

An Introduction to *The Brothers* by Susan Smythies

Susan Smythies, who is described by Simon Dickie as ‘one of the most popular and prolific mid-century novelists’,¹ was born in Colchester in 1720, and published *The Brothers* in 1758. Though Smythies is not explicitly identified as the author of *The Brothers* in either the title page or the preface, it appears that her name became known after a 1758 edition of the *Ipswich Journal* carried a letter, dated ‘Colchester, October 26th, 1758’, which offers ‘Miss Smythies’ Compliments to all that have done her the honour of subscribing to *The Brothers*’,². The declaration on the title page that *The Brothers* was written ‘By the AUTHOR of *The STAGE-COACH* and *LUCY WELLERS*’,³ thus means that she is known to be the author of these three novels, as well as at least one book for children. She did, however, originally publish *The Stage-Coach: Containing the Character of Mr. Manly, and the History of his Fellow-Travellers* anonymously in 1753, and *The History of Lucy Wellers* (1754) as simply ‘by a Lady’.⁴ This reference to gender, in spite of her anonymity, demonstrates Smythies’ desire to defend the reputation of women writers in the mid –eighteenth century, as explored further on in this Introduction.

The heroine of *The Brothers* is Phoebe Osmond, the daughter of a man who by various misfortunes has been denied the inheritance he should have been entitled to from his baronet father (though he is by no means destitute). At the start of the novel, Phoebe becomes the ward of the kindly and well-respected Lady Foster, as her father goes abroad with the Military. Whilst under the care of Lady Foster, she quickly gains the unwanted attentions of her long-lost uncle, who makes several ultimately unsuccessful attempts to kidnap, seduce or

¹ Simon Dickie, ‘The Forgotten Best-Sellers of Early English Fiction’, in *Cruelty and Laughter: Forgotten Comic Literature and the Unsentimental Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming 2011), p. 366.

² F.G. Black, ‘Miss Smythies’, *TLS*, 26 Sept 1935, p. 596.

³ Susan Smythies, *The Brothers*, 2 vols (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1758), I, title page. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parentheses (hereafter *Brothers*).

N.B. *The Brothers* does not include page numbers for the title page or subscription list, but begins numbering from the ‘Advertisement to the Reader’. I have therefore been unable to include page references for these sections, but have simply referenced them as ‘title page’ and ‘A List of the Subscribers’.

⁴ Arthur Sherbo, ‘Susan Smythies’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/72236>> [accessed 15 December 2010].

marry her throughout the novel. As a result of one of these failed attempts, she finds herself in the care of her maid's wealthy male relations, and enjoying the company of his friends and neighbours, including Colonel L. and Lady Bab. She continues to receive male attention wherever she goes, and in a short space of time rejects two further proposals, before finally accepting one from an honourable and wealthy baronet. By the end of the novel, her scheming uncle has been proven to be the illegitimate son of her grandfather, and he finally commits suicide upon realising that he has unwittingly murdered his own father (as well as seriously wounding his friend in the process). His estate and title are therefore transferred to Phoebe's father, leaving the heroine well provided for by both her husband and father at the end of the text.

Arthur Sherbo has declared of *The Brothers*, 'what is of more than ordinary interest lies in the twenty-six pages of the list of subscribers'.⁵ Certainly the list is impressive for both its length, at 675 names in total, and the great number of famous literary names to be found on it, including Richardson (who also subscribed his wife and four daughters), Smollett, Garrick, and Joseph Spence. Indeed, it was Richardson himself who suggested this method of publication to Smythies, after she failed to find a bookseller for the work. It is therefore unsurprising that he would have felt some obligation to make this method an effective one, rendering Eaves' and Kimpel's explanation that his subscription was made purely out of charity unconvincing.⁶ The entry on Smythies in the Orlando Database also comments that her father was 'well to do'⁷, implying that it is improbable that she was truly in need of charity. Whilst it was clearly a kind act, it seems unlikely that he would show such generosity purely out of pity; it is probable that he would have perceived some value in the work itself, and therefore felt that it deserved to be published and read by the public. This was certainly the case for a similar situation which he was involved in later that year, in which he attempted to persuade booksellers to publish a book entitled *The Histories of Some of the Penitents in the Magdalen House*. He was unsuccessful, and eventually again suggested the subscription method. He said of this work that 'It *must* appear, for Virtues sake',⁸ thus implying that he

⁵ ODNB.

⁶ T.C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, *Samuel Richardson: A Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 531.

⁷ Susan Brown, Patricia Clements, Isobel Grundy, eds., 'Susan Smythies', in *Orlando Project Database* <http://orlando.cambridge.org/protected/svPeople?person_id=smytsu> [accessed 15 December 2010].

⁸ Eaves and Kimpel, p. 463.

was willing to put the effort in to promoting novels which he deemed worthy of attention. Though the printing of this work was eventually paid for privately, this incident still provides insight into Richardson's likely motivations for helping authors to publish specific texts.

Sherbo comments on the subscription list for *The Brothers* that: 'The names of 23 military subscribers, 16 MDs, 63 clergymen, with subscribers from Cambridge and Oxford, suggest that Smythies had cast her net wide and that her friends had come through for her.'⁹ Clearly, Richardson's idea proved to be an excellent one for Smythies, who stated that she had 'succeeded beyond her hopes'.¹⁰ It is therefore understandable that she wished to break her anonymity, in order to personally thank those who subscribed in her letter in the *Ipswich Journal*. Though this newspaper would only have covered the relatively local area in East Anglia, Sherbo notes that 'Of the some 675 names in the list, 35 are from Colchester, and between a quarter and a third represent Essex and Suffolk',¹¹ therefore demonstrating that a significant amount of Smythies' support was indeed local.

Cheryl Turner argues that publication by subscription 'played an important role in the wider growth of woman's involvement in the literature market.'¹² Smythies' case is an impressive example of the possibilities subscription publishing offered to women writers, particularly if, as was true for her, the author had the help of 'a distinguished friend to present the proposals'.¹³ Undoubtedly, the support of Richardson was a vital factor in Smythies successfully securing so many supporters for her novel; Turner notes that gaining subscriptions could be an uncomfortable experience for a woman,¹⁴ and it was extremely unlikely that a female writer would set about the process without some kind of male assistance.

One of the names on the subscription list, a Thomas Cave (*Brothers*, I, 'A List of the Subscribers'), clearly inscribed his name on the title page of his copy, now at Chawton, as this ink marking is still visible today. This demonstrates that he must have taken a certain amount of pride in his ownership of *The Brothers*, suggesting that it was considered a valuable

⁹ ODNB.

¹⁰ Eaves and Kimpel, p. 464.

¹¹ ODNB.

¹² Cheryl Turner, *Living by the Pen: Women Writers in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 110.

¹³ Turner, p. 110.

¹⁴ Turner, p. 111.

product of the literary market at the time. Aside from this, the physical appearance of the book is relatively unremarkable; it is duodecimo, and bound in gilt-ruled calf, with gold ornamentation on the spine. There is also a single printer's ornament on the title page of each volume, but there are no further decorations or embellishments throughout the text.

Given the popularity of Smythies' former works, it seems odd that she struggled to find a publisher for *The Brothers* in the first place. *The Stage-Coach* (1753) had a Dublin edition in 1754, and a second edition in London in 1755; *The History of Lucy Wellers* (1754) also had a second edition in 1755, as well as a total of four German editions between 1754 and 1755.¹⁵ However, Thomas Keymer comments on the difficulties experienced by authors in this period, describing 'a steady year-on-year decline in the total number of novels published from fifty-one in 1754 to twenty-three in 1758', adding that at this time, several experienced novelists found themselves forced to publish new works by private subscription.¹⁶ As part of this discussion, he also notes that this must have been the only option for Smythies. Thus her use of the subscription method does indicate that she struggled to publish her work, but this seems likely to be evidence more of a decline in the market for novels at this time, than of any bad opinion of the work itself.

Richardson complained of the difficulty of securing publication in this period, claiming that the bookseller Andrew Millar had stated that the public were becoming tired of novels.¹⁷ It is clear that the belief amongst many publishers at the time was that the heyday of the novel was coming to an end. In the case of *The Histories of some of the Penitents in the Magdalen House*, Richardson tried to persuade first Millar to publish the text, and then Robert Dodsley, a seller he described as 'one of those Booksellers, who think the Day of Novels is over', but also 'an ingenious Man, a Writer himself, and no indifferent Judge of Writing.'¹⁸ Clearly, Dodsley was held in high esteem as a publisher. Though he presumably also initially rejected *The Brothers*, it is his name which ultimately appeared on the imprints of both the first edition, and the second edition of 1759: 'Printed for R. and J. DODSLEY, at *Tully's* Head, in *Pall-mall*' (*Brothers*, I, title page).

Robert Dodsley was in business with his brother James from 1753 onwards, but it was

¹⁵ Orlando.

¹⁶ Thomas Keymer, *Sterne, the Moderns, and the Novel* (Oxford: OUP, 2002), p. 56.

¹⁷ Eaves and Kimpel, p. 463.

¹⁸ Eaves and Kimpel, p. 463.

clearly Robert whom Richardson had formed a relationship with. James Raven writes that ‘Dodsley was above all an astute business man with a keen sense of the appetites of the public.’¹⁹ He was a commercially aware bookseller, who was both well-connected and well-positioned in London; James E. Tierney notes that ‘By setting up in Pall Mall, Dodsley placed himself within... the haunts of the alert and literate.’²⁰ Though this location was an unusual one for a bookseller at the time he started his business, being a little way out from the City and the centre of trade, it proved to be extremely effective,²¹ thus suggesting that Smythies was probably pleased when she did eventually manage to secure his services.

Richardson’s comments on Dodsley’s negative view of the novel are backed up by the fact that he published just twenty-three pieces of fiction during his twenty-four year career,²² demonstrating that in order to take on *The Brothers*, he must have been fully convinced of the work’s commercial appeal. Raven notes that ‘subscription schemes stood out against speculative publishing that required great caution and great risk.’²³ Clearly, the fact that investors had already partly paid their contribution for the book before it was even printed, demonstrated that there was a market for it. In the case of *The Brothers*, the 675 names on the subscription list must have seemed to Dodsley to bode very well for future sales of the novel; the second edition of 1759 proves that his investment certainly did pay off.

For this second edition, the following was added to the imprint: ‘and by W. REYMER, in Colchester’.²⁴ John Feather notes that from mid-century onwards, statements began to appear in imprints listing leading booksellers in provincial towns, to give the general impression that a book was widely available.²⁵ He additionally comments that in cases of books ‘which had a particular local interest... the local distributor could take an extra share in the profits in return

¹⁹ James Raven, *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade* (London: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 188.

²⁰ James E. Tierney, *The Correspondence of Robert Dodsley 1733 - 1764* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), p. xiv.

²¹ Tierney, p. 23.

²² Tierney, p. 27.

²³ Raven, p. 352.

²⁴ Susan Smythies, *The Brothers*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (London: R. and J. Dodsley; Colchester: W. Reymer, 1759), I, title page.

²⁵ John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), p. 66.

for the wider distribution which he was able to provide.²⁶ Tierney also states that between 1753 (when James' name first began being added to imprints) and the end of the decade, twenty-three percent of the Dodsley output consisted of joint undertakings with other booksellers (though he does not include Reymmer in his listing of Dodsley's provincial collaborators).²⁷ It thus seems most likely that Reymmer's name on the second edition indicates that it was sold in Smythies' home town as well as London, in order to accommodate for the high local demand already demonstrated by the list of subscriptions.

Feather makes no mention of a W. Reymmer in his book *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England*, although he does mention four other booksellers operating in Colchester during the eighteenth century, including one W. Keymer. He states that this Keymer set up business in the middle of the century, and that the Keymer family had been in the bookselling trade in Colchester since the middle of the previous century.²⁸ It was this W. Keymer who published Clara Reeve's *The Champion of Virtue* in 1777 (in partnership with a London bookseller), and her *The Progress of Romance* in 1785.²⁹ Whilst it does seem highly likely that W. Reymmer and W. Keymer could in fact be the same person, the imprint of *The Brothers* clearly specifies the former, and it seems improbable that such a mistake would be made on the title page. Either way, it is plain that the existence of such a thriving trade of bookselling in Colchester encouraged literary minded inhabitants, as these publishers helped promote the careers of both these writers. It is almost certain that the two women would have been associates, as Reeve was living in Colchester from 1755; The Orlando Project Database even comments that there may be some family connection between them, as Reeve's mother's birth name was Smithies.³⁰

The fact that there was a second edition at all demonstrates the contemporary popularity of the work. Reviews in both the *Monthly Review* and the *Critical Review* were also relatively complimentary, with the *Monthly* describing *The Brothers* as 'an entertaining and interesting performance.'³¹ The *Critical* congratulates Smythies on 'her ample

²⁶ Feather, p. 65.

²⁷ Tierney, p. 40.

²⁸ Feather, p. 87.

²⁹ Paul Kelly, ed., *Varieties of Female Gothic*, 6 vols (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2002), I, p. 239.

³⁰ Orlando.

³¹ Anonymous, 'Art.9: *The Brothers*', *Monthly Review*, 20 (1759), p. 81.

subscription, wishing that she may proceed with her pen, and prosper, and every year lay the public under the like contribution'.³² Clearly, the lengthy subscription list was of equally special interest at the time of publication, as it is to modern critics. It is also tribute to the reviewer's genuine admiration of the work that he should make the (unfulfilled) request to Smythies to produce a similar novel on an annual basis. Meanwhile, the *Monthly* remarks on the improvement of her style, arguing that 'She has greatly mended her hand, since she published the Stage-coach and Lucy Wellers: to which we think she has injudiciously referred the Readers of her present work.'³³ This comparison demonstrates the reviewer's familiarity with her former novels, showing that there was in all likelihood a widespread awareness of these novels within the literary community at the time.

However, both reviews do focus on the idea that she has fallen short of her model of the texts of Richardson, with the *Critical* deeming it a 'humble imitation',³⁴ and the *Monthly* claiming that 'she has by no means equalled [Richardson's] pattern'.³⁵ Keymer quotes the former piece in order to demonstrate his assertion that 'The *Critical* was especially free in invoking the precedent of Richardson or Fielding to damn a new production.'³⁶ This method of comparing all novels to the work of either Fielding or Richardson was a common practise of reviewers at the time, with the rival writers seen as crucial points of reference. However, Smythies herself concedes in the Advertisement that whilst she may have failed to 'produce something like a CLARISSA, or a GRANDISON', she 'need not however enter into so disadvantageous a comparison' (*Brothers*, I, p. iv). She thus does admit to aspiring to an imitation of Richardson's work, but is careful not to claim to be too successful in that respect; at the same time, she seems to be anticipating the negative comments of the reviewers, and arguing that her work need not necessarily be compared to that of such a well-received and popular author.³⁷

Throughout the Advertisement, Smythies carefully embeds her defence of women's writing with the modesty typical of women's prefaces of this period. She also both defends

³² Anonymous, 'Art.13: *The Brothers*', *Critical Review, or, Annuals of literature*, 7 (1759), p. 79.

³³ *Monthly*, p. 81.

³⁴ *Critical*, p. 79.

³⁵ *Monthly*, p. 81.

³⁶ Keymer, p. 54.

³⁷ Orlando.

the novel genre, and interacts with the negative discourse still associated with it at this point in the eighteenth century. J. Paul Hunter writes on those who disapproved of novels that ‘At best they thought novel reading a waste of time, at worst a serious instrument of evil’, adding that ‘novels generally... had an unsavoury reputation well into the nineteenth century.’³⁸ Smythies argues in the Advertisement that ‘A Novel presents itself; a favourite dish, if one may judge by the frequency of its appearance. It is tasteful to the *idle*: if, like vanity, it is the food of fools, yet men of wit will condescend to take a bit.’ (*Brothers*, I, p. i). In this way, she points out the popularity of the novel, commenting that even educated men read them, as clearly demonstrated by the fact that critics were reviewing them in this period. She does concede to the frequently levelled accusation that novel-reading encouraged idleness (as alluded to by Hunter in his statement that they were believed to be ‘a waste of time’), yet this small concession is counter-balanced by the defensive arguments it is surrounded by.

She goes on to say of novels that ‘even *women* set out to write them. The author may be thought a melancholy example of it, who is now guilty of a third offence of this kind, if it is an offence. And why should not *women* write them?’ (*Brothers*, I, p. ii). This defensive tone conveys Smythies’ defiance against the stigma still attached to women novelists at this time; Turner comments that ‘despite the increasing public acceptance of female authors in the second half of the century, a residual uncertainty about the suitability of novel writing for women persisted throughout the period.’³⁹ Clearly, as Smythies was writing in 1758, this idea was very much still prevalent, and she is keen to question the logic of such a belief. The use of legal language here also adds a further element of defiance to her words, as she uses a discourse generally denied to women at this time. Additional evidence for Smythies’ determination in this matter is seen in the fact that despite her anonymity, she chose to reveal her gender on the title page of her 1754 novel *The History of Lucy Wellers*. Though her authorship of *The Brothers* was widely known, it was also officially published anonymously, yet she clearly still desired to make a defence for women writers in her preface.

However, she ends the Advertisement in a reversion back to the meek and modest tone more typical of women’s prefaces of the period, claiming that she ‘pleads the *indulgence* paid by the *sensible* and the *generous* to her *sex*, of being *To her faults a little blind, / And to her virtues very kind*’ (*Brothers*, I, p. v). Susan Sniader Lanser remarks that ‘it was conventional virtually throughout the eighteenth century for women to apologize in prefaces for either their

³⁸ Hunter, p. 21-22.

³⁹ Turner, p. 111.

gender or their genre, and of course for their own inferior artistry'.⁴⁰ Given that she had already broken this convention at some points in the Advertisement, her decision to end it in this way could demonstrate a fear of speaking out too boldly against the perceived inferiority of women writers. This is possibly unsurprising given the difficulty she had in securing a publisher for *The Brothers*, which is likely to have made her very aware of the precarious nature of her profession, and therefore uncertain of how controversial she could afford to be.

In relation to Smythies' references to and imitation of Richardson, Mary Patricia Martin writes: 'In prefaces and in their novels proper, women writers take up the theories and models for fiction identified with Richardson and Fielding, revisiting their characteristic themes, reimagining their plots, and experimenting with their form and technique'.⁴¹ It is certainly easy to draw parallels between *The Brothers* and Richardson's *Pamela*. The plight of a beautiful young lady who is universally admired is clearly a common theme, as are the several attempts to seduce her by her half-uncle. However, rather than ending with a reformation of the villainous rake and subsequent marriage, Phoebe's tormentor unwittingly kills his own father and wounds his friend, before committing suicide himself. Clearly then, in this respect Smythies was more interested in poetic justice than in showing any possibility of improvement in his character. Phoebe's actions and speeches at the points where her virtue is most threatened are undoubtedly reminiscent of those of Richardson's heroines, as she is described as having 'kneeled down, and, in the bitterest anguish of soul, petitioned Heaven for relief', before begging: "Suffer me to escape the snares set to render me the detestation of myself and of the world; and I will earnestly supplicate Heaven to grant you mercy"' (*Brothers*, p. 254-6). Here the sinful nature of the male seducer's actions is emphasised, as the virtuous woman desperately calls to God for help; thus the religious value placed on a woman's virginity is conveyed, as it is so powerfully in *Pamela*.

In general, any work containing an elevated and admired female character was deemed Richardsonian; Spencer comments that he is still seen as a 'champion of women'.⁴² Though Phoebe is not praised in quite such exultant terms as Pamela, her sweet nature and pleasant appearance are frequently commented on throughout the text: 'Miss Osmond really is, the

⁴⁰ Susan Sniader Lanser, *Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice* (Ithaca, NY, USA: Cornell University Press, 1992), p. 64.

⁴¹ Mary Patricia Martin, "'High and Noble Adventures": Reading the Novel in "The Female Quixote"', *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, 31.1 (1997), 45-62 (p. 48-9).

⁴² Jane Spencer, 'Women writers and the eighteenth-century novel', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth Century Novel*, ed. by John Richetti (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), pp. 212-235 (p. 214).

purest and most ingenious of women' (*Brothers*, II, p. 202). Additionally, there are clear similarities between the form of *The Brothers* and that of *Pamela*, as the former is told mainly (though not entirely) in letters between the characters, the majority of which are written by Phoebe. John Skinner states that 'The literary mode most closely associated with eighteenth-century female *novelists* is that of letter fiction or the epistolary novel... If *Pamela* was not the original epistolary novel, then it certainly proved a watershed'.⁴³ Smythies' use of the epistolary form thus places her in an important tradition of women's writing, despite the male authorship of *Pamela*, and allows her to fully explore the feelings and opinions of Phoebe. The fact that most of Phoebe's letters are written either to her father or to Lady Foster, who is essentially a surrogate paternal figure to her, also closely links her letters to those of Pamela. However, because not all the letters included are written by her, the narrative is not told exclusively from her perspective, meaning the reader gains more of an insight into the minds and motivations of other characters, and is exposed to more acceptable praise of the heroine.

Smythies aligns herself with Richardson in the preface, not only in her reference to his works, but in her assertion that the foundation of her novel was 'a real fact' (*Brothers*, I, p. v). This claim to non-fictional origins imitates Richardson's description of *Pamela* as 'A Narrative which has its Foundation in TRUTH and NATURE'.⁴⁴ For Richardson, this was an attempt to distance his work from the low reputation of novels, as commented on by Barchas: 'Richardson – who evidently also wishes to distinguish his work from contemporary pulp and amatory fiction... removes conventional genre indications from his title page'.⁴⁵ Though Smythies provides a defence for the novel in other parts of this preface, she is obviously unwilling to imply that her work is entirely fictional, given the lingering negativity and distrust surrounding the genre at the time. It is however significant that she does not attempt this claim on the title page of the work; indeed, the title page is entirely devoid of any genre classification, despite Smythies explicitly referring to it as a novel in the preface. These contradicting elements of the paratext point to the conclusion that Smythies was keen to defend both her gender and her genre, but was sufficiently cautious to refrain from being too

⁴³ John Skinner, *An Introduction to Eighteenth-Century Fiction: Raising the Novel* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 59-62.

⁴⁴ Samuel Richardson, *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (Oxford: OUP, 2008), p. 1.

⁴⁵ Janine Barchas, 'The title page: advertisement, identity and deceit', in Janine Barchas, *Graphic design, print culture and the eighteenth century* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), pp. 60-91 (p. 78).

overt in her views, again possibly owing to her initial difficulties in securing a publisher.

Despite the contemporary reviewers focusing solely on the text's similarities to Richardson's work, there are also unmistakable influences of Fielding in *The Brothers*. Smythies' use of third person narrative at certain points in the novel, largely to quickly sum up events or to depict conversations which Phoebe would not have been aware of (generally between men), clearly distinguishes the text from Richardson and places it closer to Fielding. Martin also notes that: 'Smythies' novels, like Fielding's, feature a studied selection of typical characters, a variety of humorous incidents, and plots that turn on surprise and coincidence.'⁴⁶ There are certainly a vast number of coincidences in the novel, including the man Phoebe meets at a dance turning out to be her long-lost uncle, and her male acquaintances always seeming to be conveniently close by when she needs rescuing from a seduction attempt, amongst many other examples. Additionally, the wide variety of characters included by Smythies, and the inset narratives she uses to describe the stories of their lives, are highly reminiscent of *Joseph Andrews*.

The main sources of comedy in the text are found in the characters of Colonel L and Lady Bab, a couple who marry in the course of the narrative, and who encourage the successful match between Phoebe and Sir John. They are responsible for the majority of the witty dialogue in the novel: "where is this assistant that you mentioned, colonel?" — "With the servants I suppose, Madam; for as he is not much used to the company of ladies, though he is my assistant, I left him without" (*Brothers*, II, p. 164-5). This section, in which Colonel L informs Lady Bab that he had help rescuing Phoebe, but fails to mention that it was from his dog, demonstrates the comic nature of most of the exchanges between them.

Keymer notes that 'The category difference that now divides Richardson and Fielding from their contemporaries is not a modern invention but... a commercial fact that would not have escaped a writer'.⁴⁷ Clearly, it was in Smythies' interest to allow her work to be influenced by both of these highly respected writers, given the popular success they had enjoyed. The rivalry between these two authors is thus played out across the pages of *The Brothers*, as Smythies fuses elements of each of their styles of fiction in order to create a work which contains emotion, humour, a large cast of characters, and an elevated heroine whose feelings are fully explored using the epistolary form.

⁴⁶ Martin, p. 39.

⁴⁷ Keymer, p. 49.

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Bibliographical Description

Author (and attribution as it appears on title page, or note of pseudonym or anonymity)	By the AUTHOR of The STAGE-COACH, AND LUCY WELLERS
Title (as it appears on title page)	THE BROTHERS
Imprint (Place of publication: publisher, year of publication as they appear on title page)	London: Printed for R. And J. DODSLEY, at <i>Tully's</i> Head, in <i>Pall-mall</i> . M. DCC. LVIII
Physical description (details relating to all copies, e.g. number	Two volumes, first volume 258 pp, second volume 320

of vols., number of pgs, size, price – sometimes shown on title page, quality of paper and printing, illustrations, etc.)	pp. Good quality paper and printing. Duodecimo.
Physical description (details relating only to this specific copy, e.g. binding & decoration, binding anomalies, annotations etc.)	Bound in contemporary gilt-ruled calf. Gold plate ornamentation on spine, as well as gold plate numbers '1' and '2' on each volume. One printer's ornament on the title page of each volume.
Provenance (e.g. bookplates, inscriptions)	Ink inscription: 'Thomas Cave June, 1759' (this name appears on the subscription list); also the inscription 'From the Library of John Charles Hardy', with his bookplate, and an amorial bookplate from Aluredi Baronis de Braye.
Details of advertisements (you can summarise if there is a long list e.g. genre, price range, a few characteristic or notable titles)	None.

<p>Paratext</p> <p>(title page epigraph, subscription list, dedication, preface, introduction, etc. noted or summarised)</p>	<p>A LIST OF THE SUBSCRIBERS, 26 pp. Includes Richardson, Smollett, Garrick, and Spence.</p> <p>‘ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER’, 5 pp. Defends the novel genre and women as writers, though does ask for the reader to be ‘<i>generous to her sex</i>’. Claims she used the works of Richardson as her model, ‘but nothing came of it but <i>The BROTHERS</i>’.</p>
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