

Spring 2013  
ENGL 495AUS  
Tues. 7:00-9:45  
JRH 242

Office Hours: Tues. 3:30-5:30, Thurs. 3:30-4:30, and by appointment.

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## Jane Austen, Satire, & Society: A Service Learning Course



**Course Description and Objectives:** Love her or hate her, Jane Austen has become a ubiquitous fixture in the literary canon and in mainstream society: from *Clueless* and *Bridget Jones' Diary* to "I heart Mr. Darcy" t-shirts and Jane action figures, the cult of Austen (which arose after her death, particularly in the Victorian period) shows no signs of halting in 2013. Austen's novels are typically categorized as both comedies (in the Aristotelian sense of ending with marriage) and romantic comedies (again, with the marriages); at the same time, however, attentive readers will also notice overarching concerns about social issues embedded in Austen's novels: concerns about women's rights, property, class, gender, race, disability, and social responsibility are deeply intertwined with the romantic—often anti-sentimental—plots of the novels. Throughout the semester, we will pay close attention to how the marriage plots of the novel foster the dissemination of radical, subversive, and often destabilizing arguments about these social issues; in so doing, we will also consider Austen's formal innovations: as a masterful satirist in the tradition of great eighteenth-century satirists like Jonathan Swift, Laurence Sterne, and Frances Burney; and as the writer whose revolutionary use of free indirect discourse (FID) helped shape the novel into the form we are familiar with today. To this end, we will also consider Austen's juvenilia and her extant manuscripts to discuss her evolution as an author. To be more attuned to the relevance of these formal and historical-social issues in Austen's time and our own, class members will complete 20 hours of service activities at local nonprofit sites across LA County.

Through consistent reading, writing, and analysis, you will enhance your critical reading and analytical writing skills; recognize the defining literary forms of eighteenth-century novels (epistolary, third-person omniscient) and the defining techniques of these novelists (including satire, irony, sentimentality, and free indirect discourse); discuss and debate theoretical stances on the form of the novel and critical interpretations of given novels; and gain a better understanding of the historical and cultural contexts of the long eighteenth century.

**Required Texts (please use the editions here; let me know if you cannot purchase these editions, as we will have supplemental readings from each specific edition):**

*Jane Austen's Manuscript Works*, 9781554810581

Austen, *Persuasion* - 978-1551111315

---, *Emma* - 978-0393927641

---, *Pride and Prejudice* - 978-0393976045

---, *Sense and Sensibility* - 978-0393977516

---, *Mansfield Park* - 978-0393967913

---, *Northanger Abbey* - 978-0393978506

**Activities & Requirements**

- Manuscript Works Collaborative Presentation
- Paper one, a close reading with a few outside sources, 3-5 pages in length (workshopped by the class)
- Paper two, a conference-style, research paper, 7-10 pages in length
- Final collaborative presentation
- Providing reader's comments to your peers each week
- Bringing at least one question/comment to each class
- Moodle responses
- Quizzes and response papers, as necessary
- 20 hours of service work
- Signed and completed service forms
- Signed academic honesty contract

**What is "Service Learning"?** (From CSUN's Community Engagement Website) Service Learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful civic engagement activities with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

Through service learning, young people—from kindergarteners to college students—use what they learn in the classroom to solve real-life problems. They not only learn the practical applications of their studies, they become actively contributing citizens and community members through the service they perform.

Service learning can be applied in a wide variety of settings, including schools, universities, community-based and faith-based organizations. It can involve a group of students, a classroom or an entire school. Students build character and become active participants as they work with others in their school and community to create service projects in areas such as education, public safety, and the environment.

For resources and information on the Community Engagement Program at CSUN, including the Handbook, go to: [www.csun.edu/communityengagement/](http://www.csun.edu/communityengagement/)

**Community Partners:** An integral part of the service learning experience is forming a bond with the staff, volunteers, and clients at your community partner site. Although you may propose any community site that is approved by CSUN, I recommend the following sites, as they pair especially nicely with our course readings. **You must identify your community partner by 3/1; you have completed all orientation activities and your service agreement by 3/10.**

**826LA**

[www.826la.org](http://www.826la.org)

826LA East: Time Travel Mart, 1714 West Sunset Blvd, Echo Park, CA 90026: 213.413.3388

826LA West: SPARC Building, 685 Venice Blvd, Venice, CA 90291: 310.305.8418

Hours: Vary: morning workshops; after-school at both locations from 2:30-5:45 PM; evening tutoring from 6-8 pm.

**Mission and About:** 826LA is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting students ages 6 to 18 with their creative and expository writing skills, and to helping teachers inspire their students to write.

Our services are structured around our understanding that great leaps in learning can happen with one-on-one attention, and that strong writing skills are fundamental to future success. With this in mind, we provide [after-school tutoring](#), [evening and weekend workshops](#), [in-school tutoring](#), [help for English language learners](#), and assistance with [student publications](#).

All of our programs are challenging and enjoyable, and ultimately strengthen each student's power to express ideas effectively, creatively, confidently, and in his or her individual voice.

**MEND (Meet Each Need with Dignity)**

<http://mendpoverty.org/>

10641 North San Fernando Road, Pacoima, CA 91331

818.897.2443

Hours: Closed Mon; Tues-Fri 8-5; Sat 9am-12pm

**Mission:** With dignity and respect, powered by volunteers, MEND's mission is to break the bonds of poverty by providing basic human needs and a pathway to self-reliance.

**About:** In the early 1970's, MEND – Meet Each Need with Dignity opened its doors in an effort to transform the lives of the neediest residents of the San Fernando Valley – poor children and their struggling families. Starting as a small group of volunteers working from a garage, MEND has grown primarily by word-of-mouth into one of the leanest operating non-profit organizations in existence. More than 94% of the support and donations received by MEND, now the largest poverty agency in the Valley, provides emergency food, clothing, medical, vision and dental care, job skills training and job placement assistance, English as a Second Language classes, youth activities, and a Christmas program. In 2011, we served as many as 30,000 individuals per month.

**Alternative service option:** You may find a community partner of your own choosing by going to the approved Community Partners webpage:

<http://www.csun.edu/communityengagement/communitypartners.shtml>

**Writing Seminars:** Each week, we will devote a portion of class to discussing a brief conference-length paper draft (3-5 pages) by 2 of your peers, due the day that we are discussing the text under consideration. The paper should offer an original close reading of the text and also integrate up to two secondary sources. Everyone should offer constructive feedback by way of discussion and written materials (comments in the margins of the papers). Sign-up sheets will circulate.

**“Contexts” Presentations:** For the class of your choice, you and a peer will research an historical, literary, or cultural work that responds or corresponds to the Austen text that we are reading for the day; this document should be from the approximate time frame (within 5-ish years) of the text that we are examining. This text can be anything: an Austen Manuscript work; another author's writing; ballad, a religious document, an illustration, a pamphlet or treatise from the time (legal, literary, or otherwise), or any other short piece of prose. Your presentation should be between 7-10 minutes (no more than 10 minutes at maximum! Be sure to practice beforehand!) and it should a) describe the text, including its provenance b) explain how it responds to the literary text we are discussing in class; and c) explain its importance/relevance, or how it illuminates, the text we are examining in class. You should create a PowerPoint to facilitate your presentation; if you absolutely cannot create a PP, you should have an image of the text that we can see in class, along with a 2-3 page double-spaced narrative of your presentation at the end of class. You must contact me at least by the previous class to discuss your presentation topic; you should email me a copy of your presentation prior to class (at least 15 minutes beforehand). A sign-up sheet will circulate for you to select a date.

**Discussion Board Hosting:** For the date/class of your choice, you and a peer will “host” the Moodle discussion board (sign up sheets will be distributed). To do so, you will have found an outside article (from Project Muse or JSTOR) that deals with a topic you would like to consider in dialogue with the whole class. You will post a brief paragraph that includes a summary of the article you have found (including proper citation), along with your own reflection/experiences on your in-class readings. You are responsible for posting your ideas and questions no less than 24 hours (one day, or 7 PM on Monday)

before the class date you signed up for, and you will need to use these questions and the responses you get from students to lead discussion during class as well. I will have a list of general discussion topics/questions that you can consult to craft your own discussion posts. You must contact me at least by the previous class to have your discussion topic/article approved; failure to do so will lower your grade.

**Moodle Reflections and Responses:** To help foster dialogue and discussion inside and outside of class, throughout the semester, by 6 pm the day of each class, you will post a reflective, short (no longer than one paragraph) response that does the following: a) cites one quotation that you had questions about or found intriguing, (b) explains your question or articulates what precisely you found interesting about the passage, and (c) addresses/refers to the discussion board host's question in a meaningful way.

Questions should not be answerable simply with "yes" or "no": using interrogative words (who/what/when/where/why/how) can be especially useful. Your posts can come from confusion that you personally feel about the text we are reading or an encounter you've had at your community site, or they can be comments relating to an interpretation you have of a given work, to which you anticipate an answer. You MUST refer to specific passages/page numbers in your posting so that your peers can ground these questions in identifiable moments from the text. Keep in mind, some of these questions might be effective ways to start thinking about one of your paper topics.

**Grading Policy: (based on an A/A-/B+/B/B-/etc. scale)**

- \* In-class writing, class participation, and service: 20%
- \* Discussion board hosting: 10%
- \* "Contexts" Presentation: 10%
- \* Essay 1 (3-5 pages): 10%
- \* Moodle Posts: 15%
- \* Essay 2 (7-10 pages): 20%
- \* Final collaborative presentation: 15%

**Course Schedule:**

*Week 1: January 22*

An Introduction to the course; the novel + form; the question of the "author"; Austen's Juvenilia groupwork + adaptation excerpts; Caryn McTighe Musil's "Educating for Citizenship"

- In-class writing

*Week 2: January 29*

- *Lady Susan* (Manuscripts); *Evelyn* (Manuscripts); *Sense and Sensibility*
- Susan Greenfield, Jane Austen Weekly: "Sense and Sensibility and the Occupy Anniversary" (HuffPo)
- Suggested secondary reading: excerpts: Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*

*Week 3: February 5*

- Jane West, *Gossip's Story* excerpts; *Sense and Sensibility*; *Catharine* (Manuscripts); Begin paper workshops
- Suggested secondary reading: John C. Leffel, "Everything is Going to Sixes and Sevens": Governing the Female Body (Politic) in Jane Austen's *Catharine, Or the Bower* (1792) *Studies in the Novel* 43.2 (Summer 2011): 131-151.

*Week 4: February 12*

- Gothic novel excerpts; *Northanger Abbey*
- Suggested secondary reading: Laura Baudot, "'Nothing Really in It': Gothic Interiors and the External of the Courtship Plot in *Northanger Abbey*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 24.2 (Winter 2011-12): 325-352; Shinobu Minma, "General Tilney and Tyranny: *Northanger Abbey*" *ECF* 8.4 (July 1996): 503-518.
- Complete Pre-Service Learning Evaluation by Friday, 15 February

Week 5: February 19

- *Pride and Prejudice*
- Suggested reading: Felicia Bonaparte, "Conjecturing Possibilities: Reading and Misreading Texts in *Pride and Prejudice*," *Studies in the Novel* 37 (2005): 141-161.

Week 6: February 26

- *Pride and Prejudice*
- Suggested reading: "Darcy on Film," Norton 384-391; "Class and Money," Norton 392-405.
- Last day to meet with your service site; please submit site information on Moodle by 1 March

Week 7: March 5

- *Mansfield Park*
- Suggested reading: Edward Said, "Jane Austen and Empire," in Norton edition p. 490; Anna Mae Duane, "Confusions of Guilt and Complications of Evil: Hysteria and the High Price of Love at *Mansfield Park*," *Studies in the Novel* 33.4 (2001): 402-415.
- Student Service Learning Plan and Agreement Due by 10 March

Week 8: March 12

- *Mansfield Park*
- Susan Greenfield, Jane Austen Weekly: "Child Poverty and *Mansfield Park*" (HuffPo)
- Suggested reading: Deidre Shauna Lynch, "'Young Ladies are delicate plants': Jane Austen and Greenhouse Romanticism," *ELH* 77.3 (2010): 689-729.

Week 9: March 19

- *The Watsons* (Manuscripts); *Emma*
- Please skim: Wayne C. Booth, "Point of View and the Control of Distance in *Emma*," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 16.2 (1961)

Week 10: March 26

- *Emma*; excerpts from Mary Brunton's *Discipline*
- Suggested secondary reading: Beth Fowkes Tobin, "The Moral and Political Economy of Property in Austen's *Emma*" *ECF* 2.3 (1990): 229-254; Claudia Johnson, "Not at all what a man should be!" from *Equivocal Beings*

Week 11: April 2

- *Persuasion*
- Suggested secondary reading: Cantor, "A Class Act: Persuasion and the Lingering Death of the Aristocracy," *Philosophy and Literature* 23.1 (1999): 127-137.

Week 12: April 9 – SPRING BREAK

- NO CLASS

Week 13: April 16

- *Persuasion*; *Sanditon* (final paper workshop)
- Suggested secondary reading: Melissa Sodeman, "Domestic Mobility in *Persuasion* and *Sanditon*," *SEL 1500-1900*, 45.4 (Autumn 2005): 787-812.

Week 14: April 23

- Print + Film adaptations – TBD by class

Week 15: April 30

- Conference run-through/clean up

Week 16: May 7

- **Conference**

- **Learning Site Supervisor Evaluation of Student due by 10 May (submit to CIELO and to Profs. Spratt and Harper)**
- **Post-Service Learning Evaluation due by 10 May (submit to CIELO and to Profs. Spratt and Harper)**

**Final paper due (via Moodle) on Tuesday, May 14, at 8 PM**