

ENGL 238Z: Jane Austen and Her World
Winter session 2021

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Office hours: TBA

Course Description:

In this course we will read—and re-read—three novels by Jane Austen. Our first reading will track the development of Austen's unique approach to the realist novel. Our re-reading will investigate how that unique approach participated in contemporaneous debates about art, personhood, and politics. Austen was an active participant in these debates—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.

This course fulfills the English Department's Literary History II requirement.

Structure:

Before the January session begins, we will read *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma*, and *Persuasion* on our own. Our reading will be guided by six assignments, two for each novel. During the January session, we will re-read these three novels and encounter for the first time other works of painting, literature, and nonfiction prose.

Course Requirements:

- six pre-session reading and reflection exercises (5% each)
- three in-session reading and reflection exercises (5% each)
- three 4-5 p. essays (15% 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)
- Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (Oxford World's Classics, ISBN 978-0199535569)
- Austen, *Emma* (Oxford ISBN 978-0199535521)
- Austen, *Persuasion* (Oxford ISBN 978-0199535552)
- John Sunderland, ed., *John Constable* (Phaiden: ISBN 9780714827544)

Policies:

- Please arrive two minutes early to each zoom meeting so we can check your sound and do any necessary trouble-shooting. Repeated tardiness will lower your grade.
- Students may miss one session for any reason without penalty. A second session may be missed without penalty if additional work is done to compensate for the absence. Additional absences will lower your grade. If you miss four or more sessions, I will ask you to withdraw from the course.

- Late papers will be penalized two points per day beginning the day they are due. No work will be accepted after the last day of finals.

Zoom link: TBA

Course schedule:

Dec. 23:

Two pre-session reading and reflection exercises about *Pride and Prejudice* due at 3:00

Dec. 29:

Two pre-session reading and reflection exercises about *Emma* due at 3:00

Jan. 4:

Two pre-session reading and reflection exercises about *Persuasion* due at 3:00

Jan. 5: Knowledge I: reason and imagination

- Coleridge, “This Lime-Tree Bower, My Prison,” “Kubla Khan” (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)

Jan. 6: Knowledge I: reason and imagination, cont.

- *Emma*, vol. I

Jan. 7: Transparent and literary language I

- Locke, “Of the Remedies of the foregoing Imperfections and Abuses [of words],” from *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (moodle)
- Wordsworth, “We are Seven,” “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud,” and [The Blind Beggar; Bartholomew Fair] from Book Seventh of the 1805 *Prelude* (Norton)
- Wordsworth, [The Subject and Language of Poetry] and [What Is a Poet?] from Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (Norton)
- Byron, Norton selections from stanzas 1-8, 75-166 of Canto I of *Don Juan* (Norton)
- Clare, “Pastoral Poesy” and “The Peasant Poet” (Norton)

Jan. 8 Transparent and literary language I, cont.

- *Emma*, vol. II

Jan 9-10: no class

Jan. 11: Home and close-to-home: the beautiful and the picturesque

- 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)
- Paintings by Girtin and others (moodle)

Jan. 12: Home and close-to-home: the beautiful and the picturesque, cont.

- *Emma*, begin vol. III

Jan. 13: The individual I: interiority

- Smith, Norton selections from *Elegiac Sonnets* and “The Swallow” (Norton)
- Wordsworth, [“Emotion Recollected in Tranquillity”] from Preface to *LB* (Norton)
- Coleridge, “Frost at Midnight” (Norton)
- Keats, “On Seeing the Elgin Marbles,” “When I have fears that I may cease to be,” “Ode on Melancholy” (Norton)
- Clare, “I Am” (Norton)

Jan. 14: The individual I: interiority, cont.

- *Emma*, finish vol. III

Jan. 15-17: no class

Paper One due at 3:00 p.m. on Jan. 16

Jan. 18: Reading

- 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)

Jan. 19: Reading, cont.

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

Jan. 20: The Royal Navy / The individual II: localism and cosmopolitanism

- Byron, from Canto First of *The Corsair* (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)
- Portraits of Lord Nelson (moodle)
- Recommended: Willis, from *In the Hour of Victory* (moodle)
- Recommended: Wilson, from *Empire of the Deep* (moodle)

Jan. 21: The individual II: localism and cosmopolitanism, cont.

- Constable, “Boat-Building near Flatford Mill” (pl. 11), “Flatford Mill” (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, from “The Two-Part Prelude of 1798-99” (moodle)
- *Persuasion*, ch. 13-end

Jan. 22-24: no class

Paper Two due at 3:00 on Jan. 23

Jan. 25: Knowledge II: observation

- Constable, “Salisbury Cathedral from the Bishop’s Grounds” (fig. 9), “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), “Flatford Mill” and details (pl. 16-18), “Salisbury: The Close Wall” (pl. 28), “Salisbury Cathedral from the River” (pl. 35), “Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows” (pl. 44)
- Blake, “London” from *Songs of Experience* (Norton)
- Wordsworth, “Expostulation and Reply,” “The Tables Turned,” and lines 1-77 of “Michael,” (Norton)
- Clare, “[Mouse’s Nest]” (Norton)

Jan. 26: Knowledge II: observation, cont.

- *Pride and Prejudice*, vol. I

Jan. 27: Particularity and universality

- Christ, from *The Finer Optic* (moodle)
- Wordsworth, “Lines, Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey” (Norton)
- Dorothy Wordsworth, Norton selections from “The Alfoxden Journal” (Norton)
- Shelley, “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty” (Norton)
- Clare, “The Nightingale’s Nest” and “Clock-a-Clay” (Norton)

Jan. 28: Particularity and universality, cont.

- *Pride and Prejudice*, vol. II

Jan. 29: Sympathy and identification with literary characters

- Smith, from *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (moodle)
- Radcliffe, from *Mysteries of Udolpho* (moodle)
- Wordsworth, “Simon Lee” and “Resolution and Independence” (Norton)
- Wordsworth, “The Discharged Soldier” (Norton—Rom. Lit. and Wartime, p. 745)
- Blake, “On Another’s Sorrow” (Norton)
- De Quincey, “On the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth*” (Norton)

Jan. 30: Sympathy and identification with literary characters, cont.

- *Pride and Prejudice*, vol. III

Feb. 2:

Paper Three due at 3:00 p.m.