Jospeh Andrews Essay, Research Paper

Joseph Andrews

Joseph Andrews is a novel written in the middle eighteenth century by Henry Fielding. In this novel, Fielding talks of human nature and of the need for control of sexuality. He does not just come right out and say it, but instead expresses his concern through examples of the constant sexual advances through the entire novel, Mr. Wilson?s experiences, and the little self control people have in containing themselves properly.

The most obvious example of the advances on Joseph, is made by Lady Booby in the first few chapters of Book I. She would take walks with Joseph in the park, and spend a lot of time alone with him. Then, not even a week after her husband?s death, she invites Joseph into her room a talks with him about women, when she intentionally lifts her head so Joseph would find out that she is naked under the covers of the bed. To urge him on, she plays an actress? role in saying:

“I have trusted myself with a man alone, naked in bed; suppose you should have any wicked intentions upon my honor, how should I defend myself?”

The second example of the sexual advances and the lack of control of their barbaric nature, was made by a man who had promised to take Fanny to London, but instead had ideas of his own. If it wasn?t for Abraham Adams, Fanny might have been raped by the man who was accompanying her to London.

The next show of a sexual advance on Fanny was made by a Squire that they had encountered after leaving Mr. Wilson?s house. Since the Squire?s dogs had attacked Adams, he defended himself by hitting them with his cane. When the Squire arrived, and saw the bruises on his dogs, he would have probably had Joseph and Adams indicted had he not seen Fanny. He invited all of them to dinner at his estate, trying to get Joseph and Parson Adams drunk, so he and Fanny could spend some time alone, but Parson Adams leaves with Joseph and Fanny, disgusted at the Squire. He sends his three of his men to go and kidnap Fanny, and they do so successfully. Luckily for Fanny, on their way back, Fanny is saved by Peter Pounce who takes her to the inn where Joseph is.

Near the end of the novel, Lady Booby returns to Sunsetshire, and because of her desire for Joseph tries to plead Parson Adams to dislike Fanny and then later incarcerate them both. Since should doesn?t succeed in doing so, she decides to move back to London and find herself another young man to occupy her time with.

Another instance made by Fielding was the story of Horatio and Leonora. Leonora was a very pretty, sociable woman who adored by many men, but the one she liked the most was a man by the name of Horatio. She had agreed to marry him, but while he is away on business, Leonora attends a social outing and vows not to dance with anyone since her fianc? is not there. But she sees a man named Bellarmine, who was adored by all the women there, and had his eyes set on her. She then invited him over to her house for many days. Horatio arrived back surprising Leonora and punching Bellarmine. Bellarmine then returned to Paris forgetting about Leonora and Horatio broke up with her because of her unfaithfulness, and Leonora moved to an estate where she spent the rest of her days.

The last example of human sexuality addressed by Fielding is the experiences Mr. Wilson had with women when he was young. His first encounter with women was a cohabitation with a mistress he met through a man he knew. But by midday, she was already flirting with another man, so thus they parted and went their own ways. His second encounter was with a young girl, who was to be married with a linen-draper, but as Mr. Wilson puts it:

“I represented him in so low a light to his mistress, and made so good an use of flattery, promises, and presents, that,??I prevailed with the poor girl and conveyed her away from her mother!”

They lived together for some months together in happiness but hen grew sick of each other and began to fight constantly. They broke up, with the young girl running off with Mr. Wilson?s money.

He then encountered a seductive, married woman named Sapphira. She divorced her former husband and married Mr. Wilson. After Mr. Wilson?s successful affair with another married woman, they divorced and Mr. Wilson had to pay a L3,000 settlement. After this affair Mr. Wilson decided to end his affairs with women and pursue other activities to entertain himself.

All of these are examples that are shown throughout the entire novel and tell the reader a moral that one should contain himself and not to let his natural desire be fulfilled through little pleasures. Through the sexual advances made on Joseph and Fanny, this desire for them by the other characters tells the reader not to become so barbaric. Through the stories of Leonora and Mr. Wilson, the moral reason is not lose their solf control just because somebody is attractive and they want a quick thrill.