

# English 636

Marilyn Francus, ENGL 636, Fall 2001, Study of Selected Authors: Jane Austen  
Professor Francus  
English 636  
Study of Selected Authors: Jane Austen, Fall 2001  
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Office Hours: Thursdays, 12:30-2:30 and by appointment

August 23 Introduction

August 30 Lennox, *The Female Quixote*  
Spencer, excerpt from Chapter 6 of *Rise of the Woman Novelist* (1986)  
Kipling, "The Janeites"  
Woolf, "Jane Austen" from *The Common Reader* (1925; rpt. 1984)

September 6 Burney, *Evelina*  
Forster, "Flat and Round Characters and 'point of view' from *Aspects of the Novel* (1927)  
Johnson, "The Divine Miss Jane: Jane Austen, Janeites, and the Discipline of Novel Studies"(1996)

September 13 Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*  
Johnson, Chapter 1: "The Novel in Crisis"

September 20 Austen, *Northanger Abbey*  
Film version: *Northanger Abbey* (1986), directed by Giles Foster, starring Katherine Schlesinger and Peter Firth  
Johnson, Chapter 2: "The Juvenilia and Northanger Abbey: The Authority of Men and Books"  
Gilbert and Gubar, "Jane Austen's Cover Story (and Its Secret Agents)" from *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979)

September 27 Class Cancelled

October 4 Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*  
Johnson, Chapter 3: "Sense and Sensibility: Opinions Too Common and Too Dangerous"  
Sedgwick, "Jane Austen and the Masturbating Girl" *Critical*

*Inquiry* (1991)

Harding, "Regulated Hatred: An Aspect of the Work of Jane Austen" *Scrutiny* (1940)

October 11 Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*

Film version: *Sense and Sensibility* (1995), directed by Ang Lee, starring Emma Thompson and Kate Winslet

October 18 Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

Johnson, Chapter 4: "Pride and Prejudice and the Pursuit of Happiness"

Allen, "No Love for Lydia: The Construction of Repression in *Pride and Prejudice*" from *Sexuality in Victorian Fiction* (1993)

**First Essay Due**

October 25 Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

Film versions: *Pride and Prejudice* (1995), directed by Simon Langton, starring Jennifer Ehle and Colin Firth; *Pride and Prejudice* (1940), directed by Robert Z. Leonard, starring Laurence Olivier and Greer Garson

Excerpts from Barrett's *Presumption* (1993), Aylmer's *Darcy's Story* (1996), and Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (1996)

Ellington, "A Correct Taste in Landscape: Pemberley as Fetish and Commodity" (1998)

Nixon, "Balancing the Courtship Hero: Masculine Emotional Display in Film Adaptations of Austen's Novels" (1998)

November 1 Austen, *Mansfield Park*

Johnson, Chapter 5: "Mansfield Park: Confusions of Guilt and Revolutions of Mind"

Trilling, "Mansfield Park" from *The Opposing Self* (1955)

Heydt-Stevenson, "'Slipping into the Ha-Ha': Bawdy Humor and Body Politics in Jane Austen's Novels" (2000)

November 8 Austen, *Mansfield Park*

Film version: *Mansfield Park* (1999), directed by Patricia Rozema, starring Frances O'Connor and Jonny Lee Miller

Said, excerpt from *Culture and Imperialism* (1994)

November 15 Austen, *Emma*

Johnson, Chapter 6: "Emma: 'Woman, Lovely Woman Reigns Alone'"

Booth, "Control of Distance in Jane Austen's *Emma*" from

*The Rhetoric of Fiction* (2nd Ed., 1983)

November 22 Thanksgiving Break

November 29 Austen, *Emma*

Film versions: *Clueless* (1995), directed by Amy Heckerling, starring Alicia Silverstone; *Emma* (1996), directed by Douglas McGrath, starring Gwyneth Paltrow; *Emma* (1996), directed by Diarmuid Lawrence, starring Kate Beckinsale

Excerpt from Joan Aiken's *Jane Fairfax* (1990)

Simons, "Classics and Trash: reading Austen in the 1990s" (1998)

December 6 Austen, *Persuasion*

Film version: *Persuasion* (1994), directed by Roger Michell, starring Amanda Root and Ciaran Hinds

Excerpt from Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones and the Edge of Reason* (1999)

Johnson, Chapter 7: "Persuasion: The 'Unfeudal Tone of the Present Day'"

## **Second Essay Due**

Course Objectives:

- to analyze the major novels of Jane Austen in the context of British women's literature and authorship;
- to evaluate Jane Austen in a historical context, as a social critic reflecting, mediating, and commenting upon the ideologies of her day;
- to examine the works of Jane Austen as novels, as examples of a literary genre that work with (and often against) the established canon;
- to discuss irony as a mode of discourse, and Austen's uses of irony in the novel;
- to study Jane Austen as a cultural and academic icon of the late twentieth and early twenty first centuries, with particular regard to the popular adaptation and marketing of her novels, and the critical reception of Austen's works and her popularization.

Course Texts:

- The novels by Austen, Burney, Lennox, and Radcliffe, and Claudia Johnson's *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel*, are available at the WVU Bookstore.
- The 1940 film version of *Pride and Prejudice* and 1995 *Sense and Sensibility* are on reserve in video format at Colson Library. Colson's fall hours are Mondays through Thursdays, 8:00 a.m. to midnight; Fridays, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.; Saturdays, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; and Sundays, 1:00 p.m. to midnight.
- All the other film versions of Austen are available on video in the main office of

the English Department. Please sign out the videos with Michele.

#### Course Assignments:

--One essay (approximately 10 pages) on any aspect of Jane Austen's literature that intrigues you. You may choose to focus on a single novel, a combination of her novels, or all of her works.

--One essay (again, approximately 10 pages), on some aspect of the current marketing, adaptation, or modernization of Jane Austen.

--One class presentation, approximately 15 minutes, on a late 18th-century or early 19th-century figure who helped shape the discourse of the novel or cultural history in Austen's period.

#### Course Grading:

--Each of the two essays will count for 35% of your final grade, and the class presentation will count for 30% of your final grade.

#### Comments:

--Ideally, every paper that you write in graduate school should have a germ of an idea that you can turn into a conference presentation or a publication, or both. What I am looking for in your two papers is that germ of an idea, and its development into something of professional quality. Accordingly, I expect your papers to reflect your own thought, a sense of the parameters of the subject, and research on the subject. If you are having difficulties in choosing a subject, or envisioning how it could be pursued, or in finding appropriate research materials, please come and see me.

--You may submit your essays in the order of your choice. In other words, the first essay, due on October 18th, could be either the essay on Austen or the essay on the marketing/adaptation of Austen. Obviously the second essay, due on December 6th, will be the corresponding essay option.

--Your class presentation should reflect your research on the person, as well as your analysis of how that person adds to the history of the period, and to our understanding of the texts that we are examining. Your presentation should include a handout outlining your talk, as well as any other handouts or materials that you think are illuminating. If you are having difficulties in locating information, please come and see me.

--I would strongly encourage you to bring questions to every class — and those questions can be about Austen, history, the novel, film, theory, graduate study — anything that is of concern to you. Your questions will help me discern your needs, and structure our class discussions.

--I would recommend that you read the novels before you watch the films (and before you read the sequels and adaptations, for that matter). The novels provide the baseline for Austen's alternate representations, and analyzing Austen in her varied forms without that baseline can be quite difficult.

Please Note:

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to foster a nurturing environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

As noted in the Graduate Catalog, "West Virginia University expects that every member of its academic community shares the historic and traditional commitment to honesty, integrity, and the search for truth" (p. 46; 1998-2000 edition). As a professional academic and as a member of this University I concur with this statement, and accordingly, plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. Please note the University definition of plagiarism, as explained in the Graduate Catalog: "To take and pass off as one's own the ideas, writings, artistic products, etc. of someone else; for example, submitting, without appropriate acknowledgment, a report, notebook, speech, outline, theme, thesis, dissertation, or other written, visual, or oral material that has been knowingly obtained or copied in whole or in part, from the work of others, whether such source is published, including (but not limited to) another individual's academic composition, compilation, or other product, or commercially prepared paper" (p. 46). If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, collaborative projects, documentation of your sources, or related issues, please feel free to ask.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with Disability Services (293-6700).