions and judgements), but authority is only one of the positive attributes of conventional, personified ideal authority. All positive or "good" non-physical concepts, such as justice, love, morality and ethics, are usually seen as a homogeneous collection which makes up the ideal authority. Consequently, any authority figure based on or reminiscent of ideal authority influenced by Christianity or Stoicism will also have elements of the other positive concepts of that ideal. Fielding's authority figures, then, are distant parallels to God in the sense of embodying positive ideals.

However, because the authority figures are characters in a novel, they are not copies of the ideal concept so much as copies of a copy (like, in Plato's terms, a picture of a table). The sense of the ideal original is similarly distanced and is created partly by the limited Christian (and Stoic) doctrine in the novels, partly by the characterization of the authorities as good and good-natured people, and partly by the author's persona which reinforces and discusses both the doctrine and the characterizations. These sources are, of course, not present in equal amounts and vary in strength from novel to novel. The characterization of Adams, assisted by authorial comment, is prominent in *Joseph Andrews*, authorial comment and doctrine stand out in *Tom Jones*, and *Amelia* depends largely on doctrine alone.
In other words, authority figures in Fielding's world view are, to some extent, earthly representatives of divine control. The clergy should be most similar to their eternal prototype, the magistrates are representatives of the state, an earthly manifestation of ideal authority, and patriarchs, especially real fathers, represent the relationship between God the Father and man, so that they have authority over their children similar to that which God exercises over man (although, as emphasized in Tom Jones, patriarchal authority is not absolute), but they have no power over anyone else. As representatives of a divine authority combining Christian and Stoic definitions, the three types of authority figures in Fielding's novels have a god-like responsibility to non-authority figures: they must employ reason, promote good and provide practical and spiritual guidance and control. Authority derived from any other source -- e.g. money or rank -- is necessarily empty or evil, because if ideal authority embodies all that is good, the remainder must be nothingness, or evil. The earthly authority derived from this remainder will clearly have the characteristics of its source and cannot be morally, or, given an optimistic world view, permanently enforceable. As Butler said, "all this is no more than the distinction... between mere power and authority...", 10

However, because Fielding based his novels on the world as he saw it, there is some fluctuation in the novels in the flow of divine authority from Providence to the authority figures, and there are strong reminders that a lack of moral sanction had little effect on the practical power of evil authority figures. The pessimism indicated by instances of lapses in good authority figures and uncontrolled power in evil authority figures increases chronologically from Joseph Andrews to Amelia.
In *Joseph Andrews*, the optimistic element of philosophy and the most comforting aspects of New Testament Christianity produce a happy novel. In *Tom Jones*, graver Stoicism enters the world of the novel, with a more detailed, believable picture of the world, and Fielding begins to show flaws in optimism and to ignore organized religion as a force for good. By *Amelia*, neither philosophy, classical or contemporary, nor Christianity has much power, and there is a sense that good wins out in the end, not because it is ultimately stronger than evil, but because Fielding could not bear to abandon his characters to the injustice of what he saw, by then, as the real world. It is as if Fielding were initially enamoured of all things optimistic, and gradually, through a close comparison of philosophy with the reality of his experience as an individual and as a magistrate, became disillusioned.

This change in Fielding's attitude towards the world is mirrored by a change in the good major authority figures and some change in the evil authority figures. As the world of the novels becomes grimmer, the authority figure gradually becomes aloof, formal and relatively detached from the action. He also becomes less trusting, less friendly and generally less likeable. Obviously, the characters must suit the novel; Parson Adams would be a buffoon in *Amelia*. However, the authority figures do not become more serious only because the novels become more serious. The authority figures are spokesmen for philosophy and Christianity, for ethics and morality. They are also the guides, counsellors and confidants of the other characters in the novels. They, therefore, contribute to the ethical views in the novel, and the degree of their participation in the action of the novel and of their interaction with the other characters determines, to a large extent, the role
of Fielding's underlying optimistic philosophy in the plot. Parson Adams is not just a jolly character in a jolly book; he is the soul of the book: the other humorous characters are comic sketches, but Adams is a rounded character who embodies latitudinarian Christian philosophy as well as being the most amusing and loveable character in the novel. In *Amelia*, on the other hand, the authority figure is not only an austere character: Dr. Harrison is also inconsistent and very difficult to like. Moreover, he is the only "good" character in the novel who is treated unsympathetically, but he establishes the philosophy of the novel (or at least the philosophy which is finally shown to be correct). *Tom Jones* is a slightly different case in that the philosophy is established through several characters and frequently by the authorial voice, but again the authority figure influences the world view. There are heroes and villains, comic, sympathetic and despicable characters, but the dimension in the plot of a moral existence is established to a large extent by Allworthy, who is neither hero nor villain.

In Fielding's novels, philosophy and doctrine are expounded by the authority figures and other characters (the works would be primarily didactic if there were not such an abundance of *solaas* to coat the sentence), there is no doubt about how each character is meant to be judged, and an eternal, infinite being is almost a character in *Tom Jones* and *Joseph Andrews*. Fielding may have overemphasized the presence of religion and philosophy in the world, for a purpose, but such a possibility really comments on the percentage of authority figures Fielding chose to introduce among his characters rather than the accuracy of his world view, and, again, indicates the importance of authority figures in the novels.
THE LATITUDINARIAN COMIC WORLD

Despite a predominant comic element, the importance in Joseph Andrews of Parson Abraham Adams, the main authority figure, who is himself a comic figure in many ways, creates an emphasis in the novel on the spiritual and ethical values, based on general and non-dogmatic Christian principles, which he represents. Although the simultaneous presence of comedy and Christian morality might seem antithetical to a sympathetic presentation of the latter, Fielding has been successful in creating a character who is both a comic figure and a serious statement of Fielding's moral and ethical views. Joseph Andrews, mainly through Parson Adams, who is, as Michael Irwin points out, "clearly the embodiment of Fielding's positive precept of Good-nature,"\(^1\) contains the important elements of Fielding's philosophy: his emphasis on good nature and on a practical, simple and sincere Christianity.

Of the three novels to be examined, Joseph Andrews is by far the most optimistic, and the presentation of its main authority figure is important in achieving that optimism. The world view of the main line of the novel shows evil consistently defeated, hardship consistently relieved and innocence consistently protected. Providence is an effective force in the novel, and Fielding uses his sympathetic authority figure as a link between Providence, the narrative voice, and the world of the novel. The authority figure, though not always a particularly effective Providential agent, is certainly a spokesman and catalyst for good, and is connected to Providence by his nature, his education and his religion.
The work is a comedy - a "comic epic Poem in prose" - and, consequently, all aspects of evil and hardship must be either muted by presentation as ridiculous foibles or defeated before serious harm is done. *Joseph Andrews* avoids the common weakness of comedies - lack of realism (in the most basic sense of the term) - by depending on these two techniques, and on a strong presentation of all forms of good (including assigning the good authority figure a major role) rather than by avoiding evil entirely.

However, the presence of evil in a novel intended to amuse could easily lead to satire rather than to lighter comedy, which would mar that excellent creation, Parson Adams, and the presence of Providence and authority in themselves would be insufficient to maintain a general sense of optimism. Evil itself must be treated carefully. As Fielding says to justify his introduction of vices into a work purportedly comic:

*first, . . . it is very difficult to pursue a series of human actions and keep clear of them. Secondly, . . . the vices to be found here, are rather the accidental consequences of some human frailty, or foible, than causes habitually existing in the mind. Thirdly, . . . they are never set forth as the objects of ridicule, but detestation. Fourthly, . . . they are never the principal figure at that time on the scene; and lastly, they never produce the intended evil.*

Fielding's second justification depends largely on one's definition of vice. Certainly the bad temper of several inn-keepers' wives can be seen as a human frailty, and on a superficial level the lust and greed of other characters can be seen in the same light, but lust and greed are generically vices, not foibles. Moreover, those minor elements of evil which are clearly the result of human foibles and frailty -- pettiness, parsimoniousness, selfishness, and affectation -- are usually, despite Fielding's third justification, made ridiculous rather than detestable. It is clear, then,
that Fielding's definition of evil is not dependent upon an absolute, but upon the degree, effectiveness and power of the evil. (The same criteria, incidentally, define good.) Instead of any manifestation of the seven deadly sins (pride, lechery, greed, sloth, envy, anger and gluttony) being evil, only sins which are predominant in a character and likely to cause evil or severe hardship to other characters are actually seen as vices. Thus inn-keepers and inn-keepers' wives who demonstrate greed and lack of charity are comic, because no serious ill comes of their failings. Fielding's different presentations of evil are best demonstrated by the four scenes in which someone tries to rape Fanny. When the highwayman, the squire or the servant demonstrate their lust, no comedy is intended, because the danger is real. Only the greater power of good, in the first and last instance, and of Providence, in the second instance, prevent serious evil. When Beau Didapper tries to rape Fanny, though, the same vice of lust is made ridicu­lous, because, even if Beau Didapper's sexual virility were not questionable, he seems physically unable to overcome the stronger Fanny.

Fielding's justification, however, is still not clear, since a catalogue of the vices introduced would include some which contradict Fielding's second point and others which contradict his third. Much of the difficulty is avoided if an "either/or" qualification is assumed between the points, but the main explanation of the apparent discrepancy lies in the clause "causes habitually existing in the mind." If all the sins and vices introduced in Joseph Andrews may be traced to human frailties and foibles, then evil per se does not exist in any of the characters. If the characters in Joseph Andrews are assumed to be representative of types of people, and if it is assumed that most, if not all, types are portrayed (see P. 241),
then evil per se does not exist in most people, and humans are basically
good.\(^3\) However, the clause "the vices to be found here" suggests that
other vices exist, which presumably, are "causes habitually existing in
the mind" and it may be assumed that basically evil people do exist.
George Sherburn's statement, then, that "Fielding does not accept any
doctrine of the natural goodness of all men"\(^4\) is true, but it needs the
modification of Martin Battestin's observation that Fielding believed
that "love and benevolence and compassion were very real components,
operative in some men more strongly than in others, but present in all
to some degree."\(^5\) Thus Fielding avoids denying the orthodox Anglican
concept of original sin (Article IX, The Thirty-Nine Articles) while
establishing a more latitudinarian world where all the characters, though
riddled with faults, are good enough, or weak enough, to be comic.

This theory of good and evil is important to Fielding's presentation
of his main authority figure, Parson Adams (and, consequently, to the
prevailing optimism), and, although the theory itself is not part of the
world of the novel, sufficient elements and examples of the theory are
present to ensure its relevance to an examination of Fielding's intent in
his portrayal of authority in general and Parson Adams in particular.
First, Adams' goodness, and the law and religion which support other good
authority figures, would be almost irrelevant if there were no possibility
of evil. Even if no absolute villains appear, they must be allowed to
exist or Adams cannot be a good man, a concept which demands the opposite
concept of an evil man; he can only be better than those around him.
Second, and more important, Adams' "vices" are mitigated by defining evil
on the basis of results, so that his vices do not conflict with the
presentation of Adams as a good man and where, with some qualifications to be discussed later, they do not seriously reduce his authority. Similarly, the requirements for good authority are made reasonable: perfection or even near perfection are dispensable if, in turn, evils are not judged as absolutes, and an authority figure is not necessarily an evil or false authority because he has faults or because he is not as good as some other authority figure. In other words, an authority figure can be both human and a Providential agent.

The importance of authority in *Joseph Andrews* is noticeable in the difference between the first thirteen chapters and the rest of the novel: it is almost a cliché that *Joseph Andrews* resembles *Shamela* before Parson Adams, an authority figure, becomes an influencing figure in Chapter Fourteen. This suggests that the presence of a good, influential authority figure is a key variant between Fielding's minor works and his first major novel. Of course, the narrator is present at all times, although not always as an authority figure setting forth ethical criteria (e.g. Chapters One and Two), but, as is emphasized on several occasions, the narrator is not an authority figure in the sense of being able to modify the behaviour of the characters, or advise them. Therefore, though the narrator frequently influences the reader's reactions, only Parson Adams and other authority figures who are actually characters in the novel can influence the optimistic development of the plot. As discussed in Chapter One, Parson Adams, representing Providence, a force of good, acts as spokesman for and example of much of the didactic material suggested by the narrator, and thereby establishes ethical criteria for the novel upon which rests much of the love and good nature which make *Joseph Andrews* such a happy, optimistic novel.
The most significant point in establishing the importance of Parson Adams, and hence the importance of authority, is the simple observation of his almost constant presence. However limited Adams' practical power, his position as a clergyman gives him some authority and hence some control, and his presence means that his influence is constant, providing a sense of direction throughout the novel. It is usually assumed that the authority figures in a novel are of no more than secondary importance, and the title "Joseph Andrews" suggests that the novel is mainly concerned with the adventures of a young footman. Instead, Joseph Andrews is of secondary importance, except at the beginning, and the novel concentrates on Parson Adams, often in his role of an authority figure, and examines pertinent details of his character, attitudes and beliefs. Consequently, Parson Adams is of primary importance in an examination of Fielding's authority figures, because the prolonged focus provides many details of Fielding's opinions on authority figures in general and religious authority figures in particular.

Parson Adams does not, at first glance, seem well-suited to the role of a major authority figure, especially one whose authority must not be comic too often because he is the only real, serious authority figure in the novel. There are two minor fathers directly introduced, two magistrates, both comic butts, and three minor clergymen. There is also an abundance of would-be authorities in lawyers and upper servants. Parson Adams, then, is not only the main representative of real authority exercised honestly and conscientiously; he is also the guardian of authority against the ranks of imposters and traitors. Despite the solemnity of his position, though, Adams himself is often comic, even during his most serious moments. Although Adams
is neither the jester nor fool suggested by some critics — his comedy is unintentional and does not demonstrate stupidity — he is certainly not a conventional authority figure (as demonstrated by his unconcern for appearances and by his naivety).

Adams' divergence from the norm is based on a concept which establishes much of the meaning the novel. When God, the original for authority, is contemplated by a believer, awe, respect and solemnity are usually present in the believer's attitude and, consequently, earthly authority paralleling. God logically evokes parallel feelings (providing, of course, that the person considering earthly authority draws the parallel and does not consider the mortal in the authority role too closely). Unfortunately, where awe, respect and solemnity are elicited on earth, all too frequently pomp, riches and ceremony are added on as necessary trappings, and come to be expected regardless of the distance between the mortal authority figure and the philosophical ideal. Furthermore, love, which is included in the concept of the ultimate Christian authority, is seldom associated with response to earthly authority. The major exception, of course, is the father who is presumably loved even in his authority role, but a father has far less power in the world than has a head of state, a magistrate or a clergyman, and does not, of course, expect the ceremonial trappings of a public authority figure. Finally, Christ, the God of the religion creating ecclesiastical authority figures and supporting other authority figures of eighteenth-century England, exemplified humility; the vanity of most public authority figures in *Joseph Andrews* is particularly unsupportable when they are compared to the original of the faith they profess. Parson Adams, on the other hand, avoids most of the pride of authority figures: he is quite
happy without riches or their consequences and without personal regard (although he expects considerable respect for his order).

When Parson Adams does succumb to pride -- on the subjects of his knowledge, his sermons, and his ability as a schoolteacher -- he is temporarily cast in a comic, not an authority role, and authority shifts completely to the narrator with brief, judgemental comments so that the sense of controlling authority is maintained. For example, the comment that the "patience of Joseph, nor perhaps of Job, could bear no longer" (p. 363) clearly puts Adams in the wrong, while "nor perhaps of Job" introduces the authorial presence. The shift to comedy is possible because Adams' pride is limited, and necessary, if he is to be believable. A character completely lacking in such a basic human trait as pride would strain the reader's belief. Consequently, since much of the source of humour involving minor authorities in Joseph Andrews is their hubris in demanding more respect for their authority than it merits, and certainly more than Christ demanded, and since when the real authority figure lapses into a similar fault he is also comic, Christ's values, as portrayed in the gospels, would seem to be a major ethical base for Joseph Andrews.

Although there is some discussion of tithes (e.g. p. 129), and reference to passages of counsel on limited topics (e.g. Adams' reference to II Corinthians, p. 237), the ethical emphasis in Joseph Andrews is on New Testament basics: love, charity and, to some extent, submission to divine will. Particular attention, with favourable authorial comments, is drawn to small, even ludicrous, examples of charity (e.g. Adams offering Fanny his breakfast) and several scenes revolve around searches for and discussions of more important charities (for example, the Trulliber scene
and the discussion of charity with Peter Pounce). Invariably, charitable acts are established as the only real charity.

Romantic love, and sexual appetite deemed love, rather overshadow the less interesting agape, but Adams' actions and words towards everyone who does not prove to be selfish, avaricious or cruel demonstrate a fundamentally loving nature. The strangers he assists turn out to be previous friends, but this is a plot convenience rather than a reduction of his spontaneous warmth. Notably, the goodness of minor sympathetic characters, such as Mr. Wilson and the pedlar, which is not established through extended passages of character examination, is demonstrated by practical acts of love and charity, assisted, or course, by authorial approval.

Submission to divine will does not enjoy quite so favoured a presenta-
tion, since it is basically faith and Fielding's latitudinarian bent naturally made him prefer works. However, much of the doctrine discussed involves submission to divine will with some implication that the doctrine is easier preached than practised (e.g. Adams' advice to Joseph when Fanny is carried off). On some occasions (primarily financial crises), Adams does demonstrate a sincere submission to divine will, but not when there is extended discussion on the subject (e.g. when his son is reported drowned). Again, the practical side of basic doctrine is emphasized: it is by following New Testament doctrine, rather than by preaching it, that Adams proves his goodness.

Adams, in fact, follows Christ's example as closely as a character can while taking part in the daily life of a comic novel. The depth of devotion that Adams has could be portrayed in two ways. He could be shown as a saint "as we rather too theoretically conceive saints to be, straining
wills to follow the rugged paths of perfection," but such a character could hardly be loved and, in literature, could only be treated with deepest reverence, or with deepest satire. Or, he could be shown as a human, unconcernedly suffering the practical consequences of unworldly attitudes in the midst of the world, and demonstrating blindly human views on his own failings. Such a character is lovable, comic, and subtly didactic. Adams' incompetence in practical matters and his childish naivety are certainly funny, but he is so much happier than the competent and the sophisticated, and so much more likeable, that the worldly consequences of sincere Christianity seem minor inconveniences. Thus, Adams has much of the spiritual and ethical authority one would accord to the saint, but still deserves the love one would accord to any sincere, fatherly person. The combination of spiritual authority, love and Church orders, if no other elements were present in the treatment of Adams, would create a nearly ideal authority figure.

Adams is the true authority figure in Joseph Andrews, then, not only because he is a clergyman, although he must have some conventional position of authority if he is to have any practical power, but also because he is a good man. (The concept of the "good man" is more fully developed in Tom Jones.) A composite of Fielding's good characters, plus his narrative comments, suggest that, in his eyes, a good man (or woman) must have moral strength (e.g. Adams, Amelia, Joseph Andrews, and Allworthy), an inborn good-nature (note especially Adams, Tom Jones, and Allworthy), including high spirits and the ability to empathize with others (e.g. Adams and Tom Jones), sincere Christianity (e.g. Adams, Allworthy, Joseph Andrews and Amelia), and a good education (e.g. Adams and Dr. Harrison). In general terms, "Fielding's good men exemplify the sum
of the individual's duty to God, society and himself."^8 The education is particularly necessary for a good man in an official position of authority, since other people depend on the authority figure's knowledge, but any truly good man must be educated if he is to understand and develop the best aspects of his nature, accurately follow the precepts of his religion, and avoid the dangers of his high spirits and warm disposition. Moreover, all the features of being a "good man" should be intermingled if the goodness is genuine. It is difficult to establish the difference between Adams' nature and his Christianity, and even his education is influenced by his nature as his enthusiastic enjoyment of the classics demonstrates. Adams also enjoys his faith, and every good aspect of life: he exemplifies a sermon by Isaac Barrow (whom Fielding admired) which states that "a Christian, as such (according to the design of his Religion, and in proportion to his compliance with its dictates) is the most jocund, blith and gay Person in the World; always in humour and full of cheer."^9 In fact, if it were not for the evils and trials which beset him in the course of the novel, it would not be established that Adams is morally strong enough to be an authority figure, and since Adams depends largely on his religion for comfort and direction during these trials, it is evident that his moral strength is at least partly a consequence of his faith. Adams' goodness and natural propensity for the loving aspects of Christianity are responsible for making his authority viable and palatable, but it is his relationship to God, the ultimate authority figure, which supplies the power and purpose necessary for a true authority figure: Adams must demonstrate human parallels to God if his authority is to be accepted.

Adams' most Christ-like feature, and consequently the strongest proof
of his right to authority, is his constant concern for everyone's spiritual well-being. Even in the "scene of roasting" Adams heartily prays that God will forgive the sins committed by the company (p. 300). In every case where Adams is insulted or mistreated or where charity is refused him, he is predominantly concerned with two things: the honour of the cloth and the soul of the person who is not acting as a Christian. There are times, of course, when this concern seems a little like a preservation of dignity rather than genuine concern. Adams' pious disquietude for the soul of the squire comes at the end of a very dignified speech following most undignified circumstances. He could simply be demonstrating that he is holier than they. Again, there is a slight suggestion not that Adams "could not recollect all the jests of this kind practised on him, which the inoffensive disposition of his own heart made him slow in discovering" (p. 297), but that he would not relate all the jests out of tenderness for his pride. On the other hand, most, and perhaps all, of the difficulty in accepting Adams' concern and inoffensive disposition as genuine is that if it were, Adams would be too Christ-like to be human. The normal reader, perhaps, cannot imagine himself expressing Adams' sentiments except out of a sense of injured pride. Besides, Adams' sermons do not need to be excused entirely, because Adams really is holier than his opponents, and surely correction of those in error is sometimes better than humility.

Some moments of concern, where injured pride could explain Adams' reaction only if he were an exceptionally proud person, are undoubtedly genuine. When Adams begins to lecture Trulliber on his lack of charity, the narrative comments make it clear that he is worried about Trulliber's soul, not his own lack of success in acquiring the fourteen shillings. On the
other side of the coin, when Adams is given money by Mr. Wilson, Adams is "glad to see such an instance of goodness, not so much for the conveniency which it brought them, as for the sake of the doer, whose reward would be great in heaven" (p. 284). The effect, then, of some instances when his concern may be genuine (or, at least, when some real concern is mixed with less admirable feelings), and some when it clearly is genuine, is that Adams' primary interest when faced with strikingly Christian or strikingly non-Christian actions is the doer's spiritual well-being.

Probably the most important of the other elements which characterize Adams as an ideal Christian and clergyman, and hence as a good authority figure, is his concern for his parishioners. We are introduced to Adams as he questions Joseph on basic theological subjects, and tries to improve Joseph's station in life by offering to teach him Latin and trying to interest Squire Booby in educating him. Although Adams' interest could have pecuniary motivation, a genuine good-nature proves to be the source of his questioning and suggestion when more is known of his character. Moreover, that he troubles himself to catechize Joseph just because he has "observed the singular devotion of young Andrews" (p. 78) indicates a very conscientious attitude towards his position as a clergyman. Presumably, this attitude has been consistent throughout his curateship, for we are told that "his word was little less than a law in his parish: for . . . he had shown his parishioners by a uniform behaviour of thirty-five years duration, that he had their good entirely at heart. . . ." (p. 103). A "uniform behaviour" for thirty-five years is in itself an achievement, and since its result was a considerable degree of power held by virtue of his goodness, the achievement is remarkable.

Adams' practical religion, with its latitudinarian emphasis on the importance
of works (though Adams also has a good deal of faith: e.g. p. 336), gives him an authority strongly reminiscent of Christ's: Adams' advice is obeyed as law not primarily because he has some practical power, but because his parishioners trust that his advice is sound and always to their benefit even when he advises against their favoured course. Either the parishioners are very sincere and philosophical Christians (and even this assumption is to Adams' credit since he is responsible for their spiritual guidance and instruction), or Adams' goodness is so apparent that the divinity inherent in his authority as a providential agent can be recognized and trusted as such.

It is not possible to establish quite the same effect in a rendition of a journey lasting under two weeks and perhaps another two weeks at home, as in thirty-five years of consistent goodness, but sufficient evidence of Adams' sincerity in his benevolent interest in his parishioners is given to demonstrate why his parishioners would willingly accept his authority. His ecstasy at the reunion of Joseph and Fanny -- he is so caught up in his joy for others that he accidentally throws his Æschylus into the fire -- shows some of his sincerity: being transported with joy because two lovers meet after being separated for a few months demonstrates a remarkable depth of empathy. Indeed, some philosophers, Fielding probably amongst them, "may perhaps doubt whether he was not the happiest of the three, for the goodness of his heart enjoyed the blessings which were exulting in the breasts of both the other two, together with his own" (p. 209).

A more serious aspect of Adams' opinion of his duty as a clergyman is shown at the very end of the novel when he at first refuses a living of one hundred and thirty pounds a year, despite his poverty, "resolving not
to quit his parishioners, with whom he hath lived so long" (p. 399). He accepts the living only on the recollection that he can farm it out to a curate and thus remain with his parishioners. Fielding notably avoids any consideration of pluralism; all that is established is that Adams is no longer poor and is still with his flock. The best proof, though, of Adams' devotion to his flock, and of the serious attitude he has towards his position, is his stand on marrying Joseph and Fanny. Despite Lady Booby's practical power in the neighbourhood, and her probable power to divest Adams of the small living he has, he refuses to follow her orders and insists on publishing the banns for Joseph and Fanny. Moreover, he even lectures Lady Booby on the rights of the poor and on the nature of his duty as a clergyman. Obviously, Adams sees his duty as absolute; personal and family considerations do not enter into the execution of any aspect of his role as a clergyman. The parishioners are justified in trusting Adams.

An examination of other elements of Adams' character suggests that on a personal level he is a good Christian in a conventional sense, and that, more important in Fielding's eyes, he is a good man. As Aurelien Digeon says, Adams "is a clean, vigorous Christian, with a Christianity which pays less heed to pure dogma than to active sympathy for the weak and disinherited of this world." Whenever a situation offers alternatives, one consistent with the letter of the New Testament Bible, and one consistent with its spirit, Adams follows the spirit of the New Testament. Again, when a situation requires action more or less against the dictates of the New Testament, and certainly against the established role of a clergyman, Adams does not hesitate to follow the necessary course to prevent serious harm to others. The best action for Adams to take when he finds a ruffian attempting to rape
a young woman, Fanny as it happens, is to rescue her by attacking the
villain. Slipslop's opinion, motivated, of course, by her jealousy, is,
that since Adams is a clergyman he should not have rescued Fanny because
the rescue required fighting. She argues "that it did not become a clergyman
to lay violent hands on anyone, that he should have rather prayed that she
might be strengthened" (p. 212). Adams does pray when time allows, but
he prays in addition to practical protection, not instead of it. For example,
when the travellers mistake the sheep-stealers for murderers, Adams "fell on
his knees, . . . committed himself to the care of Providence. . . and. . .
having finished his ejaculations, grasped his crabstick" (p. 245) and
prepared to fight. This "war-like disposition," however, is based on the
danger of circumstances, for we are told that "nothing could provoke Adams
to strike, but an absolute assault on himself or his friend" (p. 221). When,
for example, Adams and Fanny are arrested on the accusation of the highwayman,
we see Adams "not only submitting patiently to his own fate, but comforting
and encouraging his companion under her sufferings" (p. 196), which demon­
strates a different and greater courage.

Adams' innocence is another proof of the purity of his mind and hence
is, in some respects, another aspect of his primitive Christianity. Evil so
seldom enters his personal considerations that he frequently does not recog­
nize it, and when evil actions or motives indicate a consciously bad person,
Adams simply refuses to believe that such a person could exist. Even on the
relatively minor subject of "malicious" lies, Adams says:

Out of love to your self, you should confine yourself
to the truth, . . . for by doing otherwise, you injure
the noblest part of yourself, your immortal soul. I
can hardly believe any man such an idiot to risk the
loss of that by any trifling gain, and the greatest
gain in this world is but dirt in comparison of what
shall be revealed hereafter.

(p. 152)
This belief in honesty as a general practice among all but idiots leads Adams to take everyone at face value: he "never saw farther into people than they desired to let him" (pp. 197-98). On the other hand, the extent and result of this naivety is often comic and although it enhances Adams' authority insofar as it proves the integrity of his intentions, the immediate result of such innocence is comedy.

Usually a comic authority figure is either consistently comic or comic with sinister overtones (e.g. the magistrates in *Volpone*). In either case, the source of comedy is misuse of authority or the authority figure's inflated view of himself because of his authority, and the result of the comedy is reduction or annihilation of the character's authority. Adams is comic to some degree most of the time, but, although the extent of the comedy cannot but reduce his authority, Adams remains basically an acceptable authority figure. The extent of the reduction can be established by an examination of the type and sources of Adams' comedy.

The most frequent source of comedy based on Adams is his appearance. Adams wears a rather shabby greatcoat, a wig "not over-new" (p. 297), and a cassock which is constantly falling down around his knees. The wrinkles in his face are so deep that Fielding describes them as "furrows." His mannerisms add to his comic appearance: he walks with great strides, "capers" when happy, snaps his fingers when emotionally excited, and groans at anything revealing less than Christian attitudes. He obviously lacks all outward aspects of dignity and hence does not appear to be an authority figure. The reader's natural reaction to such a figure will be amusement, and most of the other characters react with amusement or disdain.

On fairer consideration, though, the reader will begin to have much
the same reaction to Adams as have his parishioners. The parson's attire is partly a necessary consequence of his poverty, and partly the result of his complete unconcern for all worldly trappings. His mannerisms are the result of his spontaneity and his complete lack of a false front and of social conditioning. What is on the surface a comic reduction of his authority is in reality further proof of his suitability for complete authority, because it is further proof of his honesty and of his lack of concern for self. As Samuel Tave points out in *The Amiable Humorist* "the world may judge Adams to be a fool -- and he is a fool by worldly definition -- but the good-natured reader sees how the world is judged by the fool, too" (p. 141). Those who concentrate "on his oddities of dress and behaviour . . . are the proper objects of ridicule, not the innocent man himself" (p. 144). Clearly, Fielding intends to show "that a poor, badly-dressed man, humble and scorned, can play the part of a hero, if he carries beneath his rags a beautiful soul and a courage superior to his fortune."  

Similarly, other aspects of Adams' comedy suggest features of his character which are necessary if he is, in fact, to be seen as a pure, Christ-like authority figure. As mentioned before, Adams' innocence and naivety are a result of the purity of his mind. His forgetfulness, a minor comic feature, can be seen as a dissociation from worldly concerns, but the predominant effect of these comic features is a reduction of authority, because, although they are necessary results of his character, they are not consistent with a conventional view of an authority figure. Nevertheless, the reader is surprised into some consideration of Adams' degree of perfection, since Fielding refuses to grant him the sainthood likely for a good clergyman created by a sincere Christian. Moreover, there is some
suggestion that strict adherence to Christian values will create some conflict with any form of secular power.

In a just, pious consideration, Adams is not at all comic, and his "comic" features are actually proofs of his right to authority, but the reader and, in all probability, Fielding are not inclined to view Adams with just and pious consideration. A mental picture of Adams with drooping cassock, capering around a room, snapping his fingers will not raise any idea of religious appreciation in most readers. If Adams is not viewed in pious light, he is comic, and although unworldly justifications for the comic effects exist they do not entirely restore the degree of authority lost by comic effect.

Some aspects of Adams' comedy, of course, do not have any saving grace except as further proof that he is human. When Adams is comic because he is proud in any way, he demonstrates a foible, if not a failing, and consequently becomes ridiculous. Pride encompasses all Adams' remaining comic aspects; even when he is comic because he does not practise what he preaches, and is unable to see that he does not, it is his faith in his own learning and righteousness -- which is basically pride -- that is the source of comedy. This brand of comedy has serious consequences for Adams' authority because it undercuts his advice, sometimes to the point of destruction. For example, Adams' remonstrance, with reference to Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, that

\[
\text{no Christian ought so to set his heart on any person or thing in this world, but that whenever it shall be required or taken from him in any manner by Divine Providence, he may be able, peaceably, quietly, and contentedly to resign it}
\]

(p. 362)
is immediately undercut by Adams' reaction to the reported death of his youngest son.

On the one hand, both the reaction and the undercutting are necessary. Without comic reduction of the moral doctrine with which *Joseph Andrews* abounds, the reader might suspect that the comic epic poem in prose was a sly trick designed to inculcate wholesome instruction under cover of amusing the reader with light comedy. The suspicion usually remains, since an element of comedy in a line or so -- such as the comment that Adams had fallen asleep during Joseph's analysis of charity -- does not balance several pages of doctrine. Occasionally, though, the effect of the doctrine is balanced or destroyed by the comic reduction. In the first example, not only is the effect of the doctrine reduced by Adams' reaction, it is further reduced by Adams' going back to the doctrine, oblivious of the discrepancy between his words and actions, and reduced again by Mrs. Adams' contrary advice and assurance that Adams has been a "loving and cherishing husband" to her despite his opinion that a man ought to love his wife "with moderation and discretion" (p. 364). This doctrine must be undercut by Adams' actions if his character is to remain likeable. We might respect someone with sufficient control over his emotions to act as Adams suggests, but it would be difficult to like him. Again, though we might condemn Abraham, as Adams suggests, on religious grounds if he had refused to sacrifice Isaac, and though on similar grounds we would feel Adams lacks absolute faith in Divine Providence, it is hard to respond in human terms to Abraham, and it would be equally hard to respond so to Adams if he had been able to resign his son "peaceably, quietly, and contentedly."

On the other hand, these necessary reductions seriously lessen Adams'
credibility as an authority figure. If Adams' serious advice on serious Christian doctrine is made comic, can his advice be accepted? If his advice on subjects of obvious importance to him cannot be accepted, can his authority be accepted? In fact, whenever Adams' advice, though based on orthodox interpretation of Christianity, denies or mutes the "single string of the New Testament" -- the command to love one another -- his authority cannot be accepted, and the authority of the narrator becomes predominant. Adams' real authority is based on love just as his real nature is based on love, and neither his nature nor his authority can be radically affected by comedy when love, their basis, does not have the false dignity which comedy destroys.

Adams' authority in the world of *Joseph Andrews*, however, is a different matter. His parishioners have come to love and trust him through thirty-five years, and the reader quickly feels much the same through the faster process of being told of Adams' character on the authority of the narrator, and then shown his character. Most of the characters in the novel, though, have only his appearance, manners and speech on which to judge him, and since his appearance and manners are comic and his speech need not reflect his true nature, the characters in the novel have only his dubious position as a clergyman on which to base their esteem. The general implication in the novel, established both by the narrative voice and comments by the characters, is that the mere fact of his calling gives him spiritual authority entitling him to respect and obedience (note the frequent injunction to "honour the cloth" and Adams' comment that "his order is not the object of scorn" (p. 299) -- see also pp. 172 and 336), and the general criticism in the novel is that society does not render spiritual authority its due unless the
clergyman has the secular trappings which actually conflict with his spiritual authority (see pp. 80, 172, 217-18, 222, 226 et al). Implicit in this criticism, of course, is the more serious criticism that because the generality of clergy depend on such trappings, real spiritual authority is not recognized, or, at least, not respected. Didgeon notes that "it is only the virtuous people in the book who love Parson Adams...."13.

That Adams has real spiritual authority is established by the final consideration of the source of his authority. Adams is a father and this position is, as mentioned before, the closest analogy of God's relationship to man. Adams' role as a real father is important in that it establishes a standard by which the other fathers may be judged. Adams says that he has "never scourged a child of [his] own, unless as his schoolmaster, and then [has] felt every stroke on [his] own posteriors" (p. 278). The real importance of Adams' role as a father, though, is that he sees himself in that relationship to his parishioners (p. 225). Moreover, he acts as a father to his parishioners, if his behaviour to Joseph and Fanny may be accepted as an example of his usual behaviour, indicating a paternal authority over them, based on his spiritual authority, which suggests a necessarily limited human parallel to God's authority over them.

With the exception of the Catholic priest and the two other fathers, Wilson and Andrews, the other authority figures in the novel are comic butts. This fact, of course, increases Adams' authority, since he is seen in comparison to authority figures who demonstrate their usual failings, and his lack of those failings is even more impressive when in contrast with corrupt authority figures than it is when considered on its own. Moreover, the emphasis on corrupt secular authority figures, with only one really corrupt ecclesiastical authority figure whose effect is more than balanced by Adams'
effect, enhances the position of Adams' religion, a modified Latitudinarian stance, as the ethical basis for Joseph Andrews.

The two other father figures have very little importance in the scheme of authority in the novel. Wilson is an entirely sympathetic father figure and his concern for his children is part of the idyllic life he leads. Aside from this, the only importance of his role as a father is that he admits, even boasts of, playing with his children, which demonstrates the superiority of love over dignity in an ideal existence. Andrews has far too minor a role in the novel to have much importance in the presentation of authority, but if anything he is a less than ideal father. He accepts Fanny as his daughter and "blessed and kissed her" (p. 394), but first has to be thoroughly convinced she is his daughter because he "very likely desired to have no more children than he could keep" (p. 394), and when he is convinced he "testified no remarkable emotion" (p. 394). Clearly, he does not abound with love: one imagines Adams in the same situation in raptures. The main function of both minor father figures, then, is to establish further the importance of love for true fulfillment of the role.

The other clergy in the novel can only be foils or reinforcements to Adams since his being a clergyman is consistently emphasized. There are three other clergymen in the novel: Barnabas, Trulliber and the Catholic priest. That Barnabas is a clergyman is mentioned only in passing, and, although his discussion with Adams of some of the religious philosophies of the time clarifies Adams' position to some extent, Barnabas' role as a clergyman is far too minor to qualify him as an authority figure in the novel. Trulliber is, of course, the most prominent, since an entire scene revolves around him, but the Catholic priest is more interesting despite the brevity
of his appearance.

The priest, first of all, bears a physical resemblance to Adams which suggests some association of the two. He is described as "a grave man who sat smoking his pipe by the fire" (p. 304) (cp. Adams "had not the least affection for joking" [p. 118]). Moreover, he bears a spiritual resemblance to Adams, since Adams declares that the Catholic priest's discourse on the evils of riches, both in terms of this world and the next, expresses exactly his own sentiments. Also, the continuing parallel discussion, with Adams and the priest taking turns expanding on the theme of love of money as the root of all evil, confirms their spiritual similarities. However, this brief scene in itself only clarifies Adams' views by having him discuss them, and directly establishes the attitude towards wealth in *Joseph Andrews*.

Given Fielding's dislike of Catholicism, though, the scene takes on added importance. Fielding's choice of a priest of the Church of Rome to agree with Adams must either be a criticism of Adams' views or a statement about the true nature of a Christian. The first possibility is clearly untenable. The sentiments expressed directly are the same as those implied throughout the rest of the novel where they consistently have the approval of the narrative voice. In the scene in question, only the omission of the greater part of the discussion, on the grounds that "most of which [Adams] said occurs among many authors, who have treated this subject" (p. 305), and the comment that the priest continued the discourse "with great bitterness and invective" (p. 305) could be interpreted as sarcasm or criticism. However, the first point is no more than reasonable on literary grounds since *Joseph Andrews* is a comic novel, not a religious treatise, and the
second point is no more than reasonable on religious grounds since it is an evil which the priest is discussing. Consequently, no criticism of Adams can be intended in the duplication of his beliefs in a Catholic priest. Instead, Fielding clearly intends to establish that every sect of Christianity has believers who follow basic tenets of New Testament theology, and the sect itself is of limited importance. The onus is upon the individual to exercise his faith. Furthermore, that a member of a sect which Fielding disliked is a sincere Christian emphasizes the failure of those who are not sincere Christians even though they have the advantage of belonging to the "right" sect in Fielding's view -- the Church of England.

There is one portrait of a corrupt Church of England clergyman -- Trulliber -- and notably his main failing is criticised in the priest's critical discourse. Trulliber is rich and all his faults are in some way dependent on the importance he places on money. He has no charity, and he has no respect for anyone who is not rich. This is demonstrated by his lack of manners in his instructions to his wife to "draw a little of the worst ale," after he fastens the parlour door and takes Adams into the kitchen (p. 217), and in snatching a cup of ale from Adams' hand "crying out I caal'd wurst" (p. 218). Fairly high on his list of faults is the way he treats, or rather mistreats, his wife, which proves he has no love even where it is easiest and most natural to bestow love. All these faults are summed up in two forms: Adams' criticism and Trulliber's main source of income. It is significant that Trulliber raises hogs. In the first place, it is clear that the hogs take precedence over Trulliber's duties as a parson (in defiance of Church law), for we are told that "Mr. Trulliber was a parson on Sundays, but all the other six might more properly be called a farmer" (p. 216).
If we compare Adams' work as a curate seven days of the week to his work on Sunday, it is clear that Trulliber might as well be called a farmer all the time. The association established between Trulliber and his hogs is even more telling. Not only is Trulliber established as a swineherd rather than as a "good shepherd," he even resembles a pig in build -- "his own size being with ale rendered little inferior to that of the beasts he sold" (p. 216) -- and also in manners and in eating habits. He is a portrait of greed and his greed excludes all possible favourable characteristics. Adams' analysis notes Trulliber's lack of charity, a consequence of greed, from which Adams concludes that Trulliber is not a Christian.

That a person embodies values opposite to those which his position requires he teach others is a travesty of the authority of that position. What is even worse in Trulliber's case, however, is that he enjoys, by virtue of his sinful characteristics, far more practical power and far more respect for his distorted authority than Adams does for his real and justified authority. (On the other hand, Adams enjoys the love of his parishioners.) On one level this is a criticism of one type of person who just happens to be a parson. It is obviously not a criticism of Church of England parsons, since Adams is also a parson, but that someone like Trulliber can be in orders must be a general criticism of organized religion. Most importantly, though, Trulliber makes Adams seem even better than before, since it is obvious that Adams' poverty is a consequence of his piety. If he followed Trulliber's route, he could have all the power, respect and wealth that he now lacks. He would, of course, probably lose his piety and good-nature in the bargain. Thus, the contrast between Adams and Trulliber, and to some extent the similarity between Adams and the priest, establish that authority based on
love, honesty and spiritual principles such as those of primitive New Testament Christianity, has little worldly esteem or power, while authority based on corruption and worldly principles, including, to some extent, organized religion, draws added esteem and power from a pretence of spiritual authority. However, the characters of the different clergy suggest that on a permanent and personal level -- compare the feelings of Adams' parishioners towards Adams to Trulliber's parishioners towards him -- spiritual authority is greater and more satisfying.

In Fielding's literary picture, even real political and practical authority, therefore, can be no more than second best, and its lesser significance lessens the importance of its corruption. The corrupt magistrates in Joseph Andrews, then, are comic except when they are slightly sinister, and social corruption does not seem to be as important to Fielding as religious corruption. On the other hand, society appears in a worse state than religion in Joseph Andrews, because there is no good magistrate to balance the corrupt magistrates. The two squires who appear in their roles as magistrates and the squire at the "scene of roasting," who we may assume is a magistrate, are all corrupt and use their power and wealth to promote their own or their friends' advantage. Practical authority has no sound moral basis in Joseph Andrews. The magistrates do not uphold justice and the law, and hence they betray the original source of their authority -- the concept "justice." Unfortunately, on practical grounds they have just as much authority as if they were secular parallels to God. In both cases where innocent people are brought before a magistrate, it is only the providential interference of someone with practical power or reputation that prevents the gross injustice of due process of law.
The first magistrate scene particularly attacks the country magistrate "type." When Adams and Fanny are arrested on suspicion of highway robbery, they are first incarcerated in the stable, because the justice has not finished his dinner, then examined when the justice is "in the height of his mirth and his cups" (p. 198), because "he believed they [his company] should have good sport in their examination" (p. 199). The justice amuses himself "in cracking jests on poor Fanny" and at first refuses to hear Adams' defence, rebuking him for taking up so much of his time (p. 201). The magistrate clearly has no sense of the gravity and responsibility of his position. Instead, his authority role is to him a licence to torment unfortunates accused, however unjustly, of any crime, and his behaviour in that role reveals him to be an insensitive drunkard. Even the reason for the restoration of justice reveals the magistrate's corruption, for he releases Adams and Fanny on the assurance that Adams is a gentleman. The magistrate claims, obviously intending to establish his respect for justice, that "nobody can say [he has] committed a gentleman since [he has] been in the commission" (p. 203), and it is clear that "justice" to this magistrate means convicting the lower classes and acquitting the upper classes without consideration of guilt or innocence. The corruption is made comic because it is exaggerated, and because the intended evil is avoided, but the squire's attempt at comedy is too tainted with injustice to be amusing. The scene is a balance of comedy and criticism with only the narrative voice maintaining some elements of optimistic perspective.

The second scene of justice more or less ignores the personal corruption of the magistrate, concentrating instead on the corruption of the law and the perversion of justice. Joseph and Fanny are to be committed to Bridewell for
larceny -- "stealing" a hazel twig. The reason for this obvious perversion of justice, as the magistrate freely confesses to his fellow squire, is that "Lady Booby desires to get them [Joseph and Fanny] out of the parish" (p. 342).

Here, far more than in the first case, the power of wealth and position is established and attacked. Lawyer Scout characterizes the justice and further reveals the injustice for which the law is used:

The justice will stretch it [the law] as far as he is able, to oblige your ladyship. To say truth, it is a great blessing to the country that he is in the commission; for he hath taken several poor off our hands, that the law would never lay hold on. I know some justices who made as much of committing a man to Bridewell as his lordship at Sizé would of hanging him: But it would do a man good to see his worship our justice commit a fellow to Bridewell: he takes so much pleasure in it: And when once we ha' un there, we seldom hear any more o' un. He's either starved or eat up by vermin in a month's time.

(p. 338)

The passage is a most effective criticism of Bridewell, because it is the exceptionally virtuous Joseph and Fanny who are threatened, and the criticism of the legal system involved is also severe. The situation described here is not "wretches hang that jurymen may dine," but wretches die of hunger and disease because a justice takes pleasure in committing them, and because a "lady" wants them removed from her parish. Fielding, however, seems less concerned about corrupt magistrates than about corrupt clergymen, possibly because the latter are more hypocritical, or because some recourse is possible, although not likely, against the corruption of the former, or possibly Fielding's lesser concern is the result of some feature of his own Christian faith. In Joseph Andrews, of course, the effect of the corruption of justice is less severe than it might be, because the "intended evil" is always prevented.
It would appear, then, that the concentration of authority in *Joseph Andrews* concerns religious or spiritual authority and the role of that authority in a paternal sense. Secular authority is presented unfavourably, the sole exception being Lawyer Scout's mention of some justices who "make as much of committing a man to Bridewell as his lordship at Siz would of hanging him" (p. 338). Corrupt religious authority, serious because there is no outside protection from its effects, is similarly attacked in the portrait of Trulliber, but the favourable presentation of the Catholic priest and the concentration of the novel on Adams as a conscientious and devout spiritual authority more than balance the attack on Trulliber, and establish Adams' demonstrated values and concerns as the ethical and moral basis of *Joseph Andrews*. The concentration on Adams also overshadows the attack on corrupt secular authority until it is no more important than other ills of society, especially since its effects, like other real dangers, are providentially prevented.

The presentation of a sincere spiritual authority as the only real authority in the plot emphasizes Fielding's Christian values and the latitudinarian doctrine in *Joseph Andrews*. Adams' paternal relationship to his parishioners and his inherently good character reflect his divine model and establish his right to authority. The comic treatment of Adams somewhat reduces his credibiltiy as an authority figure, but mainly creates an aura of happiness which enhances his effect. The treatment of the main authority figure in *Joseph Andrews*, therefore, supports New Testament Christianity and affirms the importance of love, while furthering the comic atmosphere of the novel.
Fielding's major work, *Tom Jones*, frequently focuses on the nature, extent and exercise of authority. Authority figures not only abound, but discuss authority, so that in an examination of authority the "pitiful reptile of a critic" is usually blessed with direct evidence. Where "none of [the] characters can be prevailed upon to speak it" the authorial voice is heard, further clarifying Fielding's attitude toward authority. As in *Joseph Andrews*, it is the treatment of authority as an extension or type of providential control that creates the sense that "everything will turn out alright in the end" which is crucial in any kind of comedy, but the emphasis is on authority as an aspect of a "good man," rather than as otherworldly control, and this emphasis makes authority immediate and realistic. Allworthy is human; he makes mistakes. However, the combination of his authority roles with his good-nature and benevolence ensures both that all his actions are part of an overall plan and that they will create as much immediate happiness as possible.

The authority in *Tom Jones* may be divided into two categories: demonstrated and discussed. Demonstrated authority is simply an authority figure using or misusing his authority, and discussed authority may be further divided into discussion by the characters and observations by the author -- the narrative voice.

The narrator in *Tom Jones* is a commentator, a paternal advisor, a guide and a companion, and the narrative voice varies from an ironic tone to a direct "Appearance, by way of Chorus, on the Stage" (p. 103). Fielding's favourite tone-setting words and phrases are "possibly," perhaps," and "for some other
reason," which, along with numerous similar phrases, suggest that a given explanation may not be correct, and maintain a distinct authorial presence in the novel. Fielding also achieves tonal irony by the use of direct authorial interjections, such as "very wisely," "certainly," "and rightly so," which, as elements of external judgment, help establish the narrator's magisterial character, as do similar forms of emphasis using his own voice ("I doubt not," "I suppose" etc.). In other words, elements of Fielding's writing style in *Tom Jones* create an omnipresent authority which ensures that Fielding's optimistic moral and ethical values, established directly by Squire Allworthy, Fielding's "didactic mouthpiece"¹, are in control: even when he is absent.

All aspects of authority, however, are not expressed directly, since, after all, *Tom Jones* is not a treatise on authority. The discussions by the characters, for example, require an examination of each character and some consideration of what kind or kinds of authority the character holds before the merit of these discussions can be established. Demonstrated authority, of course, lends itself to critical examination, especially whenever Fielding himself does not analyse it.

Demonstrated authority is especially important because it directly establishes what kinds of authority are most important in the world of *Tom Jones*. Authority based solely on established religion and philosophy is limited, although religion and philosophy are still influencing factors. The clergymen and the philosopher in *Tom Jones* are comic figures, which in itself says something about authority, and religion and philosophy as sources of authority are mainly supports for the *de facto* authority of other characters. Judicial authority is far more important in *Tom Jones* than it is
in *Joseph Andrews*, and the use of magistrates as comic butts is restricted to
the comedy associated with Squire Western. Much of the importance of judicial
authority, of course, results from the main authority figure, Squire Allworthy,
being a magistrate, but, on the other hand, the representation of judicial
authority must be positive to establish that Allworthy is a "good man" in
every respect. Indeed, judicial authority eventually departs from its
conventional role as the source of a magistrate's power and becomes a "social"
authority: the right of a "good man" to judge others' actions. It is
parental authority, however, which is predominant in *Tom Jones*. The number
of fathers, father figures, mothers and other adults acting as guardians over
young people immediately establishes some of the importance of this type of
authority, while the discussions of parental authority, and the emphasis of
the plot on the degree of authority a parent or guardian has, make parental
authority a major concern in *Tom Jones*.

Religion and philosophy, though they are not prominent in the plot,
are the foundations of some kinds of demonstrated authority and are
consequently important considerations in *Tom Jones* and necessarily influence
the treatment of authority. Fielding refers to religion and virtue as "the
greatest Perfections of Human Nature" and as "the Bands of Civil Society"
(p. 96), while the frequent discussions of Christianity and philosophy, both
by the characters and the narrative voice, establish their importance in the
world view of *Tom Jones* as basic elements in the make-up of a good man.
Although the characters who ostentatiously draw their authority from these
sources are comic butts having no real authority, there is a sense in which
Allworthy seems to have some degree of religious authority. (This possibility
will be examined later to see if a type of religious authority, like modified
judicial authority, is somehow annexed, in Fielding's vision, to a good man.) A good man must be a sincere Christian, since the "good Turk" of Adams' consideration would be an improbable character in Fielding's settings, and Fielding does not seem to entertain the idea that anyone will be basically and consistently good without the assistance of religion and philosophy (cf Col. James in Amelia). By virtue of his sincerity and goodness, the good man eventually acquires some the minor power bestowed by religious authority. Although the concept of the priesthood of all believers is far too radical a view for Fielding, the treatment of religious authority with respect to Allworthy minimizes the conventional Anglican position that only a clergyman tends the spiritual flock, and emphasizes the religious significance of Allworthy's role as a father figure.

The philosophy in Tom Jones is a non-dogmatic undertone, with both classical ideas and views current in eighteenth-century philosophy, especially those verging on religious philosophy, apparent, piecemeal, throughout the novel. Fielding's ideas are strongly reminiscent of those in Butler's sermons, although Fielding does not seem to accept, or at least he does not emphasize, the good and evil dichotomy which is the basis of Butler's philosophy. The only contemporary philosopher quoted directly is Shaftesbury, but Fielding, again, selects only some aspects and tends towards a more realistic philosophy than Shaftesbury's. Generally, though, Fielding is less than kind to the multitude of contemporary philosophers. Didgeon comments that "for all these quacks and their panaceas, Fielding expresses the same scorn, which is professed without exception by all the humourists and best minds of his century." 

Classical philosophy is given more respect. There are a number of brief quotations, Stoicism is apparent, though not directly discussed in Tom Jones,
and the "Antients" are mentioned in general by the Man on the Hill (p. 357), by Philosopher Square (p. 716), and by Parson Supple (p. 231). In other words, the philosophy in *Tom Jones* is not based on specific philosophies, but is general. Fielding's controlling philosophical stance is expressed in the Dedication to George Lyttleton. Here Fielding claims the reader will find "nothing prejudicial to the Cause of Religion and Virtue," and that it has been his "sincere endeavour" "to recommend Goodness and Innocence" (p. 7). The use of "virtue" and "religion" in general terms sets the tone for the treatment of both philosophy and Christianity.

When Thwackum uses the term "religion" in such a general way, he is forced by Square to be more specific, and accordingly expands his thought: "When I mention Religion, I mean the Christian Religion; and not only the Christian Religion, but the Protestant Religion, and not only the Protestant Religion, but the Church of England" (p. 95). That Fielding puts this restrictive definition into the mouth of Thwackum does not necessarily mean that he did not define religion in a similar way, especially as the main characters seem to be Anglicans (since they attend the services given by Anglican clergy), and since the other Protestant religious alternatives of the time are occasionally mentioned with amusement and come under direct attack in the line "the pernicious Principles of Methodism, or . . .any other heretical Sect" (p. 327). On the other hand, Fielding himself uses "Religion" only in a general sense, and only insists on the Anglicanism of unsympathetic or comic characters; a sense of dogmatic didacticism is entirely avoided.

The "Cause" of Virtue refers to Stoicism, especially as discussed in contemporary philosophies such as those of both Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke.
When Fielding says that

> Besides displaying that Beauty of Virtue which may attract the Admiration of Mankind [he has] attempted to engage a stronger Motive to Human Action in her Favour, by convincing Men, that their true Interest directs them to a Pursuit of her

(p. 8)

he not only expresses a general Stoic sentiment, but agrees with Butler, Shaftesbury, and Bolingbroke. The most similar, and most frequent, passages are in Shaftesbury, although Butler expresses much the same idea (especially regarding the admiration mankind has towards virtue). However, since the concept was first Stoic, it may be assumed that Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Butler and Fielding are all building on Stoic foundations rather than echoing each other. Notably, Fielding treats virtue, in the Stoic sense, as being as necessary to a good man as Christianity (e.g. "His mind was, indeed, tempered with that Philosophy which becomes a man and a Christian" [p. 213]), and there is a sense in which Stoic virtue is necessary to Christianity.

The importance of non-religious philosophy to the ethical basis of Tom Jones can be gauged by the introduction of a professional philosopher. That this character is, in fact, a professional parasite, a scoundrel and a hypocrite may serve the cause of philosophy by exposing a "pretended Champion," but it also comments on many of the contemporary philosophers who, it is suggested, may also be "pretended Champions." Philosopher Square

> was deeply read in the Antients, and a profest Master of all the Works of Plato and Aristotle. . . . In Morals he was a profest Platonist, and in Religion he inclined to be an Aristotelian.

(p. 94)

The repetition of "profest" encourages a suspicion about the depth of his learning, and Fielding expands on the theme of Square's superficiality to state that Square regarded "all Virtue as Matter of Theory only" (p. 94).
This, of course, is the only explanation which can reconcile Square's actions with his words, but, more significantly, it emphasizes that the philosophy which Square professes is theoretical only and scarcely ever practical. When Square's philosophy states that "human Nature [is the] Perfection of all Virtue, and that Vice [is] a Deviation from our Nature in the same Manner as Deformity of Body is" (p. 94), it necessarily enters the realms of theory because practical experience shows, if not the contrary, at least that human nature is far from being perfectly anything, and is certainly not perfectly virtuous. Square's philosophy bears a resemblance to Hutcheson's, but also contains elements of the philosophies of Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke and even Butler, all of whom, for different reasons, came to the conclusion that man was naturally good.

Fielding himself seems to agree with this philosophy (with some reservations) if the characters in *Tom Jones* are any indication: most of the characters are basically good. Those characters whose emphasis is on the basic rather than the good have too little control over their passions and desires, but intend no harm. A few characters, however, are indeed morally deformed and seem to have no practical inkling of goodness or virtue. With the exception of Dowling, though, most of these characters have a firm working knowledge of the theory of goodness and virtue. Captain Blifil, Blifil, Thwackum and Square are the most vocal proponents of religion and virtue, but this trait actually shows the depth of their villainy. Many of the minor characters who are not exactly good do not, at least, prove their evil by hypocritical canting, but those who profess goodness while meditating evil are consciously bad.

Of the villains in the novel, Philosopher Square stands apart because
he finally repents and becomes an agent for good. On the one hand, this is a plot convenience; Allworthy must be acquainted with the deception practised on him, and, there being no reliable witnesses party to all elements of the deception and no motive for Allworthy inquiring further into the matter than he already had, the fastest way of straightening the plot is for one of the agents in the deception to relate the truth. On the other hand, since Fielding does have a number of alternatives to restore good to a position of power, Square's conversion, though predominantly motivated by fear of death, is a strong statement of the power of good over evil and demonstrates both a respect for Christianity and religious optimism.

Fielding's attitude towards Christianity is, in fact, established just as clearly in this work which professes a Stoical point of view and which introduces two comic and somewhat unfavourably presented clergy, as it is in *Joseph Andrews* where Christianity is frequently in the foreground. Not only is Christianity's power revealed in Square's conversion, its necessity in the make-up of a good man is implied in Allworthy's obviously deep and sincere Christianity and, to a lesser extent, in Tom Jones' expressed regard for the Protestant faith (which, if nothing else, shows that Fielding felt obliged to make his hero a Christian, since Tom Jones' claim of Christianity is quite unnecessary to the plot).

In the introductory description of Squire Allworthy (p. 27), the depth of his Christian belief is established by his attitude to his wife's death. His belief in Heaven is so strong that he

considered his Wife as only gone a little before him a Journey which he should most certainly . . . take after her; and that he had not the least Doubt of meeting her again, in a Place where he should never part with her more.  

(p. 27)
Our actual introduction to Allworthy is when "having spent some Minutes on his Knees, a Custom which he never broke through on any account" (p. 29), he finds the infant in his bed. Similar proofs of his Christianity abound throughout the novel, and in almost every prolonged appearance of Allworthy some reference is made to the reverence he has for religion. Moreover, Allworthy's Christianity plays a large part in his conception of his role as a magistrate. Even given that the law, especially that of eighteenth-century England, had strong roots in Old, and occasionally New, Testament Christianity, Allworthy's lectures to the defendants seem sermons rather than expressions of secular law (e.g., his lecture to Jenny Jones on chastity is based on reason, practical social considerations and Christianity, not on the law).

Tom Jones, of course, does not seem particularly religious and many of his most memorable exploits would make few churches wish to own him. Besides, his main function in the novel is as "hero in love," not as an expositor of moral doctrine. Nonetheless, Tom Jones clearly, as he himself says, "tho' . . . a very wild young Fellow, still in [his] most serious Moments and at the Bottom, . . . [is] really a Christian" (p. 292). After all, he does set out as a "hearty Well-wisher. . . of the Protestant religion" (p. 280) to fight against the Pretender (which proves, I suppose, more of his doctrinal and political leanings than his Christianity), and he finds several occasions during his brief sojourn with the army to refer to his beliefs. His charity is evident throughout the book and is, at least to some extent, an expression of Christianity since Fielding emphasizes charity as an integral part of Christianity. Especially remarkable is Tom Jones's charity to Blifil near the conclusion of the story, when he tries to mitigate Allworthy's anger
and prevents Mrs. Miller from delivering Allworthy's message of condemnation, with the consideration that Blifil must not be driven "to sudden and violent Despair" because he was not fit to die in his present situation (II, 967). That Jones is genuinely concerned about the soul of his enemy, rather than just his temporal well-being, is certainly an instance of his Christianity.

This treatment of Christianity is essential to the treatment of authority in Tom Jones. The corruption and secularization of the church evident in many of the clergy create doubts (as in Joseph Andrews) about the validity of the authority of organized religion and also provides some sort of justification for individual neglect of Christian precepts, for, as Chaucer's Parson says,

[quote]
... if gold ruste, what shal iren do?
For if a preest be foul, on whom we trust,
No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;
And shame it is, if a prest take keep,
A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep.
[/quote]

Fielding presents an example of the "shiten shepherde" and the "clene sheep," and suggests that religious authority belongs to the religious, be they shepherds or sheep. Allworthy (and Jones) must demonstrate moral and ethical excellence before they have the right to advise and admonish others (e.g. Jones can preach charity because he is charitable, but he is less successful preaching sexual morality). Moreover, once their goodness is proven, it is not only their right, but their duty to exercise some form of religious authority. On the other hand, the "shiten shepherde" loses his right to authority (but not necessarily his power) to the same degree he strays from Christian precepts or from his duty as a religious authority.

Parson Supple demonstrates the latter reason for loss of authority. He seems to be intended as a comic butt -- his name suggests someone who will
equivocate and contradict himself to please his patron — and his role as a hanger-on of a violently temperamental man makes possible many comic scenes. For some reason, though, the comedy of his role is frequently muted. Perhaps Fielding had second thoughts about the humour of a "supple" parson, or perhaps he decided that Partridge's slightly obsequious nature provided much the same sort of comedy without the possibility of casting a reflection on the clergy. At any rate, Parson Supple mainly exists "to swell a progress" and to perform necessary minor duties such as physically restraining Western from acts of violence.

Parson Supple is introduced as follows:

a good-natured worthy Man; but chiefly remarkable for his great taciturnity at Table, tho' his Mouth was never shut at it. . . . However, the Cloth was no sooner taken away, than he always made sufficient Amends for his Silence: For he was a very hearty Fellow; and his Conversation was often entertaining, never offensive.

(I, 187-88)

Except for "worthy," there is nothing in this description to indicate a clergyman, though the inclusion of "good-natured" immediately indicates he is a sympathetic character. He may be comic, in the same way that Adams is comic, but bitter criticism does not seem to be intended. In Fielding's philosophy, being good-natured excuses a multitude of human weaknesses.

And it is weakness that is Supple's fault. He is a practising, not just a professed Christian, for in addition to being concerned about the sinfulness of actions (I, 189), he demonstrates many Christian values: he is meek, and a peacemaker and seems genuinely concerned about the well-being and happiness of others. On one occasion, mention is made that he "began to meditate a Portion of Doctrine for the ensuing Sunday" (II, 624) indicating that he is a conscientious preacher and that he knows Scripture
well enough to formulate a sermon without his Bible in front of him. Even
the devil can quote Scriptures, of course, but Supple never misuses his
knowledge in sophistry as Thwackum does. There is a slight suggestion of
gluttony in his introduction and a mention of some prowess "at his cups,"
but Fielding does not require abstinence of his clergymen and Supple's
appetite seems more a proof of his heartiness than an instance of one of
the seven deadly sins. Indeed, Supple is one of the most sinless men in
the novel (at least in terms of "sins of commission"), but as Mrs. Honour
puts it, he needs "more Spirit" or, as his name suggests, needs more
backbone. Mrs. Honour mentions that Supple's

whole Dependance is on the Squire, and so the poor
Gentleman, though he is a very religious good sort
of Man and talks of the Badness of such Doings
behind the Squire's Back, yet he dares not say his
Soul is his own to his Face.

(II, 809)

There is an element of pity in this passage. Supple is in bondage to
Western, and his weakness forges his chains. Adams was in a worse economic
situation than Supple is, but Adams had the courage and strength of spirit,
as well as the naivety, to exercise his judgement and authority as he saw fit.
The adage "use it or lose it" holds true for authority, and Supple, because
he dares not use his authority, loses it. This, however, is more regrettable
than loss caused by misusing authority or abandoning active Christianity,
because Supple is still a very likeable person. His weakness is not repre-
hensible, and, though comic, Supple is too nice a person to merit many of
Fielding's satirical cuts.

Thwackum, on the other hand, loses his authority because he cuts himself
off from its source both by his lack of good nature and lack of Christianity.
In fact, if it were not for several reminders of the fact scattered throughout the novel, Thwackum would not be remembered as a clergyman at all. Our introduction to Thwackum is as he administers "so severe a Whipping, that it possibly fell little short of the Torture with which Confessions are in some Countries extorted from Criminals" (I, 222). Our initial impression is continued in a description of Thwackum's tenets as we find that, along with Square, he never mentions the word "goodness" in any discourse on morality (I, 126), and the authorial voice describes Thwackum as a "false and pretended Champion" (I, 129) of Christianity. We find that Allworthy "never liked this Man. He knew him to be proud and ill-natured; he also knew that his Divinity itself was tinctured with his Temper. . ." (II, 929). Of all these faults, it is the ill-nature which makes him a villain, because although pride, anger, cruelty and hypocrisy are all serious faults, the first two are instances of lack of control and even the second two could exist in someone who was trying to reform, but, to Fielding, bad nature means that pride and temper are constant companions and that the ill-natured person does not see them, or even cruelty and hypocrisy, as vices. Faults will appear in a good-natured person, as Jones proves, and not seriously mar his character, but, in Fielding's view, bad nature taints a person's entire life, turning everything to evil.

Thwackum, of course, appears to have good points which induce Allworthy to keep him as a tutor for Tom and Blifil. Thwackum was "an excellent Scholar, and most indefatigable in teaching the two Lads. Add to this the strict Severity of his Life and Manners, an unimpeached honesty, and a most devout Attachment to Religion" (II, 929). His knowledge and his religion, however, only make him more effective in his sophistic arguments, his diligence in
teaching is revealed mainly in a sadistic delight in whipping, and the "strict Severity of his Life and Manners" suggests only a cold, insensitive person incapable of experiencing the beauty, pleasure and joy of the world around him. None of the good characters could be said to manifest "strict Severity in Life and Manners" in the sense that Thwackum appears to; even Allworthy enjoys the pleasures of sense and flesh. In Fielding's opinion,

> the wisest Man is the likeliest to possess all worldly Blessings in an eminent Degree: For as that Moderation which Wisdom prescribes is the surest Way to useful Wealth; so can it alone qualify us to taste many Pleasures. The wise Man gratifies every Appetite and every Passion, while the Fool sacrifices all the rest to pall and satiate one. (I, 282).

Severity and goodness can only be combined in wise judicial moments, and Thwackum's uncontrolled temper makes such justice unlikely.

The result of Thwackum's bad natured character is the forfeiture of his authority. A minor example is that Tom rejects Thwackum's authority as a teacher because a teacher-pupil relationship had never existed. Thwackum relied on beatings (power) rather than authority to establish control, and so when the beatings are no longer possible, neither is any control. Similarly, Thwackum finds he has no religious control over Allworthy; instead, as discussed later, Allworthy holds authority over him by virtue of having right on his side. Here is a prime example of a "shiten Shepherde and a clene sheep," and the sheep has more power than the shepherd. Indeed, when Thwackum tries to exercise his authority as a clergyman, he actually destroys what trust and tolerance Allworthy had for him. At the end of the novel, Thwackum

continues at his Vicarage. He hath made many fruitless Attempts to regain the Confidence of Allworthy, or to
Ingratiate himself with Jones, both of whom he flatters to their Faces, and abuses behind their Backs.

(II, 980)

All his great "Appearance of Religion," like that of Capt. Blifil, does not prevent him from becoming a toadying villain, nor can religious trappings supply actual religious authority as defined previously.

The clergy, then, in Tom Jones have no religious authority. Supple is comic rather than effectively good, while Thwackum is slightly comic and effectively evil, but no clergyman exists who is a sincere Christian conscientiously fulfilling his duties as a spiritual authority. Even the chaplain of the army is mentioned with a suggestion of drunkenness, and the only casual reference to a good religious authority concerns Abraham Adams and is at the very end of the novel. Moreover, Adams is being installed as a tutor, his most ineffective role, which allows little scope for religious authority. The treatment of the clergy in Tom Jones, then, would suggest an unfavourable attitude towards religious authority, but, despite the Lieutenant's claim that "to abuse the Body is to abuse the Function itself" (I, 373), Fielding claims the novel contains "nothing prejudicial to the Cause of Religion" (I, 7). Moreover, the overall effect of the novel supports Fielding's claim.

Much of the positive treatment, of course, is the result of the favourable comments by the narrative voice, but if the narrative voice were the only element supporting religion, the tone of the novel would be much more satiric than is the case because the authorial voice would be in conflict with the characters and plot. It is at this point that Allworthy's importance to the religious attitude of the novel becomes clear. He is the mainstay, both as an example and as a spokesman, of the positive side of the treatment.
of religion in *Tom Jones*. He is, however, not a clergyman, which means that either actual religious authority, in terms of the right, power and duty to guide, counsel and reprimand others in religion and morality, does not exist in *Tom Jones*, and need not exist in a positive religious setting, or that one need not be a clergyman to have religious authority. Allworthy's position as the head of the leading household in the neighbourhood, as the Squire, and as a magistrate makes him somewhat akin to an Old Testament patriarch, and, like a patriarch, his fatherly control over the district has religious overtones. He repeatedly counsels and guides others on religious matters even when he has no personal interest in them and when it would be much less troublesome to ignore the religious aspects of the situation and concentrate solely on the legal and practical aspects (e.g. in relation to Jenny Jones, Partridge, Western and Mr. Nightingale). Therefore, he must feel it is his duty. That others accept his reprimands and try to follow his religious counsel proves that he has some authority in matters of religion, and since there is never the slightest indication of authorial disapproval of any of the instances of Allworthy's using religious authority, it may be assumed that Fielding felt Allworthy had the right to religious authority.

His position as a magistrate expands the scope of his authority, since he would have been in charge of such matters as pension arrangements for "maimed soldiers,"\(^{10}\) overseeing parish officers,\(^{11}\) and maintaining bridges, gaols, and public buildings.\(^{12}\) In a very practical way, then, Allworthy would have had control over the well-being of the parish and particularly over its objects of charity. Moreover, the inclusion of matters of morality under the legal system extends Allworthy's authority to control over what would now be considered purely religious concerns (e.g. unwed mothers, swearing
etc.). The union of control over public well-being, charity and morality gives a patriarchal and religious cast to Allworthy's role as an authority figure.

The combination of these religious overtones in Allworthy's authority roles establishes a favourable position for religion in *Tom Jones* despite the comedy and lack of authority of the clergy in the novel. However, only religion in a general sense and on a personal level are enhanced; "official" religion (and philosophy) are undercut. There is a sense that making a profession of religion or philosophy suggests insincerity, or at least that those who protest the loudest and those who say nothing are equally likely to have strong religious or philosophical convictions. Supple's character, moreover, suggests that even sincerity and strong convictions are not adequate; one must have a strong character as well. Also necessary is a balance of religion and philosophy. The rivalry of Thwackum and Square satirizes, to some extent, the quarrels of religion and philosophy during the eighteenth century, especially those which concentrated on one religious or philosophical problem to the exclusion of all others. As Fielding says, "had not Thwackum too much neglected Virtue, and Square Religion...and had not both discarded all natural Goodness of Heart, they had never been represented as Objects of Derision in this History" (I, 129). Again, the Man on the Hill finds inner peace only when he understands both philosophy and religion, and even Philosopher Square finally discovers that philosophy alone does not teach one how to die. The Man on the Hill, though, is not as happy as he might be because he does not love his fellow man -- an aspect of natural goodness of heart. As in *Joseph Andrews*, then, the good man must have sound religious and philosophical convictions, a strong character, and
natural goodness of heart which induces him to delight in man and nature and engage in acts of benevolence.

The concept of the "good man" is vital to the philosophy of Tom Jones. Mr. Allworthy is a good man; he is not perfect or infallible because such traits have "never yet been seen in human Nature" (I, 136). In fact, Allworthy's mistakes cause a great deal of trouble. However, he always has the courage to act as he feels is best, and his sound religious and philosophical convictions give him the wisdom to make the right decision whenever it is humanly possible to judge accurately the truth of the evidence on which the judgement is made. Unfortunately, the good man is at some disadvantage because of the number of apparently good men who present convincing lies as evidence, and because the good man is always slow at discovering evil in others; evil is so little in his thoughts that he does not immediately recognize it. Nonetheless, the good man's benevolence, good-nature, justice, compassion and wisdom make him supremely happy, especially when doing good to others, and make him beloved of all who are basically good. A good man also has a natural authority of limited religious and judicial power over basically good people who have some faults, and even over corrupt people who are, after all, at some pains to appear good and to impose on good people. Although the good man's charity, justice and benevolence naturally increase the amount of good in the world and lessen its suffering, he also functions as a prick to people's consciences. Fielding does not seem to provide the morally deformed, such as Blifil, with consciences, but those on the verge of corruption or those whom fate has led into courses which they know are not right are shamed by the good man's righteousness and encouraged by his example. For example, that Allworthy exists is reason enough for Jones to
keep a moral perspective and not become a "hardened sinner." Jones himself is enough of a good man to stimulate consciences in others and counsel them about goodness, but his incontinence lessens his effectiveness, especially on points of morality (e.g., when he is talking to Nightingale about Nancy). Indeed, Fielding allows every good-natured character the potential to become a good man (or a good woman), and as a good-natured person's natural benevolence and sense of right and wrong gradually overcome any propensity to vice, he or she approaches the highest possible degree of human excellence.

In terms of authority, the concept of the good man is very important. The good man has religious and quasi-judicial (social) authority, but only a good man has such authority to any degree because acceptable exercise of authority demands that the person exercising authority be more honest and virtuous than the person being counselled or corrected. Accordingly, the better, in religious and ethical terms, an authority figure is, the greater his authority. Hence a clergyman or a magistrate who has nothing of the divine but his role has very little authority, while a private individual, nearly angelic in nature and action, will have considerable authority, but complete human authority only exists when a clergyman or magistrate is also a good man, for he not only has public acceptance of his authority, he has support and sanction from greater authorities. Basically, a magistrate or clergyman with virtually no faults has, or is accorded, more right to reprimand others for their faults than has a magistrate or clergyman who is riddled with vices, and the good magistrate or clergyman is therefore more effective and has more authority than his corrupt colleague.

All the above, of course, applies more directly to religion than to justice since the law demands less personal perfection, and since the authority of a magistrate is physically enforced regardless of his moral
right to authority. Moreover, though the opinion of other religious people will, to some extent, enforce the religious authority of a good man at least on the moderately religious, where law is concerned only an actual magistrate has any power except in those nebulous regions of honour which fall between law and religion and in matters involving personal rights. Secular matters involving honour fall under the social (as opposed to spiritual) authority of a good man more even than under that of a magistrate, and some matters could be decided either by a magistrate on the basis of law or by a good man on the basis of justice. Such a case is Mr. Anderson's attempt to rob Jones. The law would have hanged Anderson as a highwayman, but Jones, as a good man, decides that justice demands some advice and "a couple of Guineas for the immediate Support of his Wife and Family" (II, 680). The social authority of a good man contains a considerable portion of benevolence. Benevolence and mercy are, in fact, primary features of the authority of a good man.

There are only two magistrates of any importance in *Tom Jones*: Squire Allworthy and Squire Western. They represent direct opposites in country magistrates and provide, respectively, exemplary and comic scenes. However, Squire Western, although a real magistrate, seldom appears as such; the importance of judicial authority in *Tom Jones* is entirely established by Allworthy.

Squire Western usually acts as a magistrate only when his own interests are concerned, apparently a common enough situation in eighteenth-century England where "the majority of those nominated [as Justices of the Peace] accepted the honour and ignored the duties."13 Mention is made of Western's exercise of judicial authority in minor points indifferent to him such as
swearing: Supple's sermons against swearing

so far operated on his [Western's] conscience, that he put the Laws very severely in Execution against others, and the Magistrate was the only Person in the Parish who could swear with Impunity.

(I, 304)

The only actual example of Western acting as a magistrate, though, concerns Mrs. Honour and Mrs. Western. Honour had insulted Mrs. Western, who earnestly desired "her Brother to execute Justiceship (for it was indeed a Syllable more than Justice) on the Wench" (I, 357). Western is, at first, quite willing to oblige his sister, which indicates either his contempt for or ignorance of the law. That it is the latter is indicated by the mention of his clerk who has "some understanding in the Law of this Realm," implying that Western has no such understanding. Western's conduct in the scene, and Fielding's comments, reveal that Western has no qualifications for his office.

More frightening in a consideration of execution of the law is the digression on Western's usual procedure as a magistrate:

In Matters of high Importance, particularly in Cases relating to the Game, the Justice was not always attentive to these Admonitions of his Clerk: For, indeed, in executing the Laws under that Head, many Justices of Peace suppose they have a large discretionary Power. By Virtue of which, under the Notion of searching for and taking away Engines for the Destruction of the Game, they often commit Trespasses, and sometimes Felony at their Pleasure.

(I, 357)

In other words, Western, oblivious to the law, uses his authority as a magistrate to protect his own interest. In terms of absolute judicial authority, then, or authority as a manifestation of the concept "justice," Western has little actual authority. He has power, because of his station,
his wealth and his birth, but his power is not justified by authority.

Again, the onus of establishing good authority is on Allworthy, and his position as a magistrate makes him even more effective in establishing a positive treatment of judicial authority than he is in establishing a positive religious authority, since he has no outward claim to the latter. Unlike Western, Allworthy takes his duty as a magistrate seriously. Western seems to act as a magistrate only to protect his game, but Allworthy seems to have taken his duties as Justice of the Peace seriously. He is shown in his role as magistrate in three scenes in the novel, and the observation that

As Mr. Allworthy was a Justice of Peace, certain Things occurred in Examinations concerning Bastards, and such like, which are apt to give great Offence to the chaste Ears of Virgins

(I, 55-56)

suggests that Allworthy exercised his judicial authority with some frequency. Mention is also made (II, 969) of Allworthy having been on the Grand Jury, which indicates that he attends to all elements of his duty as a magistrate.

Simply attending to his duties as a magistrate, however, would not be enough to establish a favourable attitude in Tom Jones towards judicial authority, especially since no great detail is provided and Western establishes a moderately unfavourable attitude in the reader. (It is only "moderately" unfavourable because Western's role as a magistrate is very minor.) It is, instead, Allworthy's attitude both in actual hearings and in personal matters requiring judgement which argues for the existence of real justice in the world of Tom Jones. As Shaftesbury said, "a virtuous Administration is in a manner necessarily accompany'd with Virtue in the Magistrate. Otherwise it could be of little effect, and of no long duration." Allworthy is described
as one

whose natural Love of Justice, joined to his Coolness of Temper, made him always a most patient Magistrate in hearing all the Witnesses which an accused Person could produce in his Defence.

(I, 100)

We also find that Allworthy never punished anyone in a passion (I, 309), and was particularly careful to avoid being influenced by "private Resentment." All of these points prove his fairness as a judge. What is particularly notable about Allworthy, though, is that he carries his judicial authority beyond actual hearings into daily life and applies the same standards to himself. His lectures to Jones are in the same style as his lectures to defendants, and he examines the details of every matter as if he were determining the merits of a legal case. This practice is particularly notable when Mrs. Waters is revealing the secrets of Jones's birth (II, 940). Although Allworthy is personally interested in the disclosure, his attitude is that of an impartial judge, as it is on several occasions when Allworthy listens to evidence against Jones and especially when he examines Dowling. This indicates that the principles of justice form part of Allworthy's character as a person, not just of his character as a magistrate, and this element of his character is essential to his presentation as a good man.

According to Allworthy, God has "implanted in our Minds"

Principles of natural Justice, and . . .original Notions of Right and Wrong . . . by which we were to judge, not only in all Matters which were not revealed, but even of the Truth of Revelation itself.

(I, 80)

A good man must have easy access to these principles and be able to apply them in all cases if he is to choose his own actions correctly. He must,
moreover, be able to judge others if he is to counsel or reprimand them effectively. However, if the good man, relying on his natural sense of justice, makes the wrong decision based on incorrect or incomplete evidence when he has no reason to suspect the evidence, he is no less a good man. Here Fielding dramatizes his concept of benevolism as he demonstrates that temporary and apparent evils eventually work out to better solutions than would have been possible if the temporary ills had been avoided. Blifil must be given enough rope to hang, not just hobble himself, and Jones must be tempered into a hero, not just warmed by his pedagogue's discipline. Since Allworthy's mistakes are expressions of judicial authority based on a good man's sense of justice, his mistakes work ultimately for the best, which suggests some degree of Providential control.

It is for this reason, among others, that forgiveness is not synonymous with justice, even when there are mitigating circumstances, so that judicial and social authority carries the obligation to condemn and to punish whenever necessary for the good of all or for the ultimate good of the individual (cp. Butler, Works, Sermon 8, pp. 139-140). This is why Allworthy has judicial authority -- even outside his role as magistrate -- and Jones does not have it. Allworthy describes Jones's propensity to forgiveness as

mistaken Mercy [which] is not only Weakness but borders on Injustice, and is very pernicious to Society, as it encourages Vice.

(II, 969)

Allworthy's decisions demonstrate proper mercy because he uses mercy to encourage a delinquent to reform, not to dispense with punishment altogether. For example, he exiles Jones as a just punishment for (supposed) crimes, but
gives him 500£ so that Jones will not be forced into other crimes as a consequence of the punishment. Jones exercises this sort of judicial discretion when he forgives Anderson only after he is convinced that Anderson is not really a criminal. On the other hand, such forgiveness could well have been fatal to some other traveller if Jones had been mistaken, but, as Allworthy says, "the Lord disposeth all Things" (II, 942), and Jones's decisions, since he is a fledgling "good man," take an active part in the divine plan for ultimate good, at least as long as Jones does not forgive indiscriminately.

Fielding, however, does not depend only on implications that there is a divine plan and some Providential control over events in the novel. On two occasions, Tom Jones is cited as a Providential agent, and although, when he rescues Mrs. Waters, his claim that "heaven seemed to have designed him as the happy Instrument of her Protection" (I, 496) is roughly equivalent to "it was lucky I came along," the unnecessary invocation of "heaven" suggests that more than luck is involved in the prevention of serious harm. The direct, and repeated, reference to Providence after Jones's rescue of the Man of the Hill (I, 448) similarly suggest to the reader that evil forces will not be ultimately victorious in the novel:

'. . .we were just departing when we heard you call for Assistance, which I must say, Providence alone seems to have sent you.' -- 'Providence indeed,' cries the old Gentleman, 'if it be so.' . . . 'Be thankful then,' cries Jones, 'to that Providence to which you owe your Deliverance. . . .' 'I was afraid your Worship would have been angry with me for letting him in; and to be certain I should not have done it, had I not seen by the Moonlight, that he was a Gentleman, and almost frozen to Death. And to be certain it must have been some good Angel that sent him hither, and tempted me to do it.'

(I, 448-89)
Moreover, even the authorial voice suggests that Providence may be an active agent in the novel:

Here an Accident happened of a very extraordinary Kind; one indeed of those strange Chances, whence very good and grave Men have concluded that Providence often interposes in the Discovery of the most secret Villany, in order to caution Men from quitting the Paths of Honesty, however warily they tread in those of Vice.

(II, 920)

Less direct than these instances, and far more frequent, are the suggestions by numerous beneficiaries that both Jones and Allworthy are angels in human form. Again, such phrases could be platitudes, but their repetition and the serious language in which they are couched cannot but create an impression of divine influence.

Although there is only one real judicial authority figure in Tom Jones, he is the controlling authority figure and also a major character in the novel. These facts make judicial authority prominent, though not as prominent as parental authority, and the overlap between Allworthy's practical religious authority and his authorized judicial authority give a flavour of justice and judgement even to religious matters (and vice versa). More importantly, though, this overlap indicates a unity of authorities based on their single source. There is some sense that Allworthy has religious authority because he is an excellent magistrate and is an excellent magistrate because he is a good man (and hence is a good Christian and is good natured). The overlap continues into the realms of parental authority.

Among the novel's parents and guardians, once again it is Allworthy who sets the standard for authority. That Allworthy has parental authority even though he is not a parent is not unusual since parental authority usually devolves on guardians, but it is perhaps a little strange that with several real parents in the novel Allworthy is the exemplar. As with
Allworthy's other roles, his excellence as a guardian is a necessary feature of being a good man, but there is a more important feature of his parental authority. To anyone as well read in the Scriptures as Fielding was, the relationship between God and man would be a model on which the conception of the relationship of parents to their children, and especially of fathers to their children, would be built. That Allworthy's relationship is, in fact, that of a guardian to his wards would not disallow the comparison, since neither God nor a guardian is biologically a father of his "children."

Several hints are made in *Tom Jones* about the similarity between God and Allworthy, although Allworthy's humanness and propensity for human error are emphasized far too much for Allworthy to be an allegory for God. The point Fielding seems to be making is that attributes of God are present in man (*cf. Tom Jones*, I, 80), but that presence mainly becomes apparent in a good man and increases in strength when he is engaged in any authority role. The suggestions of Allworthy's divine resemblance, however, are not entirely attached to instances of his authority.

First of all, Allworthy's residence is called "Paradise Hall" (I, 98), a fact which would be of profound significance and a source of much commentary on religious symbolism if it were not that the name is only mentioned once in passing. Despite Battestin's comment that the name is significant, it seems unlikely that Fielding would insist so little on the name of Allworthy's residence if he intended close comparison between it and Heaven or Eden. The comparison is made even more unlikely since Paradise Hall is filled with most unsuitable tenants for Heaven or Eden. Most likely, the name is a reference to the purely earthly beauty of the estate, described at some length. On the other hand, the plot supports the concept of an underlying allegory,
since Jones's expulsion, with its eventual happy results, is clearly a
"fortunate fall," and he does return, if not to Paradise Hall, at least to
the vicinity.

Next, there is Allworthy's name. God is described as omnipotent,
omniscient and omni-present. "Allworthy" suggests a description similar
in genre to the descriptions of God, although the "worthy" definitely
suggests humanness rather than divinity.

Finally, there are several references to and suggestions of Allworthy's
resemblance to Divinity. Fielding describes Allworthy's "Smiles at Folly" as
"indeed such as we may suppose the Angels bestow on the Absurdities of
Mankind" (II, 885). It seems likely that if the smiles are similar, the
natures motivating the smiles are similar, which would make Allworthy angelic,
at least in his attitude to others' foolishness. Mrs. Waters makes "many
most passionate Acknowledgments of [Allworthy's] Goodness, which, as she
truly said, savoured more of the divine than human Nature" (II, 947). Mrs.
Waters might be considered too poor a judge of divine nature for her opinion
to carry much weight, but the "truly said" indicates Fielding's accord.
Other passages are not so direct, but still suggest parallels between All-
worthy and God. For example, Fielding tells us that "though Mr. Allworthy
had the utmost Sweetness and Benevolence in his Smiles, he had great Terror
in his Frowns" (II, 899). The language is reminiscent of a sermon on the
nature of God. Perhaps Fielding meant no more than that Allworthy had a
most expressive face, but since smiles and frowns are frequently used to
provide images of God's reactions to man, it is likely that Fielding
intended some comparison.

If Allworthy is god-like to some extent, he must be an ideal
parent to that extent, since God the father is a parent model. Moreover,
in New Testament theology, God's role as a father figure is emphasized more than his role as a judge, so that a similarity to God would most likely result in a strongly favourable performance as a parent or guardian.

On the one hand, Allworthy is less prominent as a father than Western, but this is because Allworthy is himself childless and because Western is made conspicuous by his faults. On the other hand, Allworthy is the father figure in the novel, as emphasized by his habit of referring to a wide range of unrelated young people as "child." Even Allworthy's authority over sundry adults, such as Mrs. Miller, old Mr. Nightingale and Western, is quasi-paternal authority since it involves matters and control usually pertaining to familial relationships. Western says

I don't know how 'tis, but d--n me, Allworthy, if you don't make me always do just as you please and yet I have as good an Esteate as you, and am in the Commission of the Peace as well as yourself.

(II, 958)

This emphasizes the type of authority Allworthy holds, for he and Western are materially equals and equally magistrates in the eyes of the law, but Allworthy has authority over Western in personal relationships (see also II, 920 for Allworthy's authority over old Mr. Nightingale). As Hugh Amory points out, "...Squire Allworthy exercises an authority which is completely unwarranted by the law which made him a magistrate." The personal nature of Allworthy's control over Western suggests parental authority because Allworthy is modifying Western's juvenile and excessively boisterous behaviour just as a wise parent might manage an unruly child. Even though Allworthy's quasi-paternal authority is not so prevalent in relation to other characters, there is a controlling thought in the novel that Allworthy acts as a parent in some way towards everyone with whom he comes in contact.
Allworthy's role as a major father figure is, of course, most directly established by his being the guardian of two of the three major young people in the novel, and by the contrast he presents to the father and guardians of the third major young person in the novel. From the beginning, Allworthy is an ideal guardian. While Jones was an infant, Allworthy "seldom failed of visiting [him], at least once a Day, in his Nursery" (I, 78), much more than many fathers did for their own children. Allworthy also goes to some trouble and expense in educating Tom and Blifil, and chooses their method of instruction after careful consideration (I, 135). He has the boys educated at home, which will necessarily involve more of his participation in their upbringing than if he had sent them to school, and he also intends that "as they were bred up in his own House, and under his own Eye, he should be able to correct whatever was wrong in Thwackum's Instructions" (II, 930). His inherent goodness as a parent is thus demonstrated in his plans to take an active part in raising two children, neither of whom is his own and one of whom, to his knowledge, is not even related to him.

Fielding points out that "it is almost impossible for the best Parent to observe an exact Impartiality to his Children, even though no superior Merit should bias his Affection" (II, 857), but Allworthy does maintain impartiality towards Tom and Blifil. He treats them as equally as the interference of young Blifil himself, Thwackum and Square will allow. The only distinction he makes is in the division of his estate on his supposed death bed, but that is a matter of judicial concern where the law, supported by custom and by Scriptures, demands that the relatives receive most of an inheritance. Even on this occasion he treats them equally in one sense, for both Blifil's and Jones's inheritances are as great as judicial and religious
considerations will allow. These instances of impartiality are even more
remarkable since the one boy is, to Allworthy's knowledge, his only living
relative other than his sister, and the other boy is, supposedly, the
illegitimate child of a serving girl and a schoolmaster. Allworthy has,
indeed, divine elements to be able to love the two children equally.

Western's treatment of his only child is, in comparison, exceptionally
negligent. Since neither Western nor Sophia actively enter the novel until
the latter is in her late teens, it is not possible to compare closely
Western's and Allworthy's execution of parental duties, but some mention is
made of Sophia's education. Basically, she had none, not entirely unusual
for a girl of the period, but her upbringing and instruction in knowledge
suitable for a female seems to have devolved entirely on her mother until
Sophia was eleven (when her mother died) and then upon her aunt. On the one
hand, this is to be expected, since Western could hardly instruct her himself
and her education could best have been handled by female relatives. On the
other hand, Western does not seem to have exercised any parental authority
or demonstrated much interest in Sophia until she was no longer a child.
When Sophia returns to her father's house at about age eighteen, Western
does exhibit strong paternal feelings, but even in these there is a clear
distinction between Allworthy and Western. Allworthy is described as having
deep and tender affection for his loved ones, but Western "really doated on
his Daughter" (II, 841; see also I, 360). Allworthy's love is a reasoned
passion, subject to control, while Western's love for his daughter is a
violent and impetuous passion with no semblance of reason. Moreover,
Western's love depends on proximity and is bestowed unnaturally: he loves
his dogs more than his daughter (I, 199). Allworthy's affection is constant.
He loves his wards as infants, as children and as young adults. Western seems to ignore Sophia until she is a young adult, and then his affection grows by leaps and bounds, assisted, it seems, by strong pride in her physical charms. Nonetheless, he still loves his pleasure more than he loves his own child, which indicates some lack of parental duty, and his exercise of parental authority, motivated by his unreasoned love, indicates his incompetence as a parent. Western's misconception of his duty and the dangers of his version of parental affection are most clearly seen in the treatment of parental authority concerning marriage.

Parental authority in marriage receives more of Fielding's emphasis than any other kind of authority. The question of the degree of parental authority over marriage is integral to the plot and is also examined in several minor sketches and sub-plots. The parents and guardians in the novel, with the exception of Mrs. Miller, are divided into camps. In one camp are Squire Western, Mr. Nightingale, his brother, the Quaker and the parents of the Andersons. In the opposing camp is Squire Allworthy. Mr. Nightingale's brother nominally agrees with Allworthy's philosophy, but his actions following the marriage of his daughter prove his alliance with Western's camp. Western et al. think that a parent's authority is absolute and that the main consideration in arranging a marriage is money. Allworthy, citing God and nature, gives the parent a negative vote only (II, 957), and considers love to be the most important element in a marriage. Allworthy's emphasis on love in marriage is, of course, in accordance with many passages of Scripture, and it seems to be Fielding's, since in each treatment of the question in Tom Jones marriages based on love are shown as happy, except where the happiness is marred by an irate parent, and marriages based on
anything else are unhappy.

The theoretical position of Western's camp is, basically, non-existent. The theory's main expression is "d--n me then if shatunt ha'un" (I, 335 et al), and its basis is that the parent will receive great pleasure in seeing his child as affluent as possible, regardless of how miserable the child is in the midst of that affluence. Sophia's marriage to Blifil will make Western "the happiest Man in the World" (II, 838), "it will preserve [him], it will gee [him] Health, Happiness, Life, everything" and if she refuses he will die and break his heart (II, 839). It is interesting that his love for Sophia makes Western, and others in his camp, incredibly selfish (it is his happiness and well-being he argues for) over a matter in which he will receive no direct benefit. The basis of Western's philosophy is that he has his daughter's best interest at heart (II, 884), added to which is the implication, expressed in an argument for the other side, that a parent's greater age and experience gives him the wisdom to know what will make his child happiest (see I, 776). This would be a very reasonable position if it were not on the subject of marriage, where love is enjoined by Scripture (see I, 332), tradition and Fielding as a necessary ingredient. Western's implied position, which is in conflict with these authorities, is untenable. It is even more untenable when the parent or guardian's consideration is not the supposed happiness of the child, but the position of the family. This motive (Mrs. Western's) is irreconcilable with any form of goodness when it will cause unhappiness to either of the principals in the union. Although it appears similar to the existence of a temporary evil which will result in a lasting good, the similarity is superficial, because the "good" of marrying solely for wealth or rank is limited, and the evil is real.
Allworthy's camp is far more articulate, which suggests that there is more of an argument to present here. The argument against a parent forcing his child into a marriage for monetary considerations is given by Mr. Nightingale's brother before he reveals that his membership in Allworthy's camp is only theoretical. He points out that

to prescribe Rules of Happiness to others, hath always appeared to me very absurd, and to insist on doing this very tyrannical. . . . And if this be absurd in other Things, it is mostly so in the Affair of Marriage, the Happiness of which depends entirely on the Affection which subsists between the Parties.

(II, 776)

He also discusses the illogic in disinheriting a child because he prevents the parent from making him even richer than he would have been with the originally intended inheritance. As Fielding points out, however, these arguments, though rationally unanswerable, have no effect on "habitual avarice."

Allworthy is more concerned with the religious aspect of the matter:

is it not cruel, nay impious, to force a Woman into that State against her Will; for her Behaviour in which she is to be accountable to the highest and most dreadful Court of Judicature, and to answer at the Peril of her Soul. To discharge the Matrimonial Duties in an adequate Manner is no easy Task, and shall we lay this Burthen upon a Woman, while we at the same Time deprive her of all that Assistance which may enable her to undergo it? Shall we tear her very Heart from her, while we enjoin her Duties to which a whole Heart is scarce equal. . . . is there a Soul who can bear the Thought of having contributed to the Damnation of his Child?

(II, 883-84)

The only problem with Allworthy's argument is that no one can bear "the Thought of having contributed to the Damnation of his Child," so no one, least of all Western, will admit the possibility (see II, 884). Habitual selfishness is as strong as habitual avarice.
The final consideration is introduced by Mrs. Honour when she points out that it is Sophia who is "to go to Bed to him [Blifil], and not Master" (I, 291-92). Fielding himself expands on this point, probably because the comparison he makes would be inappropriate for an Allworthy and beyond Honour's understanding. Fielding calls forcing a child to marry for money "legal Prostitution for Hire" (II, 866), and draws a comparison between bawds and parents who so treat their children. He continues thus:

this Resemblance would be exact, was it not that the Bawd hath an Interest in what she doth, and the Father, though perhaps he may blindly think otherwise, can in Reality have none in urging his Daughter to almost an equal Prostitution.

(II, 840)

Although the argument could hold as true for fathers forcing their sons to marry (as Mr. Nightingale attempted to do), Fielding probably did not have this aspect of the problem in mind.

Against Western's camp, then, are the considerations that its position is illogical, impious and verges on the immoral, but the crux of the matter involves the right of the parent to control his child. Western's position is that a parent's authority over his child is absolute (II, 884), but Allworthy contends that God and Nature allow a parent no more than a negative voice (II, 957). Certainly that is all the parental authority Allworthy claims. Western feels that God allows him more, for he suggests Allworthy tell Sophia of the dreadful punishment "in t'other World" for disobedience (II, 945). Neither side, however, presents any support for its position, and the problem can be reduced to: do we believe Allworthy or Western on a point of theology and natural right? Since it has been established that Allworthy has some religious authority and he exercises his inherent sense
of right and wrong (see I, 80), and since Allworthy's position has the support of the narrative voice, the weight of reason falls against absolute parental authority.

In every aspect of parental authority considered, Allworthy is the exemplar. He exercises careful consideration in the education of his wards, demonstrates constant affection, tempers discipline with religious and philosophical wisdom, and, most importantly, demands no inordinate degree of control in return. Despite his errors, Allworthy's general success as a father figure is instrumental in creating a favourable impression in the reader towards authority in the novel, because his prominence simply overwhelms the effect of the incompetent and selfish parental authorities. Of course, that Allworthy is in favour of a position which will assist Tom and Sophia to marry is another element in the "everything will turn out all right in the end" comic atmosphere, or, in other words, the treatment of parental authority furthers the novel's optimism.

Allworthy, then, is the controlling authority figure for all three types of authority. Since he exercises judicial and parental authority with some frequency, and religious authority very seldom (and then usually in support of judicial or parental authority), religion has limited direct influence on authority in Tom Jones though it is an important indirect influence. Much of what seems to be religion in Allworthy's character, of course, is indistinguishable from morality and virtue based on, or at least reminiscent of, Stoicism. On the other hand, the respect expressed throughout the novel for Christianity and Stoicism, and their consequent importance, suggest that they are the bases for the actively demonstrated secular and human authorities in Tom Jones, especially since the Christianity and, to
some extent, the Stoicism considered in the novel frequently concern authority. These strong bases, added to the existence of one strong, controlling authority figure, make authority important in *Tom Jones*, and the prevalent sense of authority makes the world view in the novel very optimistic because there is direction and strength behind the events in the novel. Providence is in control (see pp 20-21 above), and has a strong instrument in Allworthy for exercising that control so that evil is a passing shadow and the happy ending is inevitable. The treatment of authority in the novel, therefore, is crucial to the pervading sense of optimism.
Amelia, in some ways, demonstrates the importance of a strong or active good authority figure to an optimistic world view more clearly than do Joseph Andrews or Tom Jones, because in Amelia the presentation of the main authority figure as a good man and a Providential agent is not convincing, and the novel's pessimism is at least partly traceable to this source. Moreover, Dr. Harrison's emergence at the end of the novel as a strong Providential agent is largely responsible for the sudden shift to optimism (although neither the optimism nor Dr. Harrison's new strength is entirely convincing). Amelia's pessimism, despite the didactic and sometimes heavy-handed treatment of Christianity, also demonstrates that even the basic optimism of Christianity without an effective agent does not create an optimistic world view. Moreover, the general unobtrusiveness of the authorial voice, the lack of other effective sympathetic characters, and Dr. Harrison's absence through much of the novel, combined with the prevalence of powerful evil characters and a somewhat sombre plot, give Amelia by far the darkest world view of any of Fielding's novels. On the other hand, some of the happier elements of the novel depend on Dr. Harrison's authority, which along with frequent supportive comments from sympathetic characters and from Fielding's persona, establish Harrison's intended position as a "good" authority figure.

Amelia has never been considered a particularly successful novel among general readers. This is, perhaps, because there are too many comic and satiric touches to please a pessimistic mind and far too much pessimism and
bitterness for the good natured reader who would find Fielding's other novels appealing. *Amelia* has been called "the most intellectual"\(^1\) of Fielding's novels, a characteristic which would not assist its popularity among the general public, and the didacticism apparent in *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones* has escaped the bounds of asides, discourses and subtle flavouring of the storyline to become an integral, even major, aspect of the plot and theme. Worse, in terms of popularity, the didacticism and intellectualism are seldom of the "this is how it should be" variety, but much more often are the dogmatic "this vile, corrupt, disgusting picture is how it is." Of course, the didacticism can be handled in such a way that those who "love a tender emotion"\(^2\) will race to buy the novel, but there should be undeniably good characters beset by undeniably evil characters.

There are very few such black and white distinctions in *Amelia*. Booth, who is the main character in the novel despite the title, could have been a basically good character, a fledgling "good man" like Jones, except that his errors have far too disastrous an effect on the innocent martyr Amelia. Who could really like Booth after he squanders their little sum and contracts a comparatively large debt gambling, while Amelia sits at home denying herself half a pint of wine because they cannot afford it? Dr. Harrison himself, the counterpart of Allworthy, although obviously intended as an undeniably good character, is at times so unlikeable that he encourages the reader to deface the margins of the book with opprobrious comments. On the other hand, few of the evil characters are developed enough for the reader to hate them, and many of them have their good points. Colonel James, for example, is really Booth's friend until lust for Amelia sidetracks him. Even Lord ____ may have been contrite about the effect his actions had on
Mrs. Bennett and her family. He may even really like children. In fact, of the prominent characters, none can be categorized as completely evil, and only Amelia is clearly a good character, though even she has grated on the nerves of many readers who object to her propensity to cry and faint.

Another probable source of the unpopularity of Amelia is its organization. The novel begins in medias res and includes lengthy histories of two minor characters. The second history, that of Mrs. Bennett, is necessary to establish that she is a good character, which is in turn necessary to prove that Lord ____ is an evil character, but much of it is completely extraneous to the plot. It covers, moreover, eight chapters. Mrs. Matthews' history is almost entirely extraneous, and it takes up three chapters. The background of the novel, related by Booth, covers two complete books. In other words, slightly over three books out of twelve take place before the main story begins, and nearly an entire book could be omitted without abbreviating the main story at all. This extra material, of course, has a purpose. In fact, both extra histories, and the brief backgrounds of a few other minor characters, establish the same harsh world evident in the rest of Amelia. The effect of these histories, then, is to prove that the world of Amelia is the real world, that serious misfortunes befall nice people, and that nothing exists to protect the innocent. Unfortunately, the authority figure acting as a worldly representative of Providence is seldom present, and can only partially control events when he is present.

Surprisingly, the end of Amelia takes an abrupt turn. Booth is converted to active Christianity, which establishes a channel for authority, and ensures that Dr. Harrison will influence and control Booth so that he will not squander Amelia's new-found fortune. Moreover, the main characters of the story return
to Dr. Harrison's pastoral domain, so that he will have frequent opportunities for exercising his authority. Even in the city, authority is reborn at the end of the novel with the introduction of a good and conscientious magistrate, and the "hand of Providence" is evident, even to an evil character, in the chain of events causing Robinson's confession. At the same time, the false authority of Lord ______ and Colonel James over the Booths, derived from money, is overthrown. The world at the end of Amelia shows man and God in fellowship, and benevolent authority in control of events affecting the main characters.

Unfortunately, this reversal is not especially believable. It could be argued that Booth's virtual atheism and dependence on worldly philosophy were responsible for the ascendance of evil, and his conversion made possible the intervention of Providence, but this requires some rather unorthodox, and therefore, given Fielding's faith, unlikely assumptions. The assumption that God or Providence was unable to control the situation is far too heretical to have been Fielding's intent: Fielding's own faith would have caused him to reject the theory if the consideration that such an implication would antagonize his audience did not. Even the assumption that God was unwilling to help until Booth came to Him could only be acceptable if there were evidence throughout the novel that God was urging Booth to accept Him without reservation. There are two possible explanations. One is that Booth's hardships were necessary to bring him back to the fold, and that Providence was in control, and the other is that the hardships in this world are necessary to prepare one for the next world. The second explanation is most likely Fielding's intent, but its application in the novel is limited because the hardships are over, in large part, long before the next world is an imminent
possibility for Booth and Amelia. The first explanation does not seem valid
because Amelia suffers far more than Booth and she is already a sincere
Christian. In addition, it is a book of sermons, not a consideration of
his sins and follies, that converts Booth. Moreover, if Providence is in
control, why are such characters as Mr. Bennett and Miss Matthews destroyed?
The harsh world so thoroughly established by the digressions cannot be
refuted by amelioration of one scene in that world. Consequently, the
restoration of authority is unconvincing, and, although Booth and Amelia
may be protected by Providence from the end of the novel to eternity, the
prevailing sense is that they have escaped from a chaotic, corrupt world,
not that chaos and corruption have been overcome. Irwin comments that "the
retirement of the Booths into the country represents an admission of defeat."¹
Eventually, for Booth, Amelia and other inhabitants of Dr. Harrison's parish,
life is seen to be under the authority and direction of Dr. Harrison and
Providence. For the other characters, life is still the plaything of
injustice and corruption.

This treatment of life makes Amelia at least partly a comment on
corrupt contemporary legal and social practices, which is not simultaneously
consistent with a presentation of good and influential authority. The
innocent suffer, the deserving are unrewarded, and the guilty and worthless
triumph. The law and its enforcement treat poverty as the greatest possible
crime, and wealth as a general pardon, while society enforces the same rules
on a private level. As Didgeon points out "Fielding's novel clearly sets
forth the power with which society endows wealth."² In Amelia, the rich,
powerful characters are treated unsympathetically, while at least some of
the poor are treated sympathetically. Worst are those who are neither rich
nor poor (the working middle class), because Fielding focuses on those who in some way live off the distresses of the poor and unfortunate. These elements of satire do not exclude good authority from the novel, because they are only elements in the novel, not its main focus. However, they do provide a strongly negative balance to any good presentation of authority.

The difference in attitude between *Amelia* and Fielding's earlier works can be seen by a consideration of their opening scenes. The first chapter in all three novels is an introductory one in which the author himself appears; the plots begin to unfold in the second chapters. The second chapter of *Joseph Andrews* gives a brief history of the nominal hero of the novel, in a facetious biographical style, and introduces Adams, the authority figure in the novel. The second chapter of *Tom Jones* deals almost exclusively with Squire Allworthy, the main authority figure, with a brief, comic portrait of his sister Bridget. However, the second chapter of *Amelia* deals with several miscarriages of justice, including the sentencing of several innocent people and release of several guilty people. The main authority figure of the novel, Dr. Harrison, does not enter the novel until the end of the third chapter of the second book. This, of course, is during the presentation of background to the story; Harrison does not take a hand in the plot until the fourth chapter of the sixth book, and then his appearance is meaningless, since no one knows it was he who scattered the children's toys about the room. He does not become an effective force until the end of Book VIII. On the other hand, there is an authority figure in the second chapter of *Amelia*, the only one other than Harrison who is presented at any length, and he is entirely corrupt.

In fact, the attitude created in the reader towards law and justice in
Amelia is unfavourable. The idea of earthly justice as a manifestation of the concept of ideal justice does not apply to the world of Amelia, because justice is completely choked out by the law. Even the magistrates who are not corrupt still favour criminals, because the law itself is shown as favouring criminals. Injustice, of course, is customarily blamed on unjust people, and Fielding realizes the reaction his grimmer position will encourage.

He argues that,

> it will probably be objected, that the small imperfections which [he is] about to produce do not lie in the laws themselves, but in the ill execution of them; but, with submission, this appears to [him] to be no less an absurdity than to say of any machine that it is excellently made, though incapable of performing its functions. Good laws should execute themselves in a well-regulated state. . . .

(I, 5-6)

In fact, the imperfections introduced at this point in the plot are in the execution of the laws, because the laws themselves seem to have very little to do with Thrasher's court. We find that Mr. Thrasher has never read any of the law by which he supposedly was to judge his cases, and that although

where mere ignorance is to decide a point between two litigants, it will always be an even chance whether it decides right or wrong: but sorry am I to say, right was often in a much worse situation than this, and wrong hath often had five hundred to one on his side before that magistrate. . . . To speak the truth plainly, the justice was never indifferent in a cause but when he could get nothing on either side.

(I, 7)

Only one of the five cases, however, offers the magistrate any pecuniary considerations, resulting in an innocent witness being sent to prison, yet the other four cases are judged with no common sense or honesty, resulting in two victims, one good Samaritan, and one honest servant being sent to
prison. It appears that a bribe to this justice only make certain the probable, since any indication of poverty results in a conviction.

The first five pages of the plot of *Amelia*, then, consist of Fielding's negative comments about the law and its execution, followed by several instances of rank injustice and corruption. The same line is followed in the description of the prison in the next two chapters where more examples of legal injustice are presented, many of which are attributed to Justice Thrasher. In general, the effect is obviously calculated to tug on the reader's heartstrings. In Fielding's prison, there is an assortment of real criminals who have enough money to make existence in a prison tolerable if not enjoyable, and some who have enough money to be bailed almost immediately. The innocent, however, have no money and present the most heart-rending scenes. Who would not be touched by an aged, dying man and a young woman in rags, father and daughter, "the latter...committed for stealing a loaf, in order to support the former, and the former for receiving it, knowing it to be stolen" (I, 17)?

This extremely negative presentation of the law, especially when it is the initial impression in the novel, creates an effect so unfavourable that all the justice and benevolence of Squire Allworthy would scarcely be able to counteract it. We do not have an Allworthy in the novel, however, and, in fact, even though the two other magistrates in the novel are good, conscientious and have a knowledge of the law, the law itself works to further the initial bad impression.

When Betty, *Amelia*’s maid, steals her mistress’s linen, Booth establishes the necessity of having her punished on much the same grounds that Allworthy uses against Jones’s indiscriminate forgiveness. The result
of the trial, then, is particularly unjust. Although "it happened, by very great accident, that the justice before whom the girl was brought understood the law" (II, 254), this knowledge frees the thief on a technicality. Moreover, the good effect a good magistrate has despite the inherent injustice in the law he enforces is somewhat negated by Fielding's comment "by very great accident," which suggests that the vast majority of magistrates are ignorant of the law and probably very much like Thrasher. The other good magistrate, good enough for the favourable characters to dine with him, also has problems with the law. This magistrate, though he was just sitting down to his dinner and very tired with "public business," resolves "to postpone all refreshment until he had discharged his duty" (II, 297), and immediately attends to Murphy's trial. Also, he later stands bail for Booth. However, the law seems determined to prevent justice, for the magistrate cannot grant a search warrant to search Murphy's house for the title deeds of the estate because no tangible property has been stolen. The warrant is finally made out to search for a mere silver cup in order that justice may be done. On the other hand, this scene creates a mainly favourable effect, and comes at the end of the novel when there remains little of the initial bad impression to emphasize the problems with the law. The effect, then, is that justice, as an aspect of authority, as discussed in Chapter 1, has been restored.

Parental authority appears in only marginally better light than judicial authority. Parental authority is very little emphasized, despite the presence of a number of parents in the novel, especially since, in the instances of good parental behaviour, authority is virtually ignored. Instead of a set of bad examples counteracted by very good examples, as in *Tom Jones*, the instances of good behaviour cover different subjects than those of bad or
weak behaviour so that the unfavourable effect of the latter remains. However, parental authority is treated so briefly that its unfavourable effect is almost unnoticeable, and the main significance of the treatment of parental authority is that one kind of possible controlling authority in the world of *Amelia* does not exist.

The first parent to appear in the novel is Miss Matthews's father. He is very much like Mr. Bennet in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*: clearly a very good-natured man, and in some senses an excellent parent, but a little ineffective. When Mr. Matthews first learns of his daughter's conduct, she is in a highly emotional state, and "instead of upbraiding [her], or exerting any anger, he endeavoured to comfort [her] all he could with assurances that all should yet be well" (I, 40). He reprimands her when she is in a state to receive reprimands, and then does all he can to contract a marriage for his daughter with Hebbers. On the other hand, there is a suggestion that Hebbers' flattery concerning Matthews' musical ability blinded him, and he was certainly somewhat remiss in not examining the character of a man whom he was introducing into the company of his daughters. There is also a suggestion that if Mr. Matthews had not become drunk, Hebbers would not have been able to find access to Miss Matthews' bedroom. (This suggestion, of course, may have been a slight shifting of blame on Miss Matthews' part rather than Fielding's comment on parental failure.) The impression is that, although Mr. Matthews may have been "the best of men" (I, 40), he was not especially effective as a parent, especially in the sense of a guiding and controlling authority figure.

Mrs. Atkinson's father enjoys a somewhat larger role in *Amelia*. He is a clergyman as well as a father and initially combines both authority roles
ideally. We are introduced to him on the death of his wife, a loss he bears much as Allworthy bore the loss of his wife. Mention is made of his "fatherly tenderness" (II, 7), and his counsel to his daughters shows him to be a wise spiritual counsellor as well as a good father. The best proof of his excellent execution of his paternal duties is that he educated his daughters. Here he even outdoes Allworthy in the guidance of his children, although he had little choice but to educate his daughters himself if he wanted them educated.

Unfortunately, after it has been established that Mrs. Atkinson's father is an almost ideal example of parental authority, he reneges on his responsibilities as a parent after most foolishly contracting marriage with a woman young enough to be his granddaughter. Not only does he use his daughter ill; it is her opinion that his own ill-usage caused him to hate her, adding injustice to his crimes. The effect of this reversal is more unfavourable than a mere presentation of a bad parent could have been, because we feel ourselves deceived and our good-will towards this character betrayed. A reader will also tend to react against the father rather than against the step-mother (even though Mrs. Atkinson puts the blame on the latter), because he does not know the step-mother enough to dislike her personally. Parental authority, then, appears in a very poor light, because even the best of parents, in the world of Amelía, can be easily corrupted.

Another minor character in this same inset history, Mr. Bennett's uncle, demonstrates another type of failure in parental authority, and he exists for little other purpose than to do so. Like Mrs. Atkinson's father, Mr. Bennett's uncle appears initially in a very favourable light, especially since he is only a guardian, yet still is a good father figure. This parental
authority, however, lacks wisdom and insight, and also seems to have had very little influence on his own children. Once again, the effects of a good parental authority are negated by forces of selfishness and injustice.

Mrs. Harris is the main parent in the novel, and she is inconsistent. We are introduced to Mrs. Harris as she bursts from hiding in a closet after spying on Booth and Amelia. Her tirade at Amelia increases our dislike. In fairness, though, what is she trying to do but save her daughter from financial ruin? At this point, she is only employing the "negative voice" which Fielding and all his main authority figures confer upon a parent, and she has ample reason, as both Booth and Amelia have themselves realized, to object to the marriage. She is, then, being a most conscientious parent, but in a most objectionable and irrational manner.

From this ambiguous stance, Mrs. Harris moves to a clearly untenable position as she retracts her hard-wrung consent, and insists her daughter marry for money. Mrs. Harris is now as bad an authority figure as Squire Western or any of his camp. In *Amelia*, though, the consequence of this type of misuse of authority is more clearly shown than it was in *Tom Jones*. Dr. Harrison, who is, as will be discussed later, a sympathetic authority figure, feels at liberty to marry the couple without further consent from Mrs. Harris. This intention not only denies the concept of absolute parental authority; it also demonstrates that misuse, or even attempted misuse, of the sacred trust of parental authority results in loss of that authority.

During the rest of her lifetime, Mrs. Harris fluctuates between being a moderately good and a moderately evil authority figure. At least some of her unjust actions, though, are the responsibility of her other daughter, Betty; and just as Blifil's influence on Allworthy did not reflect on
Allworthy's parental role, so Betty's influence cannot reflect on Mrs. Harris. On the other hand, the position of parental authority in the novel is somewhat damaged by the supposed final injustice of Mrs. Harris, which is partially responsible for all Booth's and Amelia's hardships. That the unjust will is actually of Betty's fabrication tends to restore Mrs. Harris to a posthumous position as a "good" authority figure at the end of the novel, but, during the novel, the apparently blatant misuse of authority has a detrimental effect on the position of parental authority.

Throughout most of the novel, the most obvious parental authorities are Booth and Amelia, since the reader is constantly reminded that they have children. However, Fielding avoids his usual treatment of this relationship, because Booth and Amelia, as victims of various types of injustice inflicted by various types of authority, cannot themselves be seen as authority figures. Moreover, Fielding's usual treatment involves children considerably older than those in Amelia and parents correspondingly more mature (or at least older in the case of some unsympathetic parents). The Booth children exist primarily to intensify the tragedy of the injustices done to Booth, and the folly of some of his own actions. They are innocent victims even more than Amelia (who, after all, married of her own will), and are totally dependent on their father's ability to provide.

On the other hand, it is difficult to emphasize that a couple have children without some considerations of their actions as parents. The consideration, in this case, is one more point in the proof that Amelia is far worthier than Booth. Their most immediate duties as parents are providing for the children's physical needs -- Booth's duty -- and caring for the physical needs -- Amelia's duty. Frequent mention is made of Amelia's conscientiousness and excellence in the execution of her duty, while the main thread of the
plot concerns Booth's inability to provide for his family. Amelia also comes out ahead in less basic functions of parenthood, for she inculcates religion and honesty into her children. We are told that "this admirable woman never let a day pass without instructing her children in some lesson of religion and morality" (I, 174-75), and the following passage establishes that, through a wise blend of tenderness and strictness, Amelia is an ideal parent.

Though she was the tenderest of mothers, she never suffered any symptom of malevolence to show itself in their most trifling actions without discouragement, without rebuke, and, if it broke forth with any rancour, without punishment. In which she had such success, that not the least marks of pride, envy, malice, or spite discovered itself in any of their little words or deeds.

(I, 175)

Booth himself establishes that he does not take part in the instruction of his children in answer to Dr. Harrison's question of "which of them was their son's instructor in his religion" (II, 114). Booth's reply "that he must confess Amelia had all the merit of that kind" (II, 114), furthers the impression in the novel that Booth usually has little to do with his children except what would be a necessary consequence of living in close quarters with them.

If Amelia is to follow the lead of Joseph Andrews and Tom Jones, the main authority figure should be a father figure. There is some evidence that Dr. Harrison is intended as such, but he does not emerge as a father figure, and the conflict between apparent intention and result is responsible for much of the inconsistency in Harrison's character. It is almost as if Fielding decided the main authority figure should be a father figure after he had developed Harrison's character to be far from fatherly.

The easiest way of indicating a fatherly attitude is through speech:
a discourse including the use of the appellation "child" or "my dear" is softened from religious or magisterial commands to fatherly advice. However, Dr. Harrison does not speak directly until a third of the way through the second volume, and, although Booth reports the body of Harrison's speech in the sections he relates from the past, he seldom mentions the details. Of course, it would strain the reader's credulity to have Booth quoting verbatim; it is enough that he remembers basically what people said plus a few particularly noteworthy expressions. Booth does mention that Harrison on one occasion calls Amelia "his little sugar-plum" (I, 81), which would be a strange enough expression for a real father to use to a grown daughter unless a strong precedent in endearments had already been established. In this case, it shows a kindly nature, but does little to establish Harrison as a father figure.

However, once Harrison actively enters the present world of Amelia, and his speech is recorded directly, the fatherly expression of "child" is frequent. In fact, just in case the reader has missed the feature in Harrison's speech to Amelia, we are told that he often called Amelia his child (II, 182), and an explanation is given. Harrison actually calls Amelia his daughter and her children his grandchildren because, although "perhaps, to the suddenness of [her father's] death it was owing that he did not recommend any care of them [his daughters] to [Harrison] . . . [Harrison], in some measure, took that charge upon [him]" (II, 146). Harrison is certainly intended as a father figure to Amelia.

In general, though, Harrison is not shown to be a father figure. We are told that he is a father figure to his parishioners: "All his parishioners, whom he treats as his children, regard him as their common father. Once in a week he constantly visits every house in the parish, examines,
commends, and rebukes, as he finds occasion" (I, 149). This describes an ideal exercise of pastoral duty, which would do much to establish authority as ideal in the world view of Amelia, except that we are told, not shown, and what we are shown makes what we are told difficult to believe. Later, Harrison begins his letter to Booth and Amelia "My Dear Children -- For I will now call you so, as you have neither of you now any other parent in the world" (I, 140), but, as Booth's parents were presumably dead before any part of the story took place, and Harrison had not called him "child" on this account before, it seems that Harrison mainly has Amelia in mind. Of course, there are few characters in the novel whom Harrison can address as "child" without giving offense. All the men are too old to regard the appellation with favour as are some of the women; Dr. Harrison does not like Mrs. Atkinson, and so is unlikely to address her affectionately, and we have no record of his speech to Amelia's sister, Betty. Booth does refer to Harrison as his "sage counsellor" (I, 152), and his comments on the advantage to a young man of "an intimate converse with one of riper years, who is not only able to advise, but who knows the manner of advising" (I, 152) suggest that Harrison is very much a father figure to Booth. Unfortunately, that relationship is seldom demonstrated, and any relationship depending mainly on comments by a character for its existence has little influence on the world view as a whole. Harrison's role as a father figure is, then, minor and is established mainly by his relationship to Amelia in the last quarter of the novel.

The only remaining authority role is that of the clergy, represented by the young divine and by Dr. Harrison. (The other clergy in the novel, Mrs. Atkinson's father and her first husband, are important only in their roles as father and husband.) The young divine is as minor as Dr. Harrison is major,
and exists mainly to allow Dr. Harrison scope in expounding doctrine and philosophy. Neither clergyman exhibits traditional comic roles for clergy in literature, although both reveal a few flaws which could lead to comic treatment. Of the two, the young divine is closest to being solely a comic figure, and, hence, has the least claim to authority.

Tom, the young divine, reveals his pride at every turn. He is proud of his learning and his opinion, which leads him into disputes with Dr. Harrison in which he is completely outmatched. His pride, however, blinds him to his own inferiority, and he makes a fool of himself as far as his limited opportunities for speech allow. He is also very proud of his order, which Dr. Harrison considers a most ridiculous type of pride. As his father points out, Tom's self-conceit even blinds him to his own interest. Nonetheless, although Dr. Harrison's estimation of a proud clergyman suggests that a comic treatment of the young divine would be most appropriate, he is seldom so treated. Instead, the young divine is made quite unlikeable for such a limited appearance. In terms of authority, though, Tom's treatment is not particularly important. Although it is clear that Tom will be one of the clergy to whom Dr. Harrison refers who are partly responsible for the poor reputation of religion, his youth and recent graduation are emphasized enough that the young divine can hardly be seen as an authority figure.

It is on Dr. Harrison, then, that the burden of authority falls, and consequently it must be Dr. Harrison who establishes the value system of the novel: "In conniving at Booth's unequal marriage, in arresting him for living beyond his means, and finally in restoring Amelia's estate, Dr. Harrison is the principal agent for Providence in the novel. . . ." Although there are reasons (as will be discussed), to question whether Dr. Harrison
has enough authority to be considered the novel's main authority figure, he must be so considered for two reasons. First, there is no other authority figure both good enough and prominent enough to qualify for the place, and, second, Fielding seems to have intended to create in Dr. Harrison another Squire Allworthy as far as the different subject matter of *Amelia* permitted. The first reason is a poor excuse and is the source of the proposition that there is insufficient authority in *Amelia* to support optimism and a positive value system (bearing in mind, of course, that good authority alone would be an inadequate support). The second reason explains, to some extent, the discrepancy between Harrison's actions, and Fielding's and his characters' insistence on Harrison's goodness and benevolence.

As in *Tom Jones*, there are two kinds of authority -- demonstrated and discussed -- and both are predominantly concerned with Dr. Harrison. Unfortunately, they do not agree. Fielding discusses Dr. Harrison, and Dr. Harrison discusses criteria for a value system; both kinds of discussion establish Dr. Harrison as an authority figure *par excellence*, and suggest a value system little short of ideal.

Harrison's value system focuses on two types of social authority: secular and ecclesiastic. In the secular realm, Harrison explains how a country should be run according to principles of virtue, honour and honesty, and expounds the dangers of any other bases. According to Harrison,

> Whenever true merit is liable to be superseded by favour and partiality, and men are entrusted with offices without any regard to capacity or integrity, the affairs of that state will always be in a deplorable situation. . . . But, my lord, there is another mischief which attends this kind of injustice and that is, it hath a manifest tendency to destroy all virtue and ability among the people, by taking away all that encouragement and incentive which should
promote emulation and raise men to aim at excelling in any art, science, or profession.

(II, 229-30)

Harrison suggests that if, instead of considering the interests of his friends and party, the statesman were to consider the true interest of his country . . . he will engage his country in neither alliances nor quarrels but where it is really interested; . . . he will raise no money but what is wanted, nor employ any civil or military officers but what are useful, and place in these employments men of the highest integrity, and of the greatest abilities; . . . he will employ some few of his hours to advance our trade, and some few more to regulate our domestic government. . . .

(II, 230-31)

Social authority would thus approximate ideal values and hence answer the original intention of its formation.

Dr. Harrison is understandably even more eloquent on religious values supplemented by classical philosophy. Didgeon calls him "a sort of synthesis of the moral cynicism to be found in Lucian and of the evangelical teaching to be found almost everywhere." Harrison's first letter to Booth and Amelia discusses bearing the evils of this world in expectation of the rewards of the next, and he supports this advice both with considerations of the transience and insignificance of worldly trials in comparison to the permanence and value of heavenly rewards, and with reference to Cicero's advice, "Humanas res despicere atque infra se positas arbitrari" (I, 141). On much the same lines he argues for doing good to everyone, since, if the object of goodness makes an "ill return" "to the best offices," the doer will still be rewarded in the next world. Harrison points out that "a true Christian can never be disappointed if he doth not receive his reward in this world; the labourer might as well complain that he is not paid his hire
in the middle of the day" (I, 147). He goes on to discuss Matthew 5:44, regarding loving one's enemies, condemning those who modify the passage because "they cannot bend their mind to the obedience of Scripture, [and so] are desirous to wrest Scripture to a compliance with their own inclinations" (I, 148-49). Here Harrison sounds like Adams at his best. Harrison then answers the objection that a literal acceptance of the passage would destroy law and justice because a Christian could not "prosecute his enemy in a court of justice" (I, 149). His reply, that a criminal should be prosecuted as "an offender against the laws of his country" not "from a spirit of revenge" (I, 149), articulates more clearly Allworthy's lecture about the dangers of mistaken mercy (Tom Jones, II, 969). The novel also abounds with brief comments expressing a strict compliance with predominantly New Testament Scripture, most of which could as easily be spoken by Adams or Allworthy as by Harrison. Most important, however, is Harrison's comment on the nature of man, which directly states the general impression given throughout Joseph Andrews, Tom Jones and Amelia:

The nature of man is far from being in itself evil; it abounds with benevolence, charity and pity, coveting praise and honour, and shunning shame and disgrace. Bad education, bad habits, and bad customs, debauch our nature, and drive it headlong, as it were, into vice. The governors of the world, and I am afraid the priesthood, are answerable for the badness of it. Instead of discouraging wickedness to the utmost of their power, both are too apt to connive at it.

(II, 131-32)

In all three novels, only Blifil seems to be an exception to this philosophy, and a very charitable reader could even apply it to him.

Harrison, then, expresses an idealistic quasi-political philosophy, and a religious philosophy based on strict adherence to Scripture supported
by a wide range of classical philosophy. The values that Fielding discusses whenever Harrison is not present (though the use of the authorial presence is far less noticeable than in *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*) are very similar, although he avoids direct reference to Scripture. The discussed (as opposed to demonstrated) philosophical and moral bases in *Amelia*, therefore, combine the Christian emphasis of *Joseph Andrews* and the classical and more secular emphasis of *Tom Jones*. The effect should be a combination of the best of the two earlier novels and hence an optimistic novel.

However, Dr. Harrison's characterization and the demonstration of his authority create an authority figure whom it is very difficult to like, and he thereby raises doubts about the values discussed. Moreover, Dr. Harrison is removed from the action much of the time, and unlike *Tom Jones*, where a strong major character who mirrors the values of the authority figure is always present, there is no other strong character to keep Harrison's values alive in the world of *Amelia*. Even Amelia, who does embody many of the values established in the novel, is vulnerable and ineffective, and is also absent from much of the action. Consequently, the values discussed in the novel have very little strength, and, instead, their presence emphasizes the problems and failures in the actual or demonstrated authority. Even though the actual values are frequently quite good (*e.g.* the several instances of friendship and charity and the wedded love demonstrated by Booth and Amelia and others), they do not appear so in contrast to the ideal and universal discussed values, because they are so limited in scope.

The discrepancy between real and ideal is most noticeable in Harrison's character and actions (since discussions of philosophical values are, after all, expected to be distanced from the real world). It is not expected,
however, that what we are told of a character by way of background information and introduction will be contradicted by that character's actions. At the very most, the informant could be initially mistaken, and re-judge the other character as the reader does so, but, in Amelia, both direct authorial comment and authorial comments routed through Booth and Amelia continue to establish a character for Dr. Harrison different from that which he demonstrates. For example, Dr. Harrison does not seem particularly kind or fair, but these qualities are frequently attributed to him. Moreover, many of Dr. Harrison's alleged characteristics are neither affirmed nor denied by his behaviour, creating some doubts about Fielding's endorsement of them.

Basically, the problem is in the combination of demonstrated bluntness and honesty with the good nature and tenderness that we are mostly told about. We are told that "the doctor's wit and humour, joined to the highest cheerfulness and good nature, made him the most agreeable companion in the world" (I, 145), and later that "the doctor was one of the best companions in the world, and a vein of cheerfulness, good humour, and pleasantry, ran through his conversation with which it was impossible to resist being pleased" (II, 135). On occasion, we see evidence of these qualities. More frequently, though, we see evidence of his bluntness. Since Harrison's goodness is insisted upon at every turn, bluntness could be assumed to be a good quality, especially since every comment on Harrison's bluntness suggests approbation. However, when Booth speaks of bluntness in general, he says "bluntness, or rather rudeness, as it commonly deserves to be called, is not always so much a mark of honesty as it is taken to be" (I, 127). Furthermore, instances of Harrison's bluntness are usually insulting, frequently unnecessary and sometimes cruel.
Our introduction to Harrison is as he drags Booth away from a party to impart a matter of "great consequence" (I, 68-69). The matter itself, that Harrison has convinced Mrs. Harris to let Booth marry Amelia, gives a very good impression indeed. The preface, however, involves the expression of Harrison's first, bad impressions of Booth, which may have been blunt and honest, but need not have been given in such detail since Harrison's opinion, based on hearsay, has now been altered by an opposing report. Another instance of Harrison's insulting bluntness is his farewell to Booth as the latter goes to war. He heartily wished Booth well, saying, in his blunt way, "Well, boy, I hope to see thee crowned with laurels at thy return; one comfort I have at least, that stone walls and a sea will prevent thee from running away!" (I, 103). The comment was no doubt intended to be jocular, but Harrison need not have cast aspersions on Booth's courage in order to wish him well "heartily."

Neither of these instances caused any harm, but on some occasions Harrison's bluntness does cause pain. At one time, Harrison insults Mrs. Atkinson about her learning until he causes a quarrel between her and her husband. It is not clear whether Harrison's views about learned females express Fielding's, but Harrison's opinion is certainly not shown to be wrong. However, after the fight starts, "the doctor, fearing he had gone too far, began to soften matters" (II, 187). Harrison is, of course, employing his brand of humour in the insults, but that type of humour is only acceptable when the other person is a close enough friend to realize the jocular nature of the comments. Harrison, in fact, is here breaking several of the rules which Fielding sets forth in his "Essay on Conversation." According to Fielding,
the raillery which is consistent with good breeding is a gentle animadversion on some foible; which, while it raises a laugh in the rest of the company, doth not put the person rallied out of countenance, or expose him to shame or contempt. On the contrary, the jest should be so delicate that the object of it should be capable of joining in the mirth it occasions.  

Fielding particularly warns that "all raillery on ladies...should be extremely fine and gentle..." and that raillery "is a weapon which doth the more mischief by how much the blunter it is." Moreover, an authority does not enhance a positive value system while an agent for marital strife, and the comment "fearing he had gone too far" puts the blame for the altercation on Harrison rather than on Mrs. Atkinson.

The clearest example of Harrison's bluntness causing pain concerns another woman: Amelia. When Amelia's honour is under attack by Colonel James, she is in a serious dilemma regarding her duty as a wife. On the one hand, if she tells her husband of her fears, he will probably challenge James to a duel. On the other hand, if, as a wife, she obeys the authority of her husband, she will be thrown into the arms of his unsuspected enemy. Into this dilemma comes Dr. Harrison, who as a good authority figure and exemplar of right, should rescue Amelia from the forces of evil. Although he eventually does so, initially, when the reader's sympathies are with Amelia, Harrison takes Booth's part and enlists on the side of adultery. Moreover, because Amelia does not, and we know she cannot, agree with Dr. Harrison, he insults and badgers her, giving his opinion as bluntly as possible, until she cries. Setting the main authority figure in brutal opposition to the most sympathetically treated character in the novel at one of her most distressing moments does not encourage the reader to accept the authority figure's values. The unfavourable impression is lessened by the authorial comment. Fielding tells us that "however blunt [Dr. Harrison] appeared in
his discourse, he had a tenderness of heart which is rarely found among men;" and that he is "firmly persuaded that the latter never possessed any human mind in any degree, without being attended by as large a portion of the former" (II, 129). While the cruel effect of the bluntness is evident, the good effect of the "tenderness" is left to the imagination.

Harrison's other undesirable quality, more damaging for an authority figure than bluntness, is his habit of judging people on hearsay. He demonstrates this habit at his introduction by judging and then re-judging Booth by report, and again when he judges and re-judges Colonel James by report. Most damaging to his credibility as an authority figure, of course, is the occasion when he has Booth imprisoned on the basis of hearsay. But how else is he to judge? He must form some opinion of a person being discussed, and if the person is not present, the judgment must be by hearsay. However, he need not make as unqualified judgments as he does, because the sources of his reports cannot be entirely infallible. His liking for Colonel James, for instance, could have been more reserved on the possibility that Booth and Amelia were mistaken. Concerning Booth, the sources of Harrison's first reports are not specified, but must have been either unreliable or mistaken, and re-judging on Mrs. Harris's rendition of Booth's discourse to Amelia was foolish if accidentally correct. Booth could simply have been "proving" disinterested love, while actually being the "thief" Harrison suspected.

The most serious charge against Dr. Harrison is his condemning Booth for having "set up an equipage" (I, 173), and having him imprisoned for debt, on second-hand evidence. Harrison receives an exaggerated version "from a person of the highest honour" of Booth's purchase of an old coach and harness,
and, without waiting for, or even asking for, Booth's version, condemns him as vain, foolish, and ridiculous (I, 173). Later, he accepts the malicious reports of Booth's ex-neighbours, still without applying to Booth, and, finally departs from Booth's flat in a rage after discovering a few trinkets which must have been the only valuable items in the apartment. Although Fielding claims in "the Trial of Amelia" in the *Convict Garden Journal* that Harrison has Booth arrested "only because he had all imaginable reason to think he [Booth] was a Villain," he also realizes that these instances are inconsistent with the image of a good authority figure, and goes to some pains to prove "the late conduct of Dr. Harrison . . . to be truly congrous with all the rules of the most perfect prudence as well as with the most consummate goodness" (II, 111). The substance of the argument is that Booth and Amelia were so slandered by their ex-neighbours, supposed friends included, that Harrison was "poisoned with all this malice" (II, 111). He did not allow the "criminal" to speak in his own defense, though, and this procedure is one Fielding repeatedly condemns in his scenes of justice. In fact, the strongest point Fielding can make to prove Allworthy's excellence as a magistrate is that his "natural Love of Justice, joined to his Coolness of Temper, made him always a most patient Magistrate in hearing all the Witnesses which an accused Person could produce in his Defence" (*Tom Jones*, I, 100). Harrison's behaviour is especially reprehensible when it is considered that he has known Booth for a year, and Amelia all her life.

A minor problem is that Harrison is the second worst judge of character in the novel. (The worst is Booth.) Although Amelia says that Harrison "understands human nature to the bottom" (II, 132), contrary evidence is frequently presented. He does not take into account envy or ill-will except
where they do not exist. This failing in itself could be salvaged, as it was for Allworthy and Adams, if Fielding had chosen to and had presented his arguments that evil does not occur to good minds, and that the evil characters appear much different to the limited view of a character within the novel than they do to the omniscient view of the reader. He does present the first part of this argument, but he uses it to support Amelia, not Dr. Harrison.

The major problem is that Harrison is inconsistent, which seriously reduces the credibility of authority in the novel. If imprisoning Booth were really "congruous with . . . the most consummate goodness," why does Harrison have second thoughts? We are told that "no sooner did the doctor hear that Booth was arrested than the wretched condition of his wife and family began to affect his mind" (II, 112). Why did he not think of them before he instigated "his own vindictive proceedings?" In fact, as soon as Harrison has all the evidence, it is clear even to him that his proceedings were unjustified. If this reversal came at the climax of the novel, when the protagonist is reunited with the main authority figure, it would be part of the positive resolution. However, this reunion of protagonist to authority is at mid-point in the novel and serves mainly to establish Harrison's fallibility and inconsistency. Both failings reduce the sense of a controlling authority in the novel by which everything will be resolved favourably at the end.

On the other hand, Harrison does have his good points, and his brand of humour and his didacticism do not grate on the nerves of all readers. A. R. Humphreys, in his introduction to the Everyman edition of Amelia, finds in Dr. Harrison a strong authority figure who embodies an underlying optimism.
in the novel:

Into Dr. Harrison Fielding has put a powerful moral reality, more so than into Mr. Allworthy, the doctor having an altogether robust and Johnsonian nature. Except when he wrangles with Mrs. Atkinson he is nothing but welcome. He embodies a formidable practical Christianity, not to be browbeaten or argued down. Worship is his refreshment, and eternal life real to him, but he is a citizen of the world also, for its good.  

Hugh Amory considers that "Dr. Harrison, indeed seems to embody most of that invisible authority that Fielding passed over in the Enquiry." Moreover, Dr. Harrison seems to combine the good traits of Adams and Allworthy and the frequent approving authorial comments prove that Dr. Harrison is intended as nearly an ideal authority figure. 

Hugh Amory suggests that the "most perfect prudence" (*Amelia*, XI, i, iii) is not a virtue one would associate with an Adams or an Allworthy; and as it exhibits itself in Dr. Harrison's actions, it differs from normal, human prudence — it resembles, in etymology and effect, divine providence, whose operations seem equally monstrous, whose goodness is equally "invisible and incorporeal."

This supposition is reasonable as to Fielding's intent, but it seems unlikely that an experienced writer such as Fielding would try to create a perfect creature, or that if he did try he would produce such glaring anomalies as having his "perfect" creature condemn someone unheard. Amory considered that the presentation of authority...
Most likely, Fielding intended Harrison to have the good qualities of Adams and Allworthy with more austerity than either, plus some tendency towards a divine "perfect prudence," modified by the human capacity to err. Unfortunately, evil is always easier to portray than good (cp. Milton's Satan with his God), with the result that Harrison's errors are demonstrated effectively, and his perfections are either merely discussed, or, if demonstrated (e.g. his austerity), liable to misinterpretation.

In fact, most of the values established by authority in the novel are discussed rather than demonstrated, usually detached from the plot, and, consequently, Harrison's inconsistencies and failings in demonstrated authority do not reduce his authority in the interpolated didactic material. There is no doubt that Harrison's views on the ancients, on Scriptures, on education and on government are Fielding's own and intended as touchstones in Amelia. Amelia directly contains Fielding's philosophies on these subjects hinted at in his other major novels (and also in Jonathan Wild and Journey to Lisbon).

On practical subjects, the discussions conflict with events in the novel; we are told of ideal systems of advancement and government, yet are shown corrupt systems. The discussions of Scriptures and classical philosophy, reinforced by the discussions of classical literature, establish proper conduct, attitude and morals, which are virtually ignored by all but a few characters. Unfortunately, the union between the novel and the values discussed by both Harrison and the author's persona is tenuous at best. It is as if one were reading now a little political science, now a little theology and philosophy as an intellectual diversion from the novel. Worse, when Harrison's intellectual discussions have a practical bearing on some character's
actions, Harrison is again inconsistent. When he considers whether Booth should go to war, he waxes eloquent on honour, and expostulates "...your honour is at stake; and you know how nice the honour of a soldier is in these cases" (I, 97). However, when Amelia suggests that her "husband's honour is to be preserved as well as his life" (II, 278), Harrison describes honour as "a custom established by a set of block-heads, founded on false principles of virtue, in direct opposition to the plain and positive precepts of religion..." (II, 278). It is true that the first instance involves war, a species of killing somewhat akin to judicial execution, and the second instance involves duelling, which, as an expression of private resentment and revenge, is more clearly against the precepts of Christianity. However, Harrison does not make this distinction; he deals solely, in both cases, with the question of honour.

In fact, most of the values which are inherent in the plot are established by their absence and have little to do with authority. The novel abounds with evil and foolish characters, and by demonstrating the consequences of their evil and foolishness, Fielding implies the positive values which would, presumably, lead to good consequences. Of course, some positive values must be established if evil and foolish characters are to be recognized as such, and these values are, basically, established through Harrison, Amelia, and, to some extent, through Booth, although Fielding also depends to a large extent on his authorial voice and on the reader's own values. Of Amelia, we learn that she has the fortitude and patience to bear the greatest afflictions a woman could have (which, it is suggested, are the reduction of her beauty and the vicious insults of her rivals). We also learn that she is good-natured, will not sacrifice love to worldly ambition, is a
loving and obedient wife, a good mother and a sincere Christian. Like Sophia, she is an ideal woman, though, unfortunately, her power and influence are severely limited because she is only a woman in a man's world. Of Booth, we learn that he is a "good Samaritan," that he falls in love with Amelia for her character and her beauty, not for her wealth, and that he is a courageous soldier. Therefore, we like Amelia, and Booth, as far as he does not cause Amelia hardship, and we like or dislike most other characters according to how they treat Booth and Amelia and how the consequences of their actions affect Booth and Amelia.

Basically, then, there are three worlds in Amelia. One is that of Booth, Amelia, Atkinson, Dr. Harrison and, on occasion, several minor characters, where honesty and good-nature rule supreme, and love and trust bind one character to another. The second world is Dr. Harrison's utopia, concerning life beyond personal, daily existence, which establishes ideal systems and values for all aspects of social and religious government. The third world is corrupt and chaotic on both personal and social levels, and embodies the opposite of the values established in the two other worlds. This last world is, unfortunately, predominant, and is so powerful that it can pervert the honesty and happiness of most of the good characters. Even Amelia, who remains faithful to all her values of love and honesty, is made unhappy by the evil forces of the real world, especially when that world tricks true (good) authority into its camp. The authority of the corrupt world is based on money and rank, and is, therefore, as argued previously, false authority. In the world of Amelia, this false authority is so powerful that only acquisition of its bases frees good characters from its power, and allows them to follow true authority. True authority, on its own, cannot
compete against false authority except on a personal level.

Furthermore, true authority in *Amelia* is separated from the daily lives of ordinary people, while false authority, with many more authority figures, is present most of the time. The eventual triumph of good authority in the lives of the major characters should be a strong statement of the strength of right, but the triumph of evil in the lives of so many minor characters, and the necessity of removing the major characters from the sphere of influence of false authority, detract from the positive force of the happy ending. The prevailing sense of the novel is that ordinary people are at the mercy of corruption and evil which are so powerful that even the earthly representatives of Providence can be tricked into furthering the goals of false authority.

The consequences of this pessimistic world view demonstrate the importance of the constant presence of a good authority figure. Dr. Harrison's ideal values can at least be kept in sight when he is present, but once authority is removed from active participation in daily life, the forces of evil gain an almost invincible position.

*Amelia* is a predominantly pessimistic novel, except at the end, largely because of the treatment of authority figures. Harrison's good qualities are not developed enough to establish that he is a "good man," and he is absent from the action most of the time. Since the link between the good authority figure and Providence is not convincing, and since, even if Harrison is a strong Providential agent, he is not present to protect the good characters, the optimism of *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*, based on a belief in the presence and power of good in the world as expressed and enforced by good authority figures, has been abandoned. As in *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*, then, the
treatment of authority in *Amelia* is crucial to the world view of the novel: in the two former novels the treatment of authority was instrumental in achieving optimism, and, in the latter, the treatment of authority creates much of the novel's pessimism.
An examination of the authority figures in Fielding's major novels, then, demonstrates that the degree of optimism perceived is largely dependent upon the presentation, or lack thereof, of the main authority figure as a "good man" and as a Providential agent, and, to a lesser extent, is dependent upon the sympathetic presentation of minor sympathetic authority figures and the protection of innocent characters from evil authority figures by Providential agents -- particularly by the main authority figures. The "good man" concept, although applicable to non-authority figures, is the most important requirement for an authority figure since it assures, not an absence of human failings, or freedom from error, but that empathy, good-nature and Christian and Stoic virtues will find frequent expression in charitable acts and in the exercise of benevolent guidance, prudent counsel and wise correction. The actions of the main authority figure, as long as they are based on the principles of a "good man," will be in accord with the comic resolution of the plot and with the optimistic eighteenth-century theory of a divine plan whereby everything (and, most dramatically, honest error) works towards an ultimate good. The actions of evil authority, based on a lack of good qualities rather than solely on the presence of vices (although Fielding's evil characters usually have numerous vices, selfishness being the most common), naturally inhibit the comic resolution, but also provide opportunities for Providential agents to act.

Each novel contains one main authority figure who is not the main character, or at least with Joseph Andrews in mind, who is not supposed to
be the main character, but who is, nonetheless, the spokesman for the ethical and religious bases of the novel and who establishes, to a large extent, the tone and attitude of the novel. The authority figure has one formal, public authority role, and at least one private authority role. Because he embodies all the characteristics of the "good man" (although Dr. Harrison's "good man" characteristics are insufficiently demonstrated), he exercises all types of authority to some degree. In every case, the main authority is, or, in the case of Dr. Harrison, is intended to be, the representative of Providence or God in the novel, and, although the main authority figure is never an allegory of God, he is as god-like as it is possible for a distinctly human character to be. In the case of Dr. Harrison, of course, the demonstrated "god-like" qualities establish his austerity, the discussed "god-like" qualities are not proven, and the human qualities emphasized cause temporary hardship and unhappiness. The degree of optimism intended in each novel may be gauged by the presence and participation of the Providential agent, since the more prominent Providence is, the more certain is the happy ending.

In each novel, the main source of an authority figure's power, and hence his main ethical and religious concern, is Fielding's simplified Latitudinarian stance, as modified by exposure to Stoicism and by some features of contemporary philosophy such as Shaftesbury's and Hutcheson's belief in the innate principles of goodness in man. In Joseph Andrews and Amelia, Christianity is the controlling principle for the authority figures. In Tom Jones, the role of contemporary and classical philosophies is more prominent, although God is still the model for Allworthy's authority. Moreover, Allworthy is the most nearly "divine" of the three major authority figures, and his angelic characteristics are often described. In all three
novels, contemporary and classical philosophies are discussed, but they are used to clarify and support religious doctrine, not to replace it. Stoicism, and contemporary philosophies containing elements of Locke, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Butler and Bolingbroke (as interpreted by Pope in *The Essay on Man*), are used as supporting ethical bases for the novels, while other philosophies are casually mocked or refuted. Reason and optimism, then, support Christianity in Fielding's major novels.

In *Joseph Andrews*, the main authority figure is a minor clergyman, a father and a father figure to his parish. He is visually comic and has comic characteristics, but is a "good man" and hence a real authority figure, and his goals and beliefs ultimately triumph over those of serious, more powerful false authority figures. He emphasizes love in his character and actions, and his expressed doctrine is either based on love and Latitudinarian Christianity or seriously reduced by comedy. Although his practical power is limited, his constant presence is an assurance that the Providence he represents is in control and that "everything will turn out all right in the end," and he is, therefore, largely responsible for the light-heartedness evident throughout the novel. Although Adams is not the main character in *Joseph Andrews*, in that the plot does not focus on him, he is the most prominent and most memorable character in the novel, and, consequently, the most important main authority figure of the three under consideration.

Allworthy, the main authority figure in *Tom Jones*, enjoys considerably more practical power than Adams does, but has less spiritual power because he is a magistrate rather than a clergyman, though he still finds frequent opportunity to expound moral doctrine. Although he is not an actual father, his roles as a guardian and as a squire, and hence as a father figure for the
area, are emphasized far more than are Adams' paternal roles, and much of his authority in the novel concerns his private authority roles. Allworthy's role as a "good man" is emphasized because he serves as a guide and example to Tom Jones, who, though a fledgling "good man," needs considerably more direction and advice than did Joseph Andrews. Moreover, there is a large number of parental authority figures who misuse their authority, and only Allworthy's "good man" features give him a superior degree of parental authority. Allworthy has less effect on Tom Jones than Adams has on Joseph Andrews, because he is not present during the middle section and during much of the third section, but he establishes the ethical criteria for the novel before the action moves from his control. The judicial nature of his authority, as well as the reservation in his own character, make him a more formal, but still a very likeable character, though his serious outlook on life makes Tom Jones less simply happy than is Joseph Andrews.

The main authority figure in Amelia follows the trend to formality, austerity and absence from the action. Like Adams, Dr. Harrison is a clergyman, but, unlike Adams, his "good man" characteristics are seldom demonstrated and he is absent from the action most of the time. The first problem makes his authority hard to accept and the second problem makes the world view of the novel chaotic and pessimistic. When Harrison does appear, he seldom makes the novel any happier -- his jocularity has a grating effect on this reader -- and his actions create serious, though temporary, hardship. There is no sense that Providence is in control because its main representative is inconsistent, unconvincing and seldom involved in the action, and the other possible representative is the powerless Amelia. Moreover, Harrison's private authority role -- father figure to Amelia and Booth -- is minor, which makes him formal
and aloof and therefore very difficult to like. On the other hand, the few Providential rescues are the work of Harrison, which with the comments of the authorial voice and the other characters, demonstrates that Harrison is intended as a good authority figure.

In each novel, the authority figure demonstrates many of the views expressed by the authorial voice, conveys these views to the other characters, and thereby is an active ingredient in the development of the world view. Because he is the spokesman, among the characters, for the religious and ethical bases of the novels, the reader will tend to judge the characters and events as would the authority figure (unless, of course, the reader strongly objects to the bases established). As far as his practical authority permits, the authority figure controls, or at least modifies, events in the novel. The same is true for any authority figure, but when a false authority controls events, the progression towards the positive resolution is impeded, while the main authority figure, as a Providential agent, furthers an ultimate good even when his control seems to be erroneous. The authority figure is therefore important to the tone and effect of the novel.

The three main authority figures thus demonstrate a causal relationship to their novels. Adams is a jovial, strongly Christian Providential agent, and these facts enhance the optimistic and comic world of *Joseph Andrews*. Allworthy is more serious and more remote, as well as more powerful, but still an obvious Providential agent, and *Tom Jones* is, partially for this reason, less comic and less optimistic. Harrison is not a convincing or likeable Providential agent, the action is largely removed from his domain, and these elements help to make *Amelia* neither comic nor optimistic. In all three novels, the main authority figure is primarily responsible for the didactic material
and is the character spokesman for each novel's ethical and religious philosophy. The treatment of the main authority figures is, therefore, one of Fielding's main techniques for establishing the degree of optimism in the tone and world view of each of his major novels.
FOOTNOTES

Chapter One


5 Dudden, II, 1062.

6 Dudden, II, 1084.

7 Dudden, II, 679.


Chapter Two

1 Irwin, p. 79.


3 It should be noted that a character who is "basically good" is not necessarily a "good man," a concept with quite rigid qualifications. Any genuine manifestation of empathy for one's fellow man is an instance of good in Fielding's novels, even if "habitual avarice,"
Chapter Two continued

or some other failing, cuts short the actions derived from that good (cp. Shaftesbury, Characteristics, p. 90, Inquiry, p. 13). The better a character is, of course, the deeper and more frequent are the instances of empathy and the more charitable acts result.


8 Battestin, p. 116.


10 Didgeon, p. 75

11 Tave, pp. 141, 144.

12 Didgeon, p. 74.

13 Didgeon, p. 65.

14 In the Statute of 21 Henry VIII, c. 13 "ministers were forbidden to take lands to farm, or to buy or sell in the way of merchandise." The statue was later modified in the reign of Elizabeth I, but not abolished to prevent ministers from "becoming farmers." See Christopher Hill, Economic Problems of the Church (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), p. 216. In practise, it became a matter of individual judgement on the part of the bishops whether the parsons and other minor clergy were allowed secular sources of income.
Chapter Three

1. Irwin, p. 76.

2. e.g. Butler, Works, regarding "good men": Sermon 4, II, 86; Sermon 6, II, 110-11 (especially "to esteem a man's being friendless as a recommendation," cp. comment on Allworthy "To be unfortunate in any respect was sufficient...to engage his Friendship" Tom Jones I, 140); Sermon 12, II, 204-05, 216-17; Sermon 13, II, 227, 231; Sermon 14, I, 239. See also Sermon 1, II, 35 (cp. Allworthy's comments on "Principles of Natural Justice" which God "had implanted in our minds," I, 80); Sermon 9, II, 148-49 (cp. Harrison's comments on honour [Amelia, II, 278], and on loving one's enemies [Amelia, I, 148-49]); Sermon 10, II, 166-67, 170; et al.

3. e.g. I, 398.


5. e.g. Butler, "Sermon 1," Works, II, 46.


8. e.g. I, 32, 39-42, 54, 72, 76, 183, 190, 213; II, 727, 729; et al.


11. Osborne, p. 177.

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15 Battestin, p. 90.


17 See Mingay, p. 131.

18 *e.g.* Colossians, 3:19; Ephesians, 5: 25 and 28; Ecclesiastes, 9:9.

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1 Sherburn, p. 263.


3 Henry Fielding, *Amelia*, 2 vols: separately paginated in one (rpt. 1974; New York: Everyman's Library, 1930), II, 293. All further references to *Amelia* are from this edition and are included in the text.

4 Irwin, p. 132.

5 Didgeon, p. 201.


7 Didgeon, p. 214.

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13 Amory, "Magistrate or Censor," p. 513.

14 Dudden, II, 859.

15 Amory, "Magistrate or Censor," p. 517.

Selected Bibliography

Primary


Secondary


