

Jane Austen and Her World
Summer session 2022

Prof. Stephanie Weiner
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Office hours: TBA

Zoom link: TBA

Course Description:

In this course we will explore Jane Austen's unique approach to the realist novel and her distinctive engagement in contemporaneous debates about art, personhood, and politics. Austen was a sharp, subtle, and principled writer who tended to explore competing arguments and assumptions rather than render explicit judgments. She weighed in on aesthetic controversies involving beauty and the picturesque, the appropriate language for literature, the ethics of readers' identification with characters, and the truth claims inherent in realism. She considered philosophical questions about how individuals come to know the world and themselves, and the value and danger of a complex inner life of emotion and imagination. She examined the competing claims her contemporaries made for the primacy of the individual, the family, and the community, and for local rootedness and cosmopolitan independence. Our course reading will consist of three novels by Austen as well as works of painting, literature, and nonfiction prose.

Course Requirements:

- three reading and reflection exercises (10% each)
- three 4-5 p. papers (20% each)
- class participation (10%)

Books and materials:

- Deidre Shauna Lynch, ed., *Norton Anthology of English Literature, vol. D: The Romantic Period*, Tenth Edition (Norton: ISBN 978-0-393-60305-7)
- John Sunderland, ed., *John Constable* (Phaiden: ISBN 9780714827544)
- Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (Oxford World's Classics, ISBN 978-0199535569)
- Austen, *Emma* (Oxford ISBN 978-0199535521)
- Austen, *Persuasion* (Oxford ISBN 978-0199535552)

Policies:

- Please arrive two minutes early to each zoom meeting so we can begin on time. Repeated tardiness will lower your grade.
- Please keep your camera on during class unless you experience technical difficulties.
- Please do not do anything else during class except be present, and please be present with your whole self—listening as well as speaking, thinking and learning, discovering and sharing in the collective work of our conversations. Please be mindful of communicating your attention and commitment to discussion to me and your fellow students. This is how I understand good participation—not as speaking a lot, but as being present in these ways.
- Students may miss one session for any reason without penalty. Additional absences will lower your grade. If you miss three sessions, I will ask you to withdraw from the course.

- You may revise any assignment at any point until June 21, when everything is due. The highest grade will be counted.
- *Please save copies of your graded papers with my comments on them. Should you ever ask me to write a letter of recommendation for you, I will need to see them.
- If in your written work you consult or employ any materials that do not appear on the syllabus, you must cite them; even if you do not use them directly, you should append a “Works Consulted” page. If you have any questions about plagiarism, please see me and/or consult the discussion in the student handbook at www.wesleyan.edu/studenthandbook/plagiarism.html.
- If you require accommodations in this class, please speak with me as soon as possible, so that appropriate arrangements can be made. The procedures for registering with Disabilities Services can be found at www.wesleyan.edu/deans/disability-students.html.

Course schedule:

Wed. May 25: Reason and imagination

- Coleridge, “This Lime-Tree Bower, My Prison,” “Kubla Khan,” and Chapter 13 [On the imagination, or esemplastic power] from *Biographia Literaria* (Norton)
- Shelley, from “A Defence of Poetry” up to the *** on p. 878 (Norton)
- Keats, “Ode to a Nightingale” (Norton)
- Keats, letters to Bailey (Nov. 22, 1817) and to George and Thomas Keats (Dec. 21, 27?, 1817) (Norton)

Th. May 26: Reason and imagination, cont.

- *Emma*, vol. I (ch. 1-18)

Mon. May 30: Transparent and literary language



For students with last names beginning A-H, exercise on language due at 5:00 p.m.

- Wordsworth, “We are Seven,” [The Subject and Language of Poetry] and [What Is a Poet?] from Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, and “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud” (Norton)
- Byron, Norton selections from stanzas 1-8, 75-166 of Canto I of *Don Juan* (Norton)
- Clare, “Pastoral Poesy” and “[The Badger]” (Norton)
- *Emma*, vol. II, ch. 1-13 (ch. 19-31)

Tues. May 31: Home and close-to-home: the beautiful and the picturesque



For students with last names I-M, exercise on the beautiful *or* picturesque due at 5:00 p.m.

- Constable, “Golding Constable’s Kitchen Garden” (pl. 12), “Golding Constable’s Flower Garden” (pl. 13), “Willy Lott’s House” (pl. 14), “Full-Scale Study for ‘Hadleigh Castle’” (pl. 43), “Hadleigh Castle” (fig. 48)
- Wordsworth, “The Ruined Cottage” (Norton)
- Coleridge, “The Eolian Harp” (Norton)
- Dorothy Wordsworth, Norton selections from “Grasmere Journal” (Norton)
- Keats, “To Autumn” (Norton)
- Chart about the sublime, the beautiful, and the picturesque (moodle)
- [Artstor group: beautiful, picturesque](#) (link also on moodle)

Wed. June 1: Home and close-to-home: the beautiful and the picturesque, cont.

- *Emma*, vol. II, ch. 14 - vol. III, ch. 10 (ch. 32-46)

Th. June 2: Interiority

For students with last names beginning N-Z, exercise on interiority due at 5:00 p.m.

- Wordsworth, ["Emotion Recollected in Tranquillity"] from Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* and "Strange fits of passion have I known" (Norton)
- Coleridge, "Frost at Midnight" (Norton)
- Keats, "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles" and "When I have fears that I may cease to be" (Norton)
- Clare, "I Am" (Norton)
- *Emma*, vol. III, ch. 11-end (ch. 47-55)

Sat. June 4:

Paper One due for all at 11:59 p.m.

Mon. June 6: Reading

For students with last names beginning A-H, exercise on reading due at 5:00 p.m.

- Blake, "Introduction" to *Songs of Innocence* (Norton)
- Wordsworth, [The Dream of the Arab] from Book Fifth of the 1805 *Prelude* (Norton)
- Coleridge, "Kubla Khan" (Norton)
- Lamb, from "On the Tragedies of Shakespeare" and "Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading" (Norton)
- Keats, "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer," "On Sitting Down to Read *King Lear* Once Again" (Norton)

Tues. June 7: Reading, cont.

- *Persuasion*, vol. I (ch. 1-12)
- Shakespeare, sonnet #73 (moodle)
- Keats, "To Autumn" (Norton) (again!)

Wed. June 8: Localism and cosmopolitanism: The Royal Navy

For students with last names beginning I-M, exercise on the navy due at 5:00 p.m.

- Byron, from Canto First of *The Corsair*: st. i-v (moodle)
- Byron, from Canto the Third of *Child Harold's Pilgrimage*: st. 1-2, 68-75, 85-98, and 113-14 (Norton)
- Byron, st. 11-12 of Canto II of *Don Juan* (Norton)
- [Artstor group: the Navy](#) (link also on moodle)
- Additional portraits of Lord Nelson (moodle)
- *Persuasion*, vol. II, ch. 1-6 (ch. 13-18)
- Recommended: Willis, from *In the Hour of Victory* and Wilson, from *Empire of the Deep* (moodle)

Th. June 9: Localism and cosmopolitanism, cont.



For students with last names beginning N-Z, exercise on localism due at 5:00 p.m.

- Constable, “Boat-Building near Flatford Mill” (pl. 11), “Flatford Mill” and details (pl. 16-18), “The White Horse” (pl. 21), “The Haywain” and detail (pl. 23-24), “The Leaping Horse” and detail (pl. 37-38), “The Cornfield” and detail (pl. 39-40)
- Wordsworth, lines 1-32, 271-489, 609-674 of Book First and lines 257-388 of Book Eleventh of the 1805 *Prelude* (Norton)
- *Persuasion*, vol. II, ch. 7-12 (ch. 19-24)
- Recommended: p. 7-10 of Sunderland’s introduction in our Constable book, from the paragraph beginning “From the first, C. felt a deep love . . .” to “the subject-matter of all his paintings” at the top of p. 10.

Sat. June 11:



Paper Two due for all at 11:59 p.m.

Mon. June 13: Storytelling



Optional—any student can complete the exercise on storytelling instead of the one they would otherwise do on observation, the Gothic, or sympathy

- Burns, “Tam o’Shanter” (Norton)
- Scott, Norton introduction and “Introduction” to *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (Norton)
- *Pride and Prejudice*, vol. I, ch. 1-15 (ch. 1-15)

Tues. June 14: Observation



For students with last names beginning A-H, exercise on observation due at 5:00 p.m.

- Constable, “A Wood” (plate 2), “Dedham Vale” (pl. 3), “Barges on the Stour at Flatford Lock” (pl. 8), “Autumnal Sunset” (pl. 9), “Landscape: Ploughing Scene in Suffolk” (pl. 10), “Salisbury: The Close Wall” (pl. 28), “Salisbury Cathedral Seen from the River” (fig. 38), “Cloud Study” (pl. 30), “The Gleaners: Brighton” (pl. 32), and “Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows” (pl. 44)
- Constable, “[Salisbury Cathedral from the Bishop’s Grounds](#)” on ArtStor (link also on moodle)
- Sunderland, p. 5-6 of his introduction in our Constable book, the first three paragraphs from “C. was a painter of the particular” to “vividness and freshness of these sketches”
- Blake, “London” from *Songs of Experience* (Norton)
- Wordsworth, “Expostulation and Reply,” “The Tables Turned,” “Lines, Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey,” and lines 1-77 of “Michael,” (Norton)
- Dorothy Wordsworth, Norton selections from “The Alfoxden Journal” (Norton)
- Clare, “The Nightingale’s Nest” and “The Yellowhammer’s Nest” (Norton)

Wed. June 15: Observation, cont.

- *Pride and Prejudice*, vol. I, ch. 16- vol. II, ch. 10 (ch. 16-33)

Th. June 16: The Gothic

For students with last names beginning I-M, exercise on the Gothic due at 5:00 p.m.

- Radcliffe, from *Mysteries of Udolpho* (moodle)
- Wordsworth, “The Thorn” (Norton)
- *Pride and Prejudice*, vol. II, chap. 11-vol. III, ch. 7 (34-49)

Mon. June 20: Sympathy and identification with literary characters

For students with last names beginning N-Z, exercise on sympathy due at 5:00 p.m.

- Smith, from *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (moodle)
- Blake, “On Another’s Sorrow” (Norton)
- Wordsworth, “Simon Lee” and “Resolution and Independence” (Norton)
- Wordsworth, “The Discharged Soldier” (Norton—Rom. Lit. and Wartime, p. 745)

Tues. June 21: Sympathy and identification with literary characters, cont.

- *Pride and Prejudice*, vol. III, ch. 8-end (ch. 50-61)

Th. June 23:

Paper Three due for all at 11:59 p.m.