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Autore	Potter Tiffany <1967->
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Nota di contenuto	Front Matter -- Contents -- Preface -- Toward a Re-vision of Georgian Libertinism -- Early Georgian Libertines -- Georgian Libertinism and the Reclamation of Virtue -- Threads in the Carpet -- The Road to Archetypal Georgian Libertinism -- The Mature Faces of Libertinism -- Conclusion -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	Potter is the first author to make clear how English libertinism changed during the eighteenth century as the violent, hypersexualized Hobbesian libertine, typified by the Earl of Rochester, was tempered by England's cultures of sentiment and sensibility. The good-natured Georgian libertinism that emerged maintained the subversive social, religious, sexual, and philosophical tenets of the old libertinism, but misogynist brutality was replaced by freedom and autonomy for the individual, whether male or female. Libertinism encompasses issues of gender, sexuality, and literary and cultural history and thus provides a useful cultural context for a discussion of a number of critical approaches to Fielding's work, including feminism, queer theory, new historicism, and cultural studies. The traditional view of Fielding as a warm-blooded but essentially prudent moralist is reconsidered here in

light of the symbiotic relationship Potter argues existed between Fielding and this mediated libertinism. Fielding developed the discourse in his own terms, beginning with his licentious early plays and continuing with Shamela and Joseph Andrews, in which Fielding first subverts, then reforms, popular social constructs of virtue. Fielding later develops his archetypal Georgian libertine in Tom Jones, and continues his consideration with Amelia, whose virtuous heroine embodies Fielding's balance of masculinity and femininity, his controversial understanding of virtue, and the individualism, privilege, and passion of the libertine discourse in which he so prominently positioned himself.

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