

JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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Looking for Jane Austen in Scandinavia. Eileen Sutherland.

Ron and I decided to take a holiday trip to Scandinavia this Fall, although it would mean missing the September and October Vancouver JASNA meetings, and the LA Conference. When I mentioned it in June, someone facetiously suggested we could see how Jane Austen was faring in Scandinavia these days. I didn't expect any positive results, but I thought it might be fun to see if we could find any trace of our favourite author in those countries.

The first fleeting instance came in a book I was reading on the plane going over, about Napoleon's exile on Elba. According to the book, the wine the French drank was "part of Napoleon's personal supply of Vin de Constance, the highly regarded South African wine from the Constantia vineyard near Capetown." Mrs. Jennings brought Elinor "some of the finest old Constantia wine in the house, that ever was tasted," hoping it might help cheer up Marianne's distress at the defection of Willoughby.

On one of the first days of our trip, we were walking the old cobbled streets of Copenhagen when Ron picked up a small shiny metal name-plate, perhaps broken off and lost from a piece of luggage. Etched on the front was, simply, This seemed to be an excellent omen for the success of our quest for vestiges of Jane Austen.

EMMA

A week or so later, in Tromsø, a small town on the west coast of Norway, we walked past a café and its sign attracted my attention. It was "Emma's Drommekjokken". I copied the name down and later asked someone to translate it: it means "Emma's Dream Kitchen". This could not have referred to "our" Emma. She was experienced enough as a housekeeper to make sure her kitchen staff could provide arrowroot for the ill Jane Fairfax at a moment's notice, and her cook Serle could turn out tasty dishes like "a fricassee of sweetbreads and asparagus" when the local ladies were entertained. But even as the great "imaginist" she called herself, I'm sure her dreams were not about kitchens.

Helsinki was badly damaged in the Swedish-Russian war of 1808-9, ceded to Russia by Sweden, and named the capital of an autonomous grand duchy of the Russian Empire in 1812. A massive re-building campaign began, and resulted in one beautiful building after another, wherever we looked. The central square was especially noteworthy: on its four sides were the Cathedral, the Senate House, the Old



Town Hall, and the main building of the University. The architect was Carl Gustav Engel (active from 1815), whose designs in a "picturesque Neo-Classical style" reminded us of the Adam Brothers' in England. in the late 18th century. We could only spend half a day there, but the city will remain in our memories for its splendid architecture.

We spent an hour or two in the National museum in Copenhagen, starting with the early Archaeological sections - Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age. It was interesting but that was enough for one session. I felt there was not much chance for any connection with Jane Austen there - but I found one! On our way out, we passed a group of stones carved with Runic inscriptions [Runes were the earliest written alphabet used by the northern European peoples, from AD 200 to 1,000 or so]. One of the stones there had been discovered in 1775, that famous date. In the children's study section nearby, we learned to write our names in Runes. This is JASNA: $\text{ǀ} \text{ǀ} \text{ǀ} \text{ǀ}$ in Runic characters (600-700 AD).



Rune Stone

In three hotels in the Old Town in Stockholm we found a treasure trove. They are like museums of nautical history, concentrating on Admiral Nelson, Lady Hamilton and the ships of the British Navy in the days of the Napoleonic Wars: ships that Jane's sailor brothers would have known of, and perhaps sailed in. Pleasant receptionists in each hotel welcomed us to look around as much as we liked, and told us something of their history. A wealthy couple, Majlis and Gunnar Bengtsson, were intensely interested in Admiral Nelson, and his naval battles. They began collecting everything they could find in that connection. When they ran out of space in their home, they bought a hotel to house their finds, and called it the "Lord Nelson Hotel". Eventually that, too, was overcrowded, and the "Lady Hamilton Hotel" was added in 1980, a refurbished Listed Class A building dating from about 1470. In the course of time, they acquired another building which they called the "Victory Hotel", after Nelson's famous flagship.



Ship Model

Figureheads and model ships were displayed in the lobbies and reception rooms. Walls were covered with pictures of ships, and paintings of Lady Hamilton, by some of the finest artists of the time, in dozens of her notorious "poses". Glass cases in the hallways were filled with naval artifacts and historical objects. A seaman's chest, in which he stowed all his personal possessions, was at the foot of an intricately-worked metal staircase leading to an upper "deck". The corridors looked like passageways on a ship, and each "cabin" had a portrait of a famous sea captain (double "cabins" had a portrait of his wife, also), and featured an antique painting or a hand-crafted model of his ship. In one corridor we saw a polished mahogany post with a plaque which gave the co-ordinates of the hotel, and of the battle of Trafalgar, and told how far away and in which direction the famous battle was fought.



Lady Hamilton Figurehead

We wished we had known earlier of these hotels - next time, we'll stay in one of them, and spend many more hours looking at all their treasures at our leisure - a fabulous collection of

Nelson memorabilia, and a reminder of Anne's feeling for Captain Wentworth's "Profession which is, if possible - more distinguished in its Domestic Virtues, than in its National Importance."

Back in Copenhagen, the day before we were to return home, we visited the "Bakkehus" (Hill House) Museum. This was formerly the home of the Rahbek family at very nearly the same period as Jane Austen's residence at Chawton - 1802-1830. The husband, Knud Rahbek (1760-



Knud & Kanna Rahbek

1830) was a prominent literary personality of the time - a writer, critic, professor of literature, as well as an important person in the theatre and other cultural life of the city. His wife, Kanna (1775-1829), was "well-educated, intelligent, kind-hearted, and with a sense of humour, keen wit and instant readiness to support budding talents". They sound not too different from the Austens, whose home conversation has been described as "rich in shrewd remarks, bright with playfulness and humour and occasional flashes of wit . . . a comfortable if not opulent way of life."

It was interesting to look at the house as a family home with similarities to Jane Austen's - the same time period, similar furnishings, and items which could have belonged to moderately well-to-do people of any European country at that time: a small upright piano, upholstered sofas and chairs, walls hung with family portraits, needlework "samplers" and other works of art, metal stoves in each room for heat. Bookshelves in almost every room were filled with well-worn leather-bound volumes, as they must have been at Chawton - when the Austens moved to Bath, Mr. Austen's library of "upward of 500 volumes" was offered for sale. Desks were supplied with oil lamps, letter openers, sealing wax and pens.



Hill House Library



Silhouette Drawing

In one room a "large modern circular table" like the one Emma used at Hartfield, was set with tea things and food - cakes, pastries, pies, and perhaps "minced chicken and scalloped oysters" which Emma served, or the "brawn and cold pies" of the Musgroves. Silhouettes were popular in that pre-camera age, and a contrivance for making them was shown: a lady posed sitting in profile before a piece of paper held vertical in a rack, and a bright candle reflecting her shadow for the convenience of the artist behind.

We reluctantly returned to the 21st century, and the next day flew home. I cannot honestly say that we found Jane Austen Studies flourishing in Scandinavia, but we had a great trip, and Jane's presence often seemed to be with us - who could ask for more?



"The word 'geology' is first used in English in its modern sense in 1735, though only rarely - and probably not until 1795 can it be considered a mature and full-fledged concept. There was no mention of geology in the 1797 Third Edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*; but the Fourth, which came out in 1810, had a lengthy entry, the science by now fully established."

The Map That Changed the World: Simon Winchester (2001) p.25n.

Books and Berries, September 18, 2004. Jackie Johnson.

The new season of JASNA Vancouver was launched with the annual "Books and Berries" meeting. Virgil Oriente introduced the presenters.

As a preview to the November meeting discussion of the book, *The Jane Austen Book Club*, by Karen Joy Fowler, **Joan Mann** read from an article by the author, and **Mary Atkins** read excerpts from the *New York Times* book review.

Bev Gropen. *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, by Azar Nafisi.

This is a personal biography of the author, an Iranian, who was educated in the United States and returned to Iran with her husband, after the Shah was deposed, hopeful of a more liberal political climate. She taught in several schools but rebelled against the more repressive dictates of the new regime, and left each just prior to being fired. Eventually, she gave up teaching in schools and held clandestine classes in English Literature in her home for a small group of Iranian women, most of whom attended the classes secretly. This book weaves her experiences living in Iran at this time with the work of the four authors she included in her class: Nabokov, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Henry James and Jane Austen.

Any of these authors was considered subversive by the regime. The ayatollahs considered Elizabeth Bennet dangerous because she had an independent spirit and chose her husband without consulting her family. Also Jane Austen portrays a society in England in the process of change, becoming more democratic as the middle classes acquired more power.

Bev was impressed with the interest in English Literature shown by these Persian-speaking women.

Sandy Lundy. *The Professor and the Madman*, and *The Meaning of Everything*, by Simon Winchester.

These books tell the story of the 70 years of endeavour that went into the making of the Oxford English Dictionary, from 1857 to 1928. The Philological Society in England decided the available dictionaries were inadequate, and this was articulated by the Dean of Westminster at a meeting on November 5, 1857. Although various attempts at a new dictionary were made after that, work didn't begin in earnest until James Murray (the Professor) became editor in 1879. W.C.Minor (the Madman) was an inmate of Broadmoor Asylum and a prolific contributor of words, sources and definitions during Murray's time.

Sandy felt the author was a great wordsmith and a great choice to tell the story of the Oxford English Dictionary. She liked the way he told the story, "connecting all the dots", and she thought the book was beautifully written by a man obviously in love with words.

Lucy Maxwell. *The Sense and Sensibility Screenplay and Diaries*, by Emma Thompson.

The first part of this book contains the screenplay, written by Emma Thompson, and for which she received an Academy Award. The second part includes diaries kept during the filming by the producer and by Emma Thompson herself. Lucy related several anecdotes from the book. There were seven houses used for the filming, including four run by the National Trust. Apparently some of the volunteers at one of the houses gave a cool welcome to the film crew, expecting them to lay waste to the property. According to Thomson, their reactions ranged from "diffident shyness to nervous terror".

Lucy enjoyed the humour in the book. She said it was an “easy read” but enjoyable. She first read the novel, then watched a video of the movie, and finally read this book to best appreciate the stories of the filming.

Irene Howard. *The Talk in Jane Austen.*, edited by Bruce Stovel and Lynn Weinlos Gregg.

In May, 1999, a conference was held in Jasper by several chapters of JASNA, and the subject explored was *The Talk in Jane Austen*. The papers given at Jasper have been published in this collection of 15 essays. In the novels, it is a mark of distinction for a character to speak well, to know how to converse. Praise of good conversation appears frequently in the novels yet this subject, talk, has not hitherto been explored to any extent by literary critics. The introduction credits Juliet McMaster with being one of the few people exploring the subject and she was probably the original impetus behind the conference.

Irene felt that several of the essays might very well provide programme material for future meetings. She cited Gary Kelly’s essay, “Talk, Narrative and the Modern State”, in which he argues that Jane Austen was writing at a time of the development of a reading public.

The bibliography for this collection is impressive: Kuhn, Freud, Locke, Wittgenstein, etc. Irene reminded us of “the sheer genius of Jane Austen’s writing that can sustain this weight of scholarship”.

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Gilbert White and Jane Austen.

“Those twin luminaries, two flowers of Hampshire soil, Jane Austen and Gilbert White, offer certain interesting similarities. Each is an example of extreme sensitivity coupled with earth-rootedness; in each life we can if we like detect the hand of providence. One cannot well imagine either living at any other time or in another part of the world.

White’s time was 1720 to 1793. As I have said, he perfectly balanced with it, and yet he just sufficiently carried forward into the succeeding age, as Jane Austen, with her serious sense of religion, also did. His birth just then, as if in preparation for the coming of Darwin, while at the same time providing those who wished among the religiously sensitive with a gentle antidote against the terrible shock of evolution, was providential. The place ‘selected’ for his theatre of operation was providential; his profession of clergyman was providential; above all, his family was providential.

For the Whites, like the Austens, and for that matter the Darwins themselves, and the Wedgwoods, seem to have been one of those families which the eighteenth century specialised in for the nurture of genius; families whose members were mostly all sane and cultivated; who all admired and helped each other.

It is not to be supposed that they quite realised what swans had been hatched among them; not indeed is it obvious that either Gilbert or Jane understood that they were swans at all. Both were so modest and retiring, yet both seemed innately, perfectly to understand at the outset what work they had to do. Furnished with such clear vision as from birth, nothing that was to happen on the way forward seemed capable of preventing their fulfillment.”

- Gilbert White & his Selborne: Anthony Rye. (1970).

“Heaven will be a comfortable sofa and an endless supply of novels.” (Anon).

Reports of the JASNA Meeting at Los Angeles, October 16, 2004. Irene Howard.

This meeting was devoted to reports from members who had attended the AGM in Los Angeles. Their reports were so comprehensive and lively that there wasn't time to hear reviews of essays in the last issue of *Persuasions* (which was the planned programme for the meeting), and it was decided to hold them over until another meeting.

Keiko Parker.

Keiko said she was wearing three hats at this AGM: as ordinary member, as Regional Co-ordinator (RC) and as Conference Co-ordinator. "This made me more observant as to the running of an AGM than I would usually be," she said.

At the RC's Training Session, she described our monthly meetings, distributed the latest issue of our Newsletter and the notice of monthly meetings. The RCs were impressed by the fact that we had regular meetings with programmes of substance, as compared to the way some of the regions met, for example, in one another's homes for talk and tea.

At her first Breakout Session, Keiko heard June Sturrock (SFU) speak on "Dandies, Beauties, and the Issues of Good Looks in *Persuasion*," and promptly lined her up to be a speaker at our Jane Austen Day next year. Next, she went to hear Juliet McMaster on "The Sounds of Silence: Anne Elliot Among the Talkers." This is one of the essays from the Banff Conference several years ago, now published in *The Talk in Jane Austen*. Juliet noted that Anne speaks only 30 lines in Kellynch (Chapman edition) and 66 lines at Uppercross. She is not a talker; she is a listener, and among all the talkers feels "perpetual estrangement." She is not a passive listener, but rather listens to understand. After the accident at Lyme, however, she speaks more often because she is taking a more active role, organizing others, and moving towards self-fulfilment and reunion with Captain Wentworth. Another Breakout Session was about the rise of public Art in Jane Austen's time, dealing with the History of the Royal Academy and offering some insights into the work of Joshua Reynolds.

Of all the presentations, Keiko thought that "The Bath of Jane Austen and *Persuasion*: A City of Women Writers" by Isabel Grundy of the University of Alberta, was "the best researched and the best presented." Although it's true, as Anne says, that "the pen has been in men's hands," there were a number of women writers who wrote books set in Bath or about Bath, among them Hannah More, Eliza Haywood, Sarah Fielding and Ann Radcliffe. Moreover, it was a marriage market place, and also a city where women received education.

Keiko attended a performance of *The School for Scandal* (those who couldn't get tickets were treated to a studio showing of the Bollywood movie, *Bride and Prejudice*).

As regards useful hints for our own AGM, Keiko noted that there were only four breakout sessions and the breaks between them were a half hour long, so that there was a more relaxed pace. Coffee and tea were not provided, nor was wine provided at the banquet tables, and none of these was missed. After the banquet, there was an impressive parade of members in costume and Keiko directed our attention to a snapshot in her album of Anna Quillan, whose costume was so attractive and simple to make that Keiko was moved to urge our members to start thinking now about sewing a Regency dress, and possibly using Anna Quillan's directions.

John Parker.

"The Pre-Conference on Thursday evening was the highlight of our attendance at the LA AGM," said John. There were three lectures. Marlyn Musicant, Historian for the Art Department

of the Huntington Library, explained the actual process of portrait painting with reference to Gainsborough, Reynolds, and Romney, among others. The sitter chose the costume and, from a catalogue, the attitude to be adopted for the portrait. The painter was expected to be charming and entertaining during the sitting. Reynolds, for example, used a brush 19 inches long and allowed the sitter to watch the progress of the painting in a mirror. Portrait painters were well paid: the usual fee was 80 guineas, though Reynolds was paid 100.

Stephen Tabor, Curator of Early Printed Books at the Huntington, spoke about what books actually looked like during the Regency. The type was different then with the vertical strokes being stronger than the horizontal ones. Illustrations were produced by copper engraving, with colour hand-painted. This tedious and time-consuming work was often done by women and children. Of special interest was a slide showing a copy of Robert Bage's *Hermesprung*, once owned by Jane Austen, each volume in the set showing her signature on the front page. John reported further that "at first the printing on the spine was tooled onto the leather, but later they printed such information on a small piece of paper and pasted it onto the spine."

Elizabeth Proudman from Hampshire spoke on "Jane Austen and the Landscape Garden," with special reference to the leading landscape gardeners of the time. Capability Brown was a working gardener with a special knowledge of transplanting and pruning trees. Gilpin created the idea of the Picturesque, "in which everything must come in threes, whether they are people or cows in the field," reported John. Jane Austen makes humorous reference to this in *Pride and Prejudice* when Elizabeth declines an invitation to join Mr. Darcy and the two Bingley sisters in their walk. They are perfectly grouped, she says, and by joining them she would spoil the picturesque.

The Pre-Conference occupied the whole day, allowing time to visit the Gardens, Library and Art Gallery. Of special interest were the Gutenberg Bible, c. 1455, and the 1613 Bible, and also the Ellesmere manuscript of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, "gorgeously illustrated in gold leaf."

Laureen McMahon.

Elizabeth Morrison spoke on "Finding Exactly the Right Spot to Pop the Question." In Jane Austen's novels, that spot is quite often out of doors. Henry Tilney, Mr. Knightley, Captain Wentworth, and Mr. Darcy all propose out of doors. Elizabeth is a special case, however, because she had three proposals: Mr. Darcy earlier proposed indoors, where he was refused, and Mr. Collins was also refused indoors. Elizabeth Morrison believes that readers of the novels would have understood that the outdoor setting suggested a "natural relationship," and authentic emotion, whereas the indoors suggested confinement, noise, discomfort and anything but true happiness.

A member of the audience had also found exactly the right spot to pop the question. Laureen told how during the question period, one James Ashley stood up and said, "I wonder just what a proposal was like in those days." Elizabeth Morrison replied, "Why don't you come up and we'll demonstrate. Choose somebody from the audience." So he chose his girlfriend of three years, Mary Graff, who was in the audience. Then they're both on the stage. He has the ring in a little box in his pocket. He pops the question. She says "yes." He's in Regency costume. She says, "You're my combination of Mr. Knightley and Captain Wentworth. We've always spoken of our love as something out of a Jane Austen novel." The audience was totally silent with amazement during all this, adds Laureen. Of course, James Ashley had arranged all this beforehand with Elizabeth Morrison, but Mary Graff was totally surprised.

Follies, nonsense, whims, inconsistencies and the tinkle of Jane's laughter.

[There is a 'stir' in England about a Bath café which plans to serve "Jane Austen menus", presumably using the famous silhouette; the National Portrait Gallery owns the copyright, and intends to charge for the privilege of using it. Paul Johnson commented in *The Spectator* last October about the fuss.]

"Jane had nothing against places that served food, and inns, taverns and hotels figure much more frequently in her narratives than one would expect, and are always described with approval. Jane was a hungry girl - Maggie Lane's admirable volume *Jane Austen and Food* provides plenty of evidence - and while she would never have dreamed of displaying greed, like Mrs. Jennings at Delaford ("Lord, how Charlotte and I did stuff the only time we were there!"), she had marked tastes in what was good. She told Cassandra that she loved being in charge of the housekeeping at home, because then she could make sure that all her favourite dishes were provided. There is a lot of lip-smacking in *Emma*, the novel which evidently gave her the most pleasure to write.

Nor was Jane above commerce. Once she had taken the plunge into literature, she took a close interest in the possible profits her work might bring her. Not for nothing was Henry, her favourite brother, a banker, and he acted in effect as her agent. . . I don't think those of us living today, when clever women earn over a million a year in business, can have any conception of what a difference a few guineas in her purse made to a woman like Jane, born a lady but with no assured income whatever and obliged to dress herself respectably, and if possible smartly, on exiguous means. Her letters to Cassandra are full of references to money, usually tiny sums saved or expended on fabrics to be made into dresses. For Jane to buy a bonnet or pair of gloves was an event to be carefully considered beforehand. The money she earned from her novels was doubly precious to her - she loved the idea of relative independence but still more she relished the fun of spending it . . .

What all the solemn commentators on her forget is that Jane liked laughing, and causing others to laugh, more than anything else in the world - food, clothes, I am tempted to say even men. It was her gift, her genius, her pleasure, her profession, her credo. I think she saw life as a vale of tears, especially for women, and wanted to change them from tears of sorrow into tears of simple, innocent mirth. She was a high comedian and her passion for jokes ought to be the starting-point of any work about her."

"And Another Thing": Paul Johnson (*The Spectator*, 11 October, 2003)

"Jane Austen liked to keep abreast of the nuances of current taste, and both her letters and her novels demonstrate her awareness of what was (or was not) in fashion. Harriet Smith's passing reference to Mr. Elton's yellow curtains, in *Emma*, is subtly significant: in 1814, when the novel was being written, yellow was a somewhat daring and striking colour for household furnishings, and its use at the vicarage hints at the showy presumption of this newcomer." P.181.

Jane Austen. A Companion. Josephine Ross (2002).

Thanks to Jean Scott for this clipping.

"I cannot live without books." Thomas Jefferson 1743-1826.

Georgian Vulnerability.

“When considering [the] necessity of negotiating an advantageous marriage, it is important to realise that women did not have a monopoly on vulnerability in the Georgian period. It is axiomatic in Austen criticism to read the novels as portraying female vulnerability in a patriarchal society, where men have all the power and wealth, and the independence these confer, simply because they are men. However, the theme of male vulnerability is strange enough in the novels to deserve greater consideration than it has been given. The novels portray primogeniture as a convention rather than a right under Georgian law, and there are powerful Matriarchs in Austen’s novels who control the wealth inherited from their parents and blood relatives and/or who control their husband’s wealth. These powerful women pass on wealth to their children or relatives, male and female alike, depending on whether their matriarchal will is obeyed.

Primogeniture can be easily subverted by the whim of a patriarch as well as a matriarch; and, of course, many sons are not first sons and can suffer from the exigencies of primogeniture just as much as their sisters can. In Austen’s novels, young men can be as socially and economically and morally vulnerable as young women. In *S&S*, for example, it would be unwise to presume that Elinor Dashwood is more disadvantaged than Edward Ferrars [and vice versa]. Feminist readers who presume a universal female victimhood and disadvantage tend either to overlook or to downplay the fact that Austen’s novels contain many examples of women who, within patriarchy, are oppressive of men in social and economic and moral ways. . . .

One of the puzzling aspects of Austen’s novels . . . is the level of social and economic insecurity they present even within the landed gentry. The fact that most of Austen’s families have servants, even among the more modest households, can be misleading. Perhaps we misinterpret Austen’s representation of lifestyles that seem, from a distant perspective, to be far more affluent than they really are; and perhaps we overestimate the income-generating capacity of her moneyed classes in relation to their cost of living ; and underestimate the extensive claims made on their capital. Even families that are comparatively wealthy - for example, the Bertrams of Mansfield or the Musgroves of Uppercross - do not have unlimited means, and rely on strategic marriage alliances and effective husbandry to guarantee their well-being and posterity.”

Jane Austen and Religion. Michael Giffin (2002) p. 19-20.

“[Through the eyes of William Gilpin] the young Jane, like many of her contemporaries, learnt to appreciate the delights of English scenery; he expanded her horizons, acquainting her with the character of parts of the country which she visited only later, or not at all.

And being Jane, of course, she could not take him entirely seriously. With her beloved Gilpin, as with everybody else, she was quick to spot an absurdity, and Gilpin’s chief absurdity, which emerges . . . from everything he wrote, is his preference for what will make a good picture above what will be useful to humanity. Gilpin cannot see beauty in the scenes of agricultural prosperity which Jane Austen, with her common sense, knew was her country’s greatest asset. The best kind of landscape for her, as for her character Edward Ferrars, is one which combines beauty with utility. The bounty of nature, under the controlling hand of man, is necessarily beautiful to Jane Austen, because it satisfies both sense and sensibility. Or, as Emma muses in a much later novel, ‘It was a sweet view - sweet to the eye and to the mind. English verdure, English culture, English comfort, seen under a sun bright, without being oppressive’.”

Jane Austen and the Picturesque -

Maggie Lane (Jane Austen Society (Midlands), *Transactions* No. 1, 1990.)

Role-Models for Women in Jane Austen's Novels.

"Leaving the home of her family offers Anne Elliot not only new perspectives on herself, but also a broadening in the range of possibilities of what she may become. Jane Austen is generally regarded as having accepted the most basic assumptions of her time and class, but in *Persuasion* she voices a protest stronger, I think, than has been heard against the constriction of what life offered to females. This constriction is apparent in the array of adult women she offers to her heroine at the outset, defining the limits of what Anne may herself expect to become.

There is first her own mother. Unwisely and unhappily married, Lade Elliot is attached to life solely through her daughters and Lady Russell. Next, there is Lady Russell, herself a widow, whose closest attachment, reciprocally, is to Lady Elliot. Described as a sensible and cultivated woman, she nonetheless has prejudices in favour of ancestry and rank which lead her to err consistently in her judgments. She is a more palatable representative of the old order than Sir Walter, but she is of the same world.

Lastly, there is Mrs. Musgrove, the quintessential materfamilias, whose knowledge of the world extends no further than her own family, and whose partiality to that family exposes her, in a well-known and controversial passage, to the author's attack for her 'large, fat sighings' over the death of her ne'er-do-well son.

The letting of Kellynch Hall, which sets in motion the events of the novel, brings into Anne's purview a very different sort of woman. This is Mrs. Croft. Unlike any other married couple in the novel, the Crofts find pleasure in one another's company . . . Whether strolling with her husband through the streets of Bath, or accompanying him on board ship, Mrs. Croft, it is emphasized repeatedly, is a woman at home in the world of men; it is significant, in this context, that she is childless . . . In the person of Mrs. Croft, Jane Austen presents to her heroine an example of a woman not limited by traditional constraints. Moving from the confined world of her own family, Anne Elliot discovers a widening in the range of what it is possible for a woman to be.

But it is, after all, 1815, and these new possibilities exist primarily in the imagination. We are reminded throughout *Persuasion* of the disparity between what life offered to women and what it offered to men."

Female Adolescence: Katherine Dalsimer (1986).

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"Impel me not, I supplicate, to the abyss of desperation; emancipate me from the tortuosities of agonizing dubitation; nor drive me, O cogitation pre-eminently terrific, to seek on the ramifications of a tree or in the voraginous profundity of a stream, the privation of my vitality."

- *Emily, A Moral Tale*, by Rev. H.Kett (1809). Quoted in *Ideas and Innovations*: Kathleen Jones.

[A good example of why Kett is not a big seller today. E.S.]

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