

## Short Book Reviews

### **Juvenilia**

*Comprehensive explanatory notes, an extensive critical introduction (covering the context and publication history of the juvenilia), a chronology of Austen's life, and an authoritative textual apparatus. Included, for the first time, are the copious satirical marginalia that Austen wrote on her copies of Oliver Goldsmith's History of England.*

- by Jane Austen and Peter Sabor

### **Annotated Pride and Prejudice**

*To better appreciate the wit and genius of Jane Austen, annotations give further details about the customs & etiquette of her time; maps & illustrations are included.*

- by Jane Austen and David M. Shapard

### **“Female Spectator” – Chawton House Library quarterly newsletters**

*- Latest publications on early English women's writings and articles written by visiting fellows and others.*

*- News on the running of a 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> century Elizabethan manor house and rural working manor farm of the late 18<sup>th</sup> & early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (with Shire horses, rescued battery hens, period gardening.*

*- Dates of lectures, concerts, exhibitions and other events in the coming year.*

### **The Critical Heritage : Jane Austen Volume 1, 1811 – 1870**

*Published critical responses to Jane Austen's works, plus excerpts from letters & diaries belonging to Miss Mitford, Bronte, Lewes, Scott, Whately, Kavanagh, Mrs. Oliphant and others.*

- edited by Brian C. Southam

### **Collected Reports of the Jane Austen Society 1949-1965**

*A compilation of JAS's (the British society) yearly reports with an introduction by Elizabeth Jenkins. An interesting read!*

### **Jane Austen and her Readers, 1786-1945**

*A study of readers' responses to J.A.'s novels, Jane Austen's own ideas about books and readers, the role of editions and more.*

- by Katie Halsey

### **Jane Austen and the Popular Novel**

*Jane Austen's novels are compared to the popular styles of 1790-1820, the evangelical, national, & moral-domestic.*

- by Anthony Mandal

### **Among the Janeites, a Journey Through the World of J.A. Fandom**

*The effect of Jane Austen's six novels on personal lives, and other outcomes; e.g. Chawton House, sequel spin-offs, various publications, AGMs, and JASNA, JAS, JASA.*

- by Deborah Yaffe

### **Jane Austen and her world**

*An excellent biography with 137 illustrations.*

- by Marghanita Laski

### **A Gossip's Story – and a Legendary Tale (annotated)**

*The novel is about two sisters (a wise Louisa and an emotional Marianne), and about love, duty and financial loss & status as told by a gossiping neighbour, the narrator. Not everyone lives happily after – some pay heavily for their sins. The 1796 didactic novel by a bestselling author is thought to have had an influence on Jane Austen's novel, Sense and Sensibility.*

- by Jane West, edited by Devoney Looser, Melinda O'Connell, Caitlin Kelly

### **Sister Novelists – The Trailblazing Porter Sisters, who paved the way for Austen and the Brontes**

*An account of the lives of two forgotten British/Irish novelists, extracted from their many letters. Jane & Anna Maria Porter were pressed to write 26 novels to support their widowed mother and to pay off their brothers' debts, fighting poverty all their lives. Maria began writing her 1<sup>st</sup> novel, Artless Tales, at the age of 14. Most popular were Jane's Thaddeus of Warsaw (1903) & The Scottish Chiefs (1810). They launched the historical romance novel before Sir Walter Scott, and he took the credit. Their beauty & character matched that of sensible Elinor and emotional, beautiful Marianne. Highly respected celebrities of their time, their acquaintances/friends were authors & artists (the acting Kemble family, Mary Robinson, Edmund Kean), politicians, aristocrats (kings, tsars, princes & Queen Victoria).*

- by Devoney Looser

### **A Truth Universally Acknowledged – 33 Great Writers on why we read Jane Austen**

*A collection of essays by writers born from as early as 1874 (W. Somerset Maugham) to modern writers, including German Eva Braan & Brazilian psychologist Ingres Sodr, giving their views on Jane Austen's wit & irony, about her characters, her genius and where they may believe she falls short. Lionel Trilling questions the future of her popularity in 200 years as our social culture separates further from that of Jane Austen's.*

- edited by Susannah Carson

### **Why Jane Austen?**

*By examining opinions/critiques, making comparisons between the six novels and their many films, and weighing in personal insights, the author explains why we read and reread Jane Austen's works. Each new reading produces new insights. Her appeal is in the story line, her varied and complex characters, her wit & irony, her unique and quotable dialogue. Her followers are not exclusive to one or two segments of society, to one gender, or any one era. The phenomenon of her continuing popularity has been attributed to various reasons, The author adds another; we see ourselves in her protagonists.*

- by Rachel M. Brownstein

### **Jane Austen's Philosophy of the Virtues**

*Virtue in Jane Austen's time referred exclusively to female sexual purity. Her heroines display a wide range of virtues, having worked out the answer to the question through a complicated process, "How should I live my life?" The chapters, devoted to each of the six novels & Lady Susan, analyse insight into the heroines (and others) as to what shaped their morality. The author argues that Jane Austen is conservative, yet flexible, and her heroines display both classical virtues (prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude) and Christian virtues (faith, hope, and charity). Because Jane Austen was the daughter of a clergyman, it is assumed that the virtue of faith is necessary to practice the range of the virtues in order to find happiness. The protagonists, Fanny Price and Elinor Dashwood practice prudence, Anne Eliot practices the virtue of hope, Emma works on charity, Elizabeth Bennet on justice, Catherine on .*

- by Sarah Emsley

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### **Jane Austen, or The Secret of Style**

*The author examines style in J. Austen's writings and "the slavish imitation that it sometimes inspires".*

- by D.A. Miller

## **Jane Austen and the North Atlantic: Essays from the 2005 J.A. Society Conference in Halifax, Canada**

*Charles & Francis Austen in Halifax and Bermuda*

- by Sheila J. Kindred, Brian Southam, Peter W. Graham, and Sarah Emsley

## **Jane Austen, Game Theorist**

*Jane Austen's sharp observations of human behaviour in her six novels - strategic thinking and the conspicuous absence of – cluelessness*

- by political scientist, author Michael Suk-Young Chwe

## **Satire, Celebrity, and Politics in Jane Austen**

*Another book that argues Jane Austen was a satirist who closely followed the politics and celebrities of her day, particularly Fanny Burney and the Royal Family. "Letter-writing was a major domestic task for middle class women." Her niece, Fanny, wrote to 27 people in a three-month period. By this calculation, up to 16,000 letters written by Jane Austen may have been lost to us.*

- by Jocelyn Harris

## **A Jane Austen Education: How Six Novels Taught Me about Love, Friendship and the Things That Really Matter**

*In the course of reading Jane Austen's novels, a 21<sup>st</sup> c. man learned life lessons resulting in his transformation from an immature arrogant undergrad to a happily married man. In chapter one the author recounts a required reading of Emma for a class which changed his opinion of Jane Austen and taught him "everyday matters". Pride and Prejudice in chapter two is titled "growing up", Northanger Abby in chapter three: "learning to learn", Mansfield Park in chapter four: "Being good", Persuasion in chapter five: "True Friends".*

- by William Deresiewicz

## **The Journals and Poems of Marjory Fleming**

*Marjory Fleming, 1803-1811, was a precocious, sometimes ill-tempered child from a middle class Scottish family who was beloved by the sentimental Victorians ("Pet Marjorie"). She also won the admiration of Mark Twain. Her journals were part of her education overseen by a beloved cousin. She shared with Jane Austen a devotion to Mary Queen of Scots.*

- edited by Leslie Robertson and Juliet McMaster with others

## **Capability Brown and His Landscape Gardens**

*Lancelot 'Capability' Brown converted countryside and formal English gardens into stunning parks that looked like nature's work. Beautiful pictures of his landscape designs show how he used trees, grass & serpentine lakes to control the views and create serenity. His work at Blenheim Palace, Kew Gardens & Warwick Castle is still in existence.*

- by Sarah Rutherford

## **Pride and Promiscuity – The Lost Sex Scenes of Jane Austen**

*A farce that takes the reader behind closed doors that are best left closed... unless you are inquisitive.*

- by Arielle Eckstut & Dennis Ashton

## **Literature and Dance in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Jane Austen to the New Woman**

*A study of the treatment of social dance in 19<sup>th</sup> c. literature, dance being a vital part of social life & courtship with all its symbolism; includes instructions from popular 19<sup>th</sup> century dance manuals. Works by Austen, Eliot, Thackeray, Trollope on the subject of dance are viewed.*

- by Cheryl A. Wilson

### **Fashion in the Time of Jane Austen**

*Many beautiful illustrations from 1775 to “After the age of Elegance” when London (not Paris) reflected the era and dictated fashion. Here, the meaning of Jane Austen’s words in her letters and in novels about articles of clothing are made clear.*

- by Sarah Jane Downing

### **A Country House Christmas, Treasure on Earth**

*The excitement of Christmas celebrations at Lyme Park in 1906 is described by the author as a child – expectations of the arrival of guests, theatricals, games, dancing and presents to be given and to receive. In a gentler world, Phyllis freely runs around the estate under the watchful care of servants. The epilogue is about a return visit to Lyme Park in 1946 after the war when the beloved house now belongs to the nation.*

- by Phyllis Elinor Sandeman

### **Jane Austen & Adelstrop, Her Other Family**

*Adelstrop and Stoneleigh Abbey were the ancestral homes of the Leigh family – Mrs. Austen was a Leigh and Jane knew Adelstrop well. While visiting, Jane had experienced are connected to the storylines in her novels. The author relates the family history of scandals, insanity, tragedies and how a number of the Leigh & Austen clerics worked the “system”. She believes that Jane had approved of closures of common land – pages 86 and 94... “good husbandry and taking care of your property”.*

- by Victoria Huxley

### **Jane Austen's Brother Abroad: The Grand Tour Journals of Edward Austen**

*Edward Austen’s short, but detailed, journals describe his tour of Switzerland in 1786-88, and in 1790, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and Netherlands. His writing showed his interest to be mainly in architecture & bridges, farming, landscape, politics, exporting & manufacturing of the areas he visited and some mentions of art in his second tour. Illustrated.*

- edited by John Spence and published by JASA

### **Jane Austen’s Transatlantic Sister, The Life and Letters of Fanny Palmer Austen**

*Three characters in Persuasion may have been based on Fanny Palmer Austen, 1<sup>st</sup> wife of her brother, Captain Charles Austen. Mrs. Croft accompanied her husband on his voyages as did Fanny. They were both capable and adventurous women. Like Anne Elliot she “gloried in being a sailor’s wife”. Captain Bennet was left to deeply mourn the death of his fiancée, Fanny, as did Charles when his wife, Fanny, died in childbirth.*

- by Sheila Johnson Kindred

### **Jane Austen’s Families**

*Family dynamics in the six novels are examined – fathers, mothers, daughters, siblings, and effects of money and morals on spoilt children. Dysfunctional parenting sometimes produces “useful” offspring, most of the time, not! This is a concise and complete study of family relationships in Austen & those of other novelists of the same period.*

- by June Sturrock

### **Gentlemen of Uncertain Fortunes, How Younger Sons Made Their Way in Jane Austen’s England**

*Acceptable careers for “gentlemen” or would-be gentlemen were in law, military, church, and in civil positions (the most secure, best paid, with fewest hours). If Mrs. Bennet had five sons instead of daughters she would not have feared losing her home and the younger sons may have had help finding their place in the world. All careers and advancements required connections and monetary payouts.*

- by Rory Muir

### **The Other Knight Boys, Jane Austen's Dispossessed Nephews**

*The details of the complex lives of Edward Austen Knight's six sons are unearthed from unpublished works and revealed in chapters devoted to each one of them. All eleven children led pampered lives, leading Jane Austen to worry that her nephews may not be well prepared for reality. Edward the heir had his future planned for him, George was a wanderer – supported by his father until he married a rich widow, two became clergymen, two joined the military. John, the youngest died poor. The family bond was strong and the loss of the family home of Godmersham was strongly felt.*

- by Hazel Jones

### **Longbourn, Pride and Prejudice, The Servants' Story**

*The housemaid's thought at 4:30 on one cold September morning as she filled the buckets with water while everyone else was asleep: "If Elizabeth Bennet had the washing of her own petticoats, she would be more careful not to tramp through muddy fields." The woes of the Bennet family add to the hardship of the servants downstairs, who share their plight. In parallel narratives, the heroines, Elizabeth Bennett & Sarah (the housemaid), find love, lose love, and find it again. They set forth for Pemberley after Lizzy & Darcy marry but Sarah eventually leaves to find the footman who delivered a letter early on in P&P and stole her heart.*

- by Jo Baker

### **The Jane Austen Project**

*Rachel & Liam travel from a far advanced future, where light and food are artificially produced, into the restrictive world of 1815. Posing as a rich doctor and his sister, former slave owners from Jamaica, their object is to befriend Henry Austen, and through him, meet sister Jane and recover a suspected unpublished novel - 'The Watsons'. Romantic attachments complicate the project; history is being altered. Years of preparation to immerse themselves into the Regency world of manners, speech & customs are not enough to avoid suspicion. The portal is about to close; their escape & future is uncertain. Is Jane's popularity due to the scarcity of six novels that can be reread each time with new eyes, unlike Trollop's 47 that have similar patterns?*

- by Kathleen A. Flynn

### **My Dear Charlotte**

*A murder mystery in epistolary form, flavoured with lines borrowed from Jane Austen's letters to Cassandra, set in about 1815 after the Napoleonic wars in Lyme Regis.*

- by Hazel Holt

### **Second Impressions**

*If Jane Austen had written about the afterlives of the characters in P & P, the story line would have been similar to this humourous and well researched, socially accurate book except for a little detail – the author takes the three Darcys to Europe for almost half the novel. Jane Austen never left England. Her writing advice to her niece Anna: "Let the Portmans go to Ireland, but as you know nothing of the manners there, you had better not go with them. You will be in danger of giving false representation."*

- by Ava Farmer a.k.a. Sandy Lerner