

Steele's *The Conscious Lovers* (1722), Hugh Kelly's *False Delicacy* (1768) and Richard Cumberland's *The West Indian* (1771) are regarded as the best examples of the sentimental comedy. In sentimental comedy, tears took the place of laughter; melodramatic and distressing situations that of intrigue, pathetic heroines and serious lovers and honest servants that of rogues and gallants and witty dandies. Nicoll says that in the sentimental comedy "we are in the world of drama, not of comedy in the realm of emotions, not of the intellect."

Reaction to Sentimental comedy:

The popularity of the sentimental comedy was not to continue long. Goldsmith and Sheridan pioneered the anti-sentimental movement. Nicoll writes about their contribution: "Goldsmith endeavours to revive the spirit of *As you like it*, where Sheridan strives to create another way of the world."

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