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Now best known for three great novels - Tom Jones, Joseph Andrews and Amelia - Henry Fielding (1707-1754) was one of the most controversial figures of his time. Prominent first as a playwright, then as a novelist and political journalist, and finally as a justice of peace, Fielding made a substantial contribution to eighteenth-century culture, and was hugely influential in the development of the novel as a form, both in Britain and more widely in Europe. This collection of specially-commissioned essays by leading scholars describes and analyses the many facets of Fielding's work in theatre, fiction, journalism and politics. In addition it assesses his unique contribution to the rise of the novel as the dominant literary form, the development of the law, and the political and literary culture of eighteenth-century Britain. Including a Chronology and Guide to Further Reading, this volume offers a comprehensive account of Fielding's life and work.