

Pamela makes this declaration of her identity during the early incident in which Mr. B. pretends not to recognize her in her country clothes and uses his pretext of confusion to get close to her. The incident and Pamela's reaction underscore the fact that the battle to determine whom Pamela will sleep with is also the battle to determine who Pamela is: Pamela, in committing herself to a personal set of compelling principles, establishes her own identity, which Mr. B. threatens to erode by inducing her to violate those principles. The debate over Pamela's identity also surfaces in their disagreements, apparent in this scene, over what she should wear. The country wardrobe Pamela has selected manifests to the world her choice of honest, cheerful poverty over corrupt luxury; Mr. B., taking a break from his efforts to dress Pamela in a wardrobe befitting his mistress, seeks to adulterate the meaning of her chosen clothes by interpreting them as a mode of coquetry.