

NAXOS
AudioBooks

**CLASSIC
FICTION**

John Cleland
Fanny Hill
or Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure
Read by **Emma Fielding**



NA316012D

LETTER THE FIRST

1	Fanny goes to London	6:33
2	Left alone at the inn	3:19
3	Mrs Brown takes Fanny in	6:30
4	Fanny is initiated in "the London way"	8:10
5	Fanny is introduced to Mr Crofts	8:48
6	The first invader of Fanny's innocence	7:58
7	Mrs Brown and her paramour	7:12
8	Fanny in love	15:50
9	Fanny and Charles	11:01
10	Mrs Jones' ultimatum	8:43
11	Mr H's affections	5:50
12	Mr H's infidelity	5:46
13	Will provides a means of revenge	10:57
14	Fanny's happiness cut short	7:03
15	Fanny meets Mrs Cole	3:40

LETTER THE SECOND

16	Fanny continues her story	2:06
17	Fanny is introduced to her new companions	7:35
18	The company of gentlemen is met	4:05
19	Louisa, Harriet and Emily and their gallants	10:38
20	Fanny's initiation	7:18
21	The night after	6:29
22	A meeting in Covent Garden	6:53
23	Mr Norbert is received	10:15
24	Fanny becomes a kept woman	3:47
25	Mr Barville's ardent desire	11:14
26	The violent expedient of lashing nature	9:37
27	Good-natured Dick	7:33
28	The life of a gentle-woman	4:42
29	Charles returns	6:41
30	The sacrifice of Vice to Virtue	7:53

Total time: 3:44:06

John Cleland Fanny Hill

or *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*

THE BOOK

"I beg of your Grace to give proper orders to stop the progress of this vile Book which is an open insult upon Religion and good manners..." Thomas Sherlock, Bishop of London (1750)

Sherlock's condemnation, fierce as it was, was in reference not to the original version of Cleland's erotic masterpiece, but an edition expurgated by the author himself (entitled **Memoirs of Fanny Hill**) and published in March 1750. The novel itself, in its fuller and original version, had appeared in two parts, the first in November 1748 and the second in March 1749, both published by Ralph Griffiths, and each selling for three shillings. There is evidence that the book, at least in manuscript form, was read at a meeting of the "Order of the Beggar's Benison and Merryland" in 1737. However, both parts of the novel were published during Cleland's incarceration for debt in Fleet Prison, having first been revised by their author. It was some six

months after the publication of the second part that Cleland was arrested for issuing an obscene publication, but shortly released. After publication of the bowdlerised version he was again arrested, but no charges seem to have been made against him.

The book became one of the most popular of the eighteenth century with several editions, often with illustrations, appearing on the market. However, for 200 years the book was treated purely as pornography and this resulted in its literary worth being ignored. It was only after the legal action in America and Europe in the early 1960s coupled, no doubt, to the changing mood of those times to matters sexual, that the work began to be reappraised.

Fanny Hill contains echoes of several other novels of the mid-eighteenth century, most obviously Daniel Defoe's **Moll Flanders**, although the latter work is deliberately less explicit, being "wrapped up so clean". There are many influences also from French libertine literature. Indeed,

translations of erotica from the continent were readily available in England at this time, and Cleland's moral outlook – the open enjoyment of sexual pleasure – would seem to be more attuned to the French than to the English literary approach.

THE AUTHOR

John Cleland was born in 1710, the son of Major William Cleland, Commissioner of Taxes. He was educated at Westminster and joined the East India Company in Bombay in 1728 where he remained until 1740, having achieved some success in business. He returned to London in 1741 when his father died. A dispute with his mother did nothing to alleviate ongoing financial difficulties and he became a journalist interspersed with periods within a debtor's prison.

After the publication of **Fanny Hill**, for which he was paid £20, Cleland attempted to repeat its commercial success with the publication in 1751 of **Memoirs of a Coxcomb** which lacked the eroticism of Fanny Hill and, as a result, sold only a few copies. His later attempts at erotic fiction also fell into oblivion and he spent the rest of his days translating and writing poetry, plays and, eventually, scientific treatises. In 1779 Boswell described him as a lonely figure living in shabby chaos "drinking tea and eating biscuits... There was something genteel in his manner amidst this oddity." It was in such obscurity and poverty that Cleland died in 1789.

Notes by Anthony Anderson

The music on this recording is taken from the NAXOS catalogue

RAMEAU LA NAISSANCE D'OSIRIS/ABARIS OÙ LES BORÉADES	8.553388
Capella Savaria/Mary Térey-Smith	
RAMEAU ANACRÉON/DAPHNIS ET EGLÉ	8.553746
Capella Savaria/Mary Térey-Smith	

Music programmed by Anthony Anderson

Cover picture: William Hogarth, A Harlot's Progress.
Courtesy: The Bridgeman Art Library, London.

John Cleland
Fanny Hill
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Read by **Emma Fielding**

Fanny Hill, one of the most popular novels of the 18th century, traces the rise of its heroine from prostitution to middle-class respectability. Condemned in its own time on grounds of indecency, the book was the subject of several law suits until as recently as the 1960s. For today's reader, the work holds as much fascination as when it was first published, not only as the foremost example of English erotic fiction, but as a literary classic in its own right.

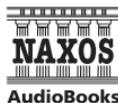


Emma Fielding trained at RSAMD. She has worked for the Royal National Theatre and the RSC, most notably in John Ford's *The Broken Heart* for which she won the Dame Peggy Ashcroft Award for Best Actress and the Ian Charleson Award. She has also appeared in numerous radio plays for the BBC. She also reads *The Turn of the Screw*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Jane Eyre*, and performs in *Lady Windermere's Fan* and *Hamlet* for Naxos AudioBooks.

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Total time
3:44:06