

Character Analysis Joseph Andrews

Joseph's chief attributes are his self-control, his virtue, and his devotion. He is attractive physically, as Lady Booby and Mrs. Slipslop are well aware, and his character matches this exterior excellence. The strength of his pure love for Fanny Goodwill enables him to deal plainly, directly, and even violently with the moral and physical weaklings who cross his path, be it the lustful Lady Booby or the insect of a man, Beau Didapper. Joseph is a man of genuine emotion, and it is this which inspires him to the virtuous action which Fielding believed so important: "I defy the wisest man in the world to turn a true good action into ridicule," Joseph comments in Book III. Joseph, however, would be a bore if he were only a knight-like figure. Fielding enhances his moralizing by giving us much rich laughter. It is true that Joseph is always ready to do battle for a stranger, but, throughout the novel, Joseph battles most for his chastity and it is this satiric reversal which is the basis of Fielding's "comic epic-poem."



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