

Plain? Not this Jane (Austen): *Pride and Prejudice* is 200.

“I want to tell you that I have got my own darling Child from London; – ” wrote Jane Austen in a letter to her sister Cassandra on January 29, 1813.¹ That “darling Child” was the first printing of Austen’s novel *Pride and Prejudice*. In commemoration of the bicentenary of this event *The Wall Street Journal* devoted two pages to what it entitled “Austen Power.” According to the *Journal*, “In the last 200 years, Austen’s ‘darling child’ has spawned hundreds of literary offspring, making it one of the most frequently adapted novels in history. The novel, which centers on the rocky romance between the spirited, obstinate protagonist Elizabeth Bennet and the proud, taciturn aristocrat Fitzwilliam Darcy, has been through countless parodies, film, TV, stage and Web adaptations and erotic retellings. It has been reimaged as a comic book, a board book for toddlers, mashed up with zombies and remade as a Bollywood musical. Austen acolytes have published hundreds of literary reboots.” “To mark the 200th anniversary,” the *Journal* reports, “... this year, novelists, scholars, biographers and filmmakers are releasing a flood of new homages and critical studies to cash in on the seemingly bottomless appetite for all things Austen.”²

As Joseph Conrad wrote to H. G. Wells in 1901, “What is all this about Jane Austen? What is there *in* her? What is it all about?”³ Wells’ answer is not readily found. But *The Wall Street Journal* ventures a guess. “Like Shakespeare’s works, her novels deal with universal themes that resonate with readers across generations and

historical epochs: love, money, power and status. Her arch humor and wit, and her storybook endings, give her novels both highbrow and lowbrow appeal.”⁴ Austen does this using the same plot plan. Writes William Deresiewicz in his memoir-like essays *A Jane Austen Education: How Six Novels Taught Me About Love, Friendship, and the Things that Really Matter*, “A heroine and a romance, a Mr. Wrong and a Mr. Right, perils and misunderstandings, conflicts and complications, revelations and reversals, and at last, a happy ending: these were the conventions that Austen employed in every one of her novels.”⁵ The things that really matter, that Austen has apparently disclosed to him, concern the “inner riches” of the self, involving “moral seriousness, depth of feeling, constancy of purpose.”⁶ These are what the protagonists develop over the course of each of the novels, learning and acquiring self-knowledge, while in the midst of coping with the sometimes daunting practicalities of life, and surrounded by the foolish, the feckless, the mean-spirited and the sometimes downright vicious, whose primary attributes are self-absorption, selfishness and vanity.

“Jane Austen: *bourgeois* virtue ethicist?” is the question on the cover of a recent issue of the magazine *Philosophy Now*. Why, yes, of course she is. Thomas Rodham declares that “virtue ethics is the approach to moral philosophy that understands the good life in terms of becoming the kind of person who does the right thing at the right time for the right reason.” The *bourgeois* part involves virtues for “ethically-flourishing middle-class life” where, unlike the aristocrats, one is still constrained by material concerns and, unlike the peasants, one “is not trapped by a subsistence economy” but has the leisure

“to reflect on who [one] wants to be, and to make and carry out plans for [one’s] future.”

“[S]uccess for Austen’s characters depends on their developing a moral character. Her central virtues are conspicuously bourgeois: *prudence* (planning one’s actions with respect to protecting and furthering one’s interests); *amiability* (civility to family, friends, and strangers, according to their due); *propriety* (understanding and acting on an acute sense of what virtue requires); and *dignity* (considering oneself an independent, autonomous person deserving of respect.)”⁷ Rodham opines, “Austen is primarily concerned with setting up particular scenes – moral trials – in which we can see how virtuous characters behave in testing circumstances. These lessons to the reader are what she gave the most exacting attention to. This is where her words are perfectly chosen and sparkling with intelligence and deep insight. These are the parts that she really cared about. The rest – the rituals of the romantic comedy genre and the ‘social realism’ – is just background.”⁸

It is the courtship story, as old as Cinderella, that drives Austen’s novels. Fay Weldon summarized the plot of *Pride and Prejudice* as follows:

“ And Mr. Bingley rode by the Bennets’ window on his way to Netherfield Park, and Elizabeth was slighted by Darcy, and sister Jane was slighted by Mr. Bingley, and then Darcy fell in love with Elizabeth, who rejected his offer of marriage, and Lydia ran off and lived in sin for at least a week with Mr. Wickham, and Elizabeth fell in love with Darcy, and Bingley was reunited with Jane, and everyone lived happily ever after, even Mrs. Bennet, the only one with the slightest notion of the sheer desperation of the world, whom everyone laughed at throughout.

Nonsense, isn’t it!” she comments.⁹

So why bother reading it? Empathy is Weldon's answer. "You can practice the art of empathy very well in *Pride and Prejudice*, and in all the novels of Jane Austen, and it is this daily practice that we all need, or we will never be good at living, as without practice we will never be good at playing the piano." ¹⁰

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On the day *Pride and Prejudice* arrived, Austen wrote to her sister, "[Miss Benn] dined with us. . . & in the evenin[g] we set fairly at it & read half the 1st vol. to her – . . . & I beleive [*sic*] it passed with her unsuspected." Miss Benn was a talkative, poor single woman in the neighborhood, the model, perhaps, for Miss Bates in the later novel *Emma*. What Miss Benn did not suspect was the name of the author, who was actually reading the novel to her. All of the four novels published during Austen's lifetime were published anonymously. Austen continues, Miss Benn "was amused, poor soul! *that* she c[ould] not help you know, with two such people to lead the way [they were Jane and her mother doing the reading]; but she really does seem to admire Elizabeth. I must confess that *I* think her as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print, & how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like *her* at least, I do not know. – " ¹¹

Elizabeth is the second of the five Bennet sisters whose mother's chief concern is to avert their financial ruin by finding them husbands. "She has a sense of humour, she can look a man who has insulted her in the eye, and she is witty and clever. . . Her intelligence shines from her eyes; she is observant, skilled with language, and generally excellent at judging other people. . ." But "her judgment, in the cases of Wickham [the

wicked seducer] and Darcy [the taciturn aristocrat], proves to be ‘too quick’, formed on insufficient evidence. At the beginning of the novel Elizabeth displays both ‘pride’ and ‘prejudice’, and she must learn to eliminate both and judge more clearly. . . It is a joy to watch Elizabeth undergo this learning process, to see her realize her mistakes, amend her judgments, improve in her knowledge of human nature. . . [T]he reader is challenged and changed along with her. Every rereading of *Pride and Prejudice* is a learning experience,” writes Susannah Fullerton.¹² But above all, Elizabeth “personifies charm. . . There is no recipe for this magic ingredient. Elizabeth’s charm is a mixture of her sense of fun, her loving and loyal personality, her spirit and *joie de vivre*, her independence and self-sufficiency, and her love of playing with words.”¹³

Small wonder that when asked, If you could be any character from literature, who would it be? J. K. Rowling, author of the stupendously successful “Harry Potter” series, replied, “Elizabeth Bennet, naturally.”¹⁴ Mystery writer P.D. James, who penned a sequel to *Pride and Prejudice* entitled *Death Comes to Pemberley*, when asked with which Austen character she identified herself, responded, “It has to be Elizabeth Bennet. I share her humour and irony and interest in other people and her wish to be well married. I have a similar enthusiasm for the security that is offered by family.”¹⁵

And small wonder that Elizabeth Bennet receives three marriage proposals. The first is from Mr. Collins whom she calls “a conceited, pompous, narrow-minded, silly man.”¹⁶ Mr. Collins’ proposal goes on for several pages.

“My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it is a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances

(like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish. Secondly, that I am convinced it will add very greatly to my happiness; and thirdly, which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier, that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honour of calling patroness.”¹⁷

That lady is the comically haughty Lady Catherine de Bourgh who gives unsolicited advice and recommendations to everyone. After some further lengthy palaver, Mr.

Collins continues:

“ And now nothing remains for me but to assure you of the violence of my affection. To fortune I am perfectly indifferent, and shall make no demand of that nature on your father, since I am well aware that it could not be complied with; and that one thousand pounds [earning 4 percent], which will not be yours till after your mother’s decease, is all that you may ever be entitled to. On that head, therefore, I shall be uniformly silent; and you may assure yourself that no ungenerous reproach shall ever pass my lips when we are married.”¹⁸

What everyone knows is that the Bennet property is entailed, that upon the death of Mr. Bennet, it goes to his nearest male heir; his wife and their five daughters will be put out of their home. And Mr. Collins is the nearest male heir. By rejecting his proposal Elizabeth is putting them all at risk. Mr. Collins is incredulous.

“ [Y]ou should take it into further consideration that in spite of your manifold attractions, it is by no means certain that another offer of marriage may ever be made you. Your portion [meaning her finances] is unhappily so small that it will in all likelihood undo the effects of your loveliness and amiable qualifications. As I must therefore conclude that you are not serious in your rejection of me, I shall choose to attribute it to your wish of increasing my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females.”

“ I do assure you, sir, that I have no pretension whatever to that kind of elegance which consists in tormenting a respectable man. I would rather be paid the compliment of being believed sincere. I thank you again and again for the honor you have done me in your proposals, but to accept them is absolutely impossible. My feelings in every respect forbid it. Can I speak plainer? Do not consider me now as an elegant female intending to plague you, but as a rational creature speaking the truth from her heart.”¹⁹

Miss Benn, the “poor soul,” must have had a grand, old time listening to Austen and her mother reading.

For his first proposal the usually-reserved snob Darcy, “[a]fter a silence of several minutes. . . came towards her in an agitated manner, and thus began, ‘In vain have I struggled. It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed. You must allow me to tell you how ardently I admire and love you.’ ” But he continues on about “[h]is sense of her inferiority – of its being a degradation – of the family obstacles which judgment had always opposed . . .” “He concluded with representing to her the strength of that attachment which, in spite of all his endeavors, he had found impossible to conquer . . .”²⁰

Their exchange goes on for pages; the reader sees they are evenly matched. Elizabeth gives it to him. “[T]he mode of your declaration . . . spared me the concern which I might have felt in refusing you, had you behaved in a more gentlemanlike manner. . . From the very beginning, from the first moment, I may almost say, of my acquaintance with you, your manners impress[ed] me with the fullest belief of your arrogance, your conceit, and your selfish disdain of the feelings of others. . .”²¹

Over the course of the next 150 pages Darcy reveals himself by letter and in

person. Elizabeth realizes that her *first impressions* (the original title of the novel) should be modified. By the time of his second proposal Darcy has also changed. He admits he had come “to be selfish and overbearing, to care for none beyond my own family circle, to think meanly of all the rest of the world. . . You taught me a lesson, hard indeed at first, but most advantageous. . . You showed me how insufficient were all my pretensions to please a woman worthy of being pleased.”²²

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Marriage was a pressing business for women lacking economic independence. Elizabeth Bennet’s friend Charlotte Lucas snaps up the rejected Mr. Collins.

“Without thinking highly either of men or of matrimony, marriage had always been her object; it was the only honourable provision for well-educated young women of small fortune, and however uncertain of giving happiness, must be their pleasantest preservative from want.”²³

One of the most famous first sentences in literature opens *Pride and Prejudice*. “It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.” But this is followed by the equally important second sentence.

“However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families that he is considered as the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters.”²⁴

A single daughter of the neighborhood without financial resources had few options. She might seek employment as a governess, a school teacher, a lady’s companion or a servant. Unemployed, she might live with relatives, relying on their charity and/or

the charity of neighbors. Otherwise, she might live a life of “degradation.”

Jane Austen lived with her mother and sister for all of the almost 41 years of her life. After her father’s death, her brothers contributed to their support. She earned all of £110 from the sale of *Pride and Prejudice* and £140 from *Sense and Sensibility*. Money is a constant focus in her novels. Fortunate indeed is Elizabeth Bennet to marry Fitzwilliam Darcy whose *annual* income is £10,000, the equivalent in 2012 of \$1,262,820.²⁵ Her older sister Jane marries Mr. Bingley who inherited £100,000 from which he earns £4,000 to £5,000 yearly. But her impetuous younger sister Lydia runs off with the irresponsible Wickham whom Darcy “bribes”, in Austen’s words, to marry her.

On the death of their father the Dashwood sisters and their mother, in *Sense and Sensibility*, are turned out of their home by their half-brother, the wealthy heir, despite his having promised their father he would support them. He explains, “If they marry, they will be sure of doing well, and if they do not they may all live very comfortably together . . .”²⁶ His conniving wife, having convinced him with meretricious arguments to give them nothing because their own assets will bring them interest income, exclaims,

“Altogether they will have five hundred a year amongst them, and what on earth can four women want for more than that? They will live so cheap! Their housekeeping will be nothing at all. They will have no carriage, no horses, and hardly any servants; they will keep no company, and can have no expenses of any kind! Only conceive how comfortable they will be! Five hundred a year! I am sure I cannot imagine how they will spend half of it; and as to your giving them more, it is quite absurd to think of it. They will be much more able to give *you* something.”²⁷

Dumped by the cad Willoughby, the emotional Marianne finds happiness with the patient landowner Colonel Brandon and, after overcoming many impediments, the self-controlled Elinor is content with the shy, honorable clergyman Edward Ferrars.

In *Mansfield Park* poor, prim Fanny Price was taken in at the age of 9 by her rich aunt and uncle, a baronet with “a handsome house and large income.”²⁸ She grows up treated little better than a servant by her relatives, except for her kind cousin Edmund Bertram. Into the neighborhood appear the superficially-charming, but utterly unprincipled, siblings from London, Henry and Mary Crawford; he is a well-to-do landowner and she has £20,000 of her own. After much consternation the very proper Fanny decides she must reject Henry. The upright Edmund becomes a clergyman, realizes the serious Fanny’s true worth and gives up his infatuation with the flippant Mary. At the novel’s end Fanny and Edmund are pronounced “[e]qually formed for domestic life,” and “the happiness of the married cousins must be as secure as earthly happiness can be.”²⁹ Unmarried Mary is living with her widowed half-sister, and unscrupulous Henry has abandoned Edmund’s sister whom he had enticed into committing adultery.

“Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence;” begins the novel *Emma*.³⁰ The head-strong Emma interferes in everybody’s life, matchmaking oblivious to their true feelings, but with a good heart. Rejected by her, the clergyman Mr. Elton quickly finds the vain, always insistent Augusta Hawkins. The poor, retiring

Jane Fairfax, living with her impoverished aunts, finally has her secret engagement to the man-about-town Frank Churchill fulfilled when his domineering aunt conveniently dies. Emma's protégé Harriet Smith, of unknown parentage, winds up, after much confusion, with the respectable farmer Robert Martin. Marriage didn't seem, at first, to be a goal for Emma, she explains,

“I shall not be a poor old maid; and it is poverty only which makes celibacy contemptible to a generous public! A single woman with a very narrow income must be a ridiculous, disagreeable old maid! the proper sport of boys and girls; but a single woman of good fortune is always respectable, and may be as sensible and pleasant as anybody else!”³¹

But the long-held hopes of Mr. Knightley, the most prominent landowner in the neighborhood, are finally attained as Emma becomes ever more cognizant of the “high superiority of his character.”³²

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It seems D. H. Lawrence called Austen a “narrow gutted spinster.”³³ True, she may have been single, but not for lack of interest or opportunity. One acquaintance described the young Jane Austen as “the prettiest, silliest, most affected, husband-hunting butterfly she ever remembers.”³⁴ From her birth on December 16, 1775 Austen lived in the parsonage in the village of Steventon, in Hampshire, where her father was a clergyman, until he retired and the family moved to Bath in 1801.

When she was twenty she attended a ball in the manor house at Manydown Park, a few miles from the parsonage. Tom Lefroy, also twenty, from Ireland, but studying law in London, came to the village to visit his aunt and to attend balls. “. . . I am almost

afraid to tell you how my Irish friend and I behaved. Imagine to yourself everything most profligate and shocking in the way of dancing and sitting down together. I *can* expose myself, however, *only once more*, because he leaves the country soon after next Friday, on which day we *are* to have a dance at Ashe [his aunt's residence] after all," she wrote her sister.³⁵ On Friday she wrote, "At length the Day is come on which I am to flirt my last with Tom Lefroy, & when you receive this it will be over –"³⁶ The two of them had discussed Fielding's novel *Tom Jones*, a rather racy subject of conversation between unmarried young people in 1796. According to one of her sons, the aunt nipped the relationship in the bud. After all, these two were penniless. Lefroy later married a wealthy heiress and, 56 years after the Manydown ball, was appointed Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. When an old man he reportedly said, "in so many words that he was in love with her, although he qualifies his confession by saying it was a boyish love."³⁷

The aunt, whom Austen greatly respected, tried to fix her up instead with a clergyman, but he couldn't somehow get himself to the village. Austen continued going to balls and making comments in her letters about her dance partners. She was close friends with the daughters at Manydown Park and, on a visit back to the village from Bath in 1802, she and her sister stayed at the manor house. The heir Harris Bigg-Wither, almost six years younger than she, proposed. She accepted; she would in time become the mistress of a great estate. Yet the next day she changed her mind. There appears to have been a proposal three years later from another clergyman and in her sister's old age she referred to someone Austen may have been interested in, but who died before

they could meet again.

In his recent book *What Matters in Jane Austen? Twenty Crucial Puzzles Solved*, John Mullan includes as one puzzle, “Is There Any Sex in Jane Austen?”³⁸ There certainly is. The novels are filled with sexually-charged interchanges between the major characters and seductions, pre-marital sex, out-of-wedlock children, and adultery among the minor ones. And there are intimations of what the characters may be up to when they are not on the scene. John Sutherland claims, “In the background of the narratives, of course, the prurient ear can usually detect some suspicious rustling.”³⁹ Perhaps D. H. Lawrence should have paid closer attention.

But why this view of Jane Austen as a prim prig; is it her looks? The only known image of her face is a sketch by her sister Cassandra and she was far from a professional artist. The sketch looks unfinished. Austen appears a bit put-out, (or is it defiance?), with pursed lips and sharp-eyed gaze. The original is now at the National Portrait Gallery, London; rarely is it reproduced in connection with anything Austen. We are usually treated to something hardly resembling it. A softer, kinder Austen appeared in a watercolor miniature more than 50 years after her death. Even it is later “improved upon” in an engraving we often see of a pleasingly plump, buxom Austen, wearing, of all things, a wedding ring. Her image continues to be updated. (See attached)

Dictionary.com tells us that a Plain Jane is “a drab, unattractive, and generally uninteresting girl or woman.”⁴⁰ And, by gum, there is a head-shot of that engraving, with a so-called “matching quote” from *Northanger Abbey*. Plain? Not this Jane!

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In 1805 Austen, her mother and sister moved to Southampton and lived with her brother Frank, a naval officer, and his family. Another of her five brothers, Edward, was adopted at the age of 12 by very rich, childless relatives with whom he lived in Kent and from whom he ultimately inherited enormous estates. In 1809 he offered his mother and sisters a house back in Hampshire, where they longed to return. They settled in with a family friend at Chawton Cottage, now the Jane Austen House Museum. Close by was the Great House, now the Chawton House Library, home to early English women's writing. At Chawton Cottage Austen prepared for publication the already written *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*. After the publication of *Pride and Prejudice*, 200 years ago, she immediately started *Mansfield Park*, then wrote *Emma*, both of which she saw published. She wrote *Persuasion*, published posthumously together with the previously written *Northanger Abbey*, but became too ill to write more than the beginning portion of *Sanditon*. All this she did in four and a half years after *Pride and Prejudice* was published. She died on July 18, 1817. The cause of death has been speculated as, variously, Addison's disease, lupus, lymphoma or other cancer, and even poisoning by sustained use of arsenic-containing medicine. She left less than £800.

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Two hundred years ago Austen wrote mockingly of *Pride and Prejudice*,

“The work is rather too light & bright and sparkling; – it wants shade; – it wants to be stretched out here & there with a long Chapter – of sense if it could be had, if not of solemn specious nonsense – about something unconnected

with the story; an Essay on Writing, a critique on Walter Scott, or the history of Buonaparte – or anything that would form a contrast & bring the reader with increased delight to the playfulness & Epigrammatism of the general stile.”⁴¹

Although the plots of all the novels hinge on complications of courtship, and lack a history of Bonaparte, their background is the Napoleonic wars waged during a major portion of Austen’s life. They are all stories of the home front. Her brother Henry was in the militia and it is the men of the militia, especially the dashing Wickham, who so excite the young women, including Lydia, in *Pride and Prejudice*. Her brothers Frank and Charles were from boyhood in the Royal Navy. *Persuasion*, the story of a second chance at happiness for Anne Elliot and Captain Frederick Wentworth, is Austen’s homage to British navy men at home from war at sea.

But it is “the general stile” of Austen’s writing that brings readers to re-read the novels again and again, even though they already know precisely who pairs up with whom. Here is an example from *Pride and Prejudice*. Mr. Collins, rejected by Elizabeth, hastens to Charlotte Lucas to “throw himself at her feet.”

“Miss Lucas perceived him from an upper window as he walked towards the house, and instantly set out to meet him accidentally in the lane. But little did she dare hope that so much love and eloquence awaited her there.

In as short a time as Mr. Collins’s long speeches would allow, everything was settled between them to the satisfaction of both; and as they entered the house, he earnestly entreated her to name the day that was to make him the happiest of men; . . .”⁴²

Charlotte would not be “dying an old maid.”

Austen lets her readers into the minds of her characters and their inner life is revealed; for example, she shows Charlotte pondering her situation.

“Her reflections were in general satisfactory. Mr. Collins to be sure was neither sensible nor agreeable; his society was irksome, and his attachment to her must be imaginary. But still he would be her husband.”⁴³

The narrator in *Northanger Abbey* defines novels as,

“only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour, are conveyed to the world in the best-chosen language.”⁴⁴

According to current-day novelist Ann Patchett,

“Reading fiction is important. It is a vital means of imagining a life other than our own, which in turn makes us more empathetic beings. Following complex story lines stretches our brains beyond the 140 characters of sound-bite thinking, and staying within the world of a novel gives us the ability to be quiet and alone, two skills that are disappearing faster than the polar icecaps.”⁴⁵

Henry Tilney, the hero of *Northanger Abbey*, puts it more succinctly, “The person, be it gentleman or lady, who has not pleasure in a good novel, must be intolerably stupid.”⁴⁶



Sketch by Austen's sister Cassandra



1873 engraving



Modern Austen

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- ¹ Austen, Jane, Letter No. 79, Ed. Deirdre LeFaye, *Jane Austen's Letters*, (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 201
- ² Alter, Alexandra, "Austen Power," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 25, 2013, p. D1,2
- ³ Quoted in Mullan, John, *What Matters in Jane Austen? Twenty Crucial Puzzles Solved*, (New York: NY, Bloomsbury Press, 2013), p. 9
- ⁴ See Note 1.
- ⁵ Deresiewicz, William, *A Jane Austen Education: How Six Novels Taught Me About Love, Friendship, and the Things that Really Matter*, (New York: NY, The Penguin Press, 2011), p. 95
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 152
- ⁷ Rodham, Thomas, "Reading Jane Austen as a Moral Philosopher," *Philosophy Now*, vol. 94, Jan/Feb 2013, p. 7
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8
- ⁹ Weldon, Fay, *Letters to Alice on first reading Jane Austen*, (New York, NY: Carroll & Graf, 1990), p. 93
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 94
- ¹¹ See Note 1.
- ¹² Fullerton, Susannah, *Celebrating Pride and Prejudice: 200 years of Jane Austen's Masterpiece*, (Minneapolis, MN: Voyageur Press, 2013), p. 55-57
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 61
- ¹⁴ Interview of J.K. Rowling, "By the Book", *The New York Times Book Review*, October 14, 2012, p. 8
- ¹⁵ Interview of P. D. James, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2012/jul/15/pd-james-author-interview-readers>
- ¹⁶ Austen, Jane, *Pride and Prejudice*, (New York, NY, New American Library, 1961), p. 117
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 92
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 93
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 95
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 161
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 164
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 310
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 107
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1
- ²⁵ No attribution, Note, *Bookforum*, Summer, 2012, p. 26
- ²⁶ Austen, Jane, *Sense and Sensibility*, (New York, NY, New American Library, 1961), p. 11
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12-13.
- ²⁸ Austen, Jane, *Mansfield Park*, (New York, NY, Dell Publishing, 1961), p.1
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 448
- ³⁰ Austen, Jane, *Emma*, (New York, NY, Bantam Books, 1969) p. 1
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 79
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 442
- ³³ Quoted in Sutherland, John, *Lives of the Novelists: A History of Fiction in 294 Lives*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 58
- ³⁴ Quoted in Johnson, Claudia, *Jane Austen's Cults and Cultures*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 50
- ³⁵ See Note 1, Letter 1, p. 1
- ³⁶ See Note 1, Letter 3, p. 4
- ³⁷ Quoted in Tomalin, Claire, *Jane Austen: A Life*, (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1997) p. 118
- ³⁸ See Note 3.
- ³⁹ See Note 33.
- ⁴⁰ <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/plain+jane?s=t&path=/>
- ⁴¹ See Note 1, Letter 80, p.203
- ⁴² See Note 16, p. 106
- ⁴³ See Note 16, p. 107
- ⁴⁴ Austen, Jane, *Northanger Abbey*, (New York, NY, New American Library, 1965) p. 30
- ⁴⁵ http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/18/opinion/and-the-winner-of-the-pulitzer-isnt.html?_r=0
- ⁴⁶ See Note 44, p. 90