

Muse & Musings

"The company of clever, well-informed people, who have a great deal of conversation"

November 13th Meeting: Lindsey Seatter Imagining Publics, Negotiating Powers – The Parallel Evolutions of Romantic Social Structure and Jane Austen's Free Indirect Discourse

Dr. Lindsey Seatter's talk on how Jane Austen's pioneering use of Free Indirect Discourse (FID) helps convey ideas in her novels contained many interesting insights. R.W. Chapman said that "the subject of her art is not individuals but their interaction," and FID suggests that interaction in a fashion that is both subtle and economical. The reader never knows where the authorial voice leaves off and the character's inner thought takes over. Even straightforward statements may be slyly infected with FID. The opening line of *Emma*, "Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever and rich," appears like a statement of undisputed fact, but by the end of the novel, only "handsome" remains certain.



Dr. Seatter spent August 2017 doing research for her dissertation at Chawton House Library, seen above.

Seatter ranged over the later novels showing how FID helps to evoke the instability of the Romantic period – a time of rapid and progressive change, including both the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, which created upheaval in the orders of rank, class, income, relationships.

In the moments surrounding Louisa's fall from the Cobb in *Persuasion* FID leads us from the internal thoughts of



Winter 2021 meeting dates

At St. Philip's: Mark your calendar!

Our next meeting will be in February, but no date has been set.

Full COVID protocols will be in place, according to Public Health Orders at the time.

Please see the program of events on our website for more up-to-date information (thanks to webmaster Laureen McMahon):

[JASNA-Vancouver program](https://www.jasna-vancouver.org/program)

Anne to the group's ideas to Louisa's thoughts to Wentworth's reasoned concerns, then the group's emotions after Louisa's fall. The point of view changes five times in less than 250 words.

She finished with some thoughts on how JA's style may have been changing in the unfinished fragment *Sandition*: restlessness and movement in novel reflects economic status in England after recovery from Napoleonic Wars, the cast of characters reflects the emergence of the middle class and world of commerce.

– *Elsbeth Flood using notes by Lorraine Meltzer*

Final Recap from May's Discussion

Our panel discussion on financially vulnerable women featured Joan Reynolds as Isabella Thorpe; Phyllis Ferguson on Miss Bates; Janice Mallison on Lucy Steele; Phyllis (again) on Charlotte Lucas Collins; Keiko Parker on Fanny Price; and Barbara Phillips on Mrs. Clay and Mrs. Smith in *Persuasion*. Several of the presenters provided their scripts to be featured in *Muse & Musings*, as we did with the Aunts. Here is Phyllis's contribution on Charlotte Lucas.

Charlotte Lucas Collins

At first many of us don't realize that Charlotte is in this financially vulnerable category – not immediately like

Mrs. Smith or the three Dashwood sisters but in the long-term if she does not marry.

Who is Charlotte?

The eldest child of at least five of a man who is described as having “a tolerable fortune” with which to support and launch them. Later Austen adds that Sir William and Lady Lucas will be able to give Charlotte “little fortune.”

She is 27 years old so the same age as Anne Elliot and significantly older than the Bennet or Dashwood sisters or the teenaged Catherine Morland. A young woman with no training nor, since her father made his income through trade, is she likely to have anyone in her extended family who may be able to leave her an inheritance.

She is a very realistic person who describes herself as “not romantic” and who knows that even her modest life ambitions are becoming less and less likely.

The fact that her closest friend, Elizabeth Bennet, is seven years her junior may be an indication that her age peers are now engrossed in their own marriages, households and children. She is in the vulnerable position of having been left behind or “on the shelf.”



Mrs. Collins played by Lucy Scott in P&P 1995; Mr. Collins played by Tom Hollander in P&P 2005.

Given these facts, since her “inoffensive, friendly and obliging” father is likely to predecease her, an unwed Charlotte would end up in the same position as Cassandra and Jane Austen – largely dependent on the charity of her brothers. Will the one who is likely to inherit Lucas Lodge be as caring as their father? Given the boldness with which he argues with Mrs. Bennet as he boasts of his youthful ambitions that he would use wealth to “keep a pack of foxhounds, and drink a bottle of wine every day”, his may be a riotous home that out-spends its income. Many a hard-working, innovative trades or business man has built up a fortune which is then inherited by a younger generation lacking the same financial good sense. Besides the character of Charlotte’s brothers, much will also depend on that of the women they marry – and how many children result from these unions. Two of the Austen

brothers each had eleven children! Married brothers have many, many responsibilities.

Charlotte’s hopes for her life are modest compared to our modern ones to “have it all” – twenty-first century women in their twenties hope for some at least of the following menu: education, a stimulating career, foreign travel, a soul-mate partner, financial success, a house, children.

Charlotte hopes only for “a comfortable home.” Her own home. Not one where her mother or her sister-in-law is the chatelaine.

Mr. Collins can fulfil this wish. His position at Rosings comes endowed with “a good house and very sufficient income.” Although only 25 years of age, he is well enough set up in life to be able to consider taking on the responsibility of marriage and a family. In that sense, he is Charlotte’s dream come true!

Now, what of his personal as well as his financial characteristics. What sort of a life partner will Charlotte be acquiring?

One aspect of his character, some basic decency, is often overlooked. When his patroness commands him to marry, his thoughts turn immediately to his father’s cousin’s family of daughters showing his awareness that under the laws of entail he will ultimately inherit their home thus leaving them without.

He makes the following poignant statement after his first visit to Longbourne – “I certainly meant well through the whole affair. My object has been to secure an amiable companion for myself, with due consideration for the advantage of all your family.” He and Mrs. Bennet recognized that having any one of her daughters marry the heir would guarantee that she and any unmarried daughters could remain in their home permanently. Their very real threat of homelessness would thereby be removed.

However, although he will not be able to help Mrs. Bennet, Mr. Collins has achieved half of his goal. He has secured “an amiable companion.”

Miss Lucas and Mr. Collins enter marriage not romantically but feeling positive about their arrangement. Each has achieved their stated goal: a home; a companion. This may provide a solid base for a satisfying relationship. They are content and both look forward to the arrival of their first child who will give them a common, emotional bond.

Yes, Mr. Collins is pedantic, socially awkward and, indeed, shows a variety of other traits compatible with being on the autistic spectrum. However, marriage to a socially astute wife such as Charlotte will provide him

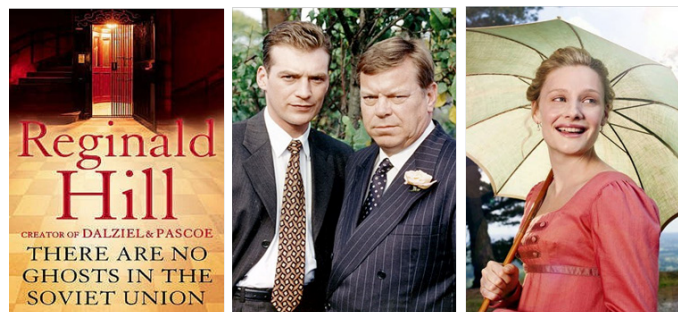
with positive guidance for the first time in his life. Once he inherits Longbourne, he will be removed from the unpleasant influence of Lady Catherine. His energy and attention to detail will be invested not in just a garden but in managing the farm and lands that Mr. Bennet shows as little care for as he does his daughters. As land owners, Mr. and Mrs. Collins will have a respectable and honoured position in their community. I believe that they may well continue to be content and to treat each other pleasantly without the bitterness and disrespect shown by the current married couple residing at Longbourne.

To quote critic DW Harding, Charlotte will make a “tolerable life for herself in the second-best world that most people, except heroines, have to inhabit.” And second best is still a Silver Medal! – *Phyllis Ferguson*

Book Review

“Poor Emma” by Reginald Hill

What you may ask is murder mystery/crime writer Reginald Hill doing playing about with the works of Jane Austen? Hill is probably most well-known as the creator of Yorkshire police detectives Dalziel and Pascoe. But you may not recall that he is also someone with sufficient Janeite credibility to have been one of the key speakers at the 1997 JASNA AGM in San Francisco (see his “Voyage of Discovery” in *Persuasions* #19). Moreover, he is the author of a modern-day completion of *Sanditon* reinventing it as a murder mystery requiring investigation by his famous team of sleuths. (*The Price of Butcher’s Meat*, 2009 – UK title: *A Cure for All Diseases*.)



Centre: Reginald Hill’s detective characters Dalziel (r) and Pascoe (played by Warren Clarke and Colin Buchanan) seen in the British TV series 1996-2007). **Right:** Emma played by Romola Garai (2009).

Some 30 years ago, Hill wrote a collection of short stories published under the title *There are No Ghosts in the Soviet Union* which included a little-known sequel to *Emma*. (I was unaware of this story until it was mentioned to me by Elspeth Flood, the editor of this Newsletter, and so am indebted to her for bringing it to my attention.) The original novel of *Emma* is often cited as one of the earliest mystery novels, so perhaps it is not so strange that Hill would be attracted to this story and want to set down his idea of what happened in the years after Emma’s marriage to George Knightley. I think we all wonder how Austen’s

heroines turn out after their marriages. Emma is no exception. Is she still matchmaking? How long did Mr. Woodhouse survive after the wedding? How many children did Emma have? Has Emma matured in her outlook? To the latter point I will say yes, but whether she retains more of the Emma we know and love, or whether she has become more cynical and calculating along the lines of Lady Susan – well you will have to read the short story to find out.

This sequel relies on the intricacies of estate and inheritance law and it certainly reveals a much more strategic side to Emma, and also leans more to Austen’s assertion of Emma being “a heroine whom no one but myself will much like.” As for my opinion on this continuation of Emma’s life, I am not generally a fan of these types of sequels, but in Reginald Hill’s capable hands I enjoyed this intriguing and light-hearted take on Emma’s life after Austen had put down her pen.

Note: Hill is not the only detective novelist who enjoys Austen’s works. Fellow crime writer, Scottish author Val McDermid, is also a devoted Janeite – if you ever participate in an Austen-themed pub quiz and McDermid is in the room, get her on your team. Her knowledge of Austen trivia is unsurpassed, which is probably why she was selected to write a modern version of *Northanger Abbey*. Her version was relocated to modern-day Edinburgh during the Festival – a busy social time in a city that is full of dark alleyways and gothic architecture. It is one of the few of the ill-fated Austen Project efforts to have succeeded in my opinion. – *Joan Reynolds*

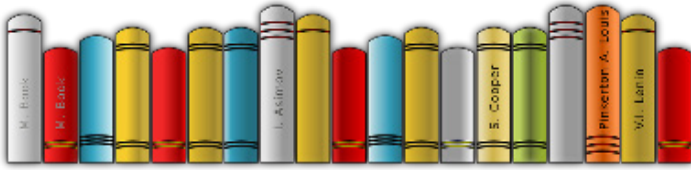


Austen Sighting

“The State of Grace” by Harold Brodkey

Short story first published in *The New Yorker* on Nov. 6, 1954 and re-printed in *The 50s: The Story of a Decade*

“If my mother was home, I braced myself for unpleasantness, because she didn’t like me to sit and read; she hated me to read. She wanted to drive me outdoors, where I would become an athlete and be like other boys and be popular. It filled her with rage when I ignored her advice and opened a book; once, she rushed up to me, her face suffused with anger, took the book (I think it was *Pride and Prejudice*), and hurled it out the third-story window. At the time, I sat and tried to sneer, thinking she was half mad, with her exaggerated rage, and so foolish not to realize that I could be none of the things she thought I ought to be. But now I think – perhaps wistfully – that she was merely desperate, driven to extremes in her anxiety to save me.” – *contributed by Phyllis Ferguson*



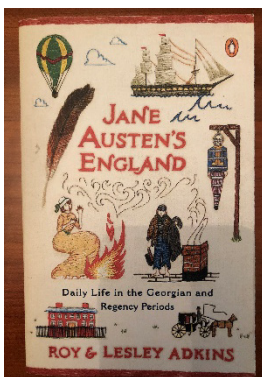
From our Library

Jane Austen's England. Daily Life in the Georgian and Regency Periods by Roy and Lesley Adkins

I recently discovered this book (published in 2014) in my home library and will donate to our JASNA Vancouver library because I think it is an interesting addition to our collection.

The book uses contemporary texts such as journals (a few extracts from Jane Austen's), diaries, letters, and newspaper notices to describe the lives of both the gentry and the poor during the Georgian and Regency periods. While moving through the stages of life from birth and childhood, marriage and adulthood, to death, the middle chapters also describe the activities and details of life at this time: clothing, food, money, home and amusements. There are descriptions of fetching water, buying smuggled gin and the hardships endured by children working in the mines.

I particularly enjoyed the chapter entitled "Wealth and Worth" which among other topics describes the difficulty of sending money by post, which led to people sending banknotes in two separate halves. The bank therefore started printing the serial number on each end of a banknote so that the two halves could be matched and presented at the bank. Coin shortages led to counterfeiting, and the wars were a continual drain on the economy; all these and more are covered in this chapter.



I found this book an interesting complement to the book *What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew* which is in our library. While there is overlap in the subject matter in both books, I found that *Jane Austen's England* provided more descriptions of the lives of the working class and poor of the time; however, I have found that it is easier to find specific information in *What Jane Austen Ate...*, as it has a more detailed Table of Contents and a

Glossary at the back for quick reference. Together the two books provide a good background to society at this time.

Library Volunteers Needed for In-Person Meetings

We now are responsible for bringing out and putting back the library in the storage area and therefore could a few (strong) members stay afterwards to help with this.

– Cathleen Boyle, librarian



Member Profile

Julia VanDelft



1. Tell us a bit about who you are and your life to-date.

I grew up in Rosedale and Agassiz on a dairy farm, the first daughter after four boys, and had a happy, carefree childhood, probably very similar to Catherine Morland who was "fond of all boys' plays" and "noisy and wild." Like Catherine, I loved

"baseball, riding on horseback, and running about the country" but I also did love to read. I met my husband, Darryl, in high school and we were married in 2012. We now have three children, Luke (7), Ruth (4), and Jane (1). We live in Abbotsford.

I studied English literature, history, and TESL at UFV and graduated with a BA in 2013. I love reading, playing piano, travelling, gardening, and sewing. I also enjoy researching family history and working on my family tree. My grandparents on all sides emigrated from Holland so my roots are there. Some of my other favourite authors are Robert Jordan and Georgette Heyer.

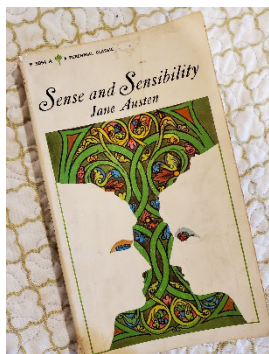
2. When did you join JASNA? How did you find out about JASNA?

I joined in the fall of 2018. I found out about JASNA through a Google search, looking for more Jane Austen things to do.

3. How did you first get started with Jane Austen?

I remember watching the Keira Knightley *Pride and Prejudice* when I was 16 or so with my friends. I read my first Jane Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*, sometime after that. I had my mom's old copy (below), published in 1961 that may have been passed down from my Oma. I distinctly remember thinking that Marianne ending up

with Colonel Brandon was just sad and that he was much too old for her. I don't feel that way anymore.



4. What do you like about JASNA?

I love being with a group of people that are as interested in Jane Austen as I am. I also like learning new things, as I had only read the books and watched the movies before joining JASNA and hadn't known much about Jane or her family at all. I find the group of people so fascinating with all of their different backgrounds and interests.

5. Has JASNA given you any special memories? New friends? Inspiration to new experiences?

I enjoyed the in-person meetings before the pandemic, and have made new friends. I liked playing piano and hope to do it again one day. I have been inspired to continue costuming and also to visit the UK again in 2022, and plan this time to visit many of the important places in Jane Austen's life. I look forward to attending more in-person meetings in the future and am very excited looking forward to the 2022 AGM in Victoria.



Austen Sighting

Rules for Visiting by Jessica Francis Kane (2019)

"But now I'm thinking about visiting friends, putting myself on their mercy. Maybe I'll stay a fortnight." I was thinking of Austen and her heroines. It was always the most vulnerable, the orphaned and unmarried, who went visiting.

"You're kidding."

"I've always liked the idea of them. Why not?"

"I think the fortnight is dead, along with calling cards and letters of introduction," Sue said.

"No one has guest rooms or servants anymore, either. I'm sure that's part of it."

— contributed by Phyllis Ferguson

Call for Volunteers

2022 JASNA Vancouver's 40th Anniversary Projects

Joan Reynolds would like to begin work on a "legacy project" in celebration of our 40-year anniversary, and she is looking for three or four people to volunteer to help. The group would work together independently and go through Eileen's early newsletters one by one, creating an index of the articles in each issue. There is no specific deadline, just something that can be built over time and used as a reference resource. If this is something you feel you would like to help with, please contact Joan Reynolds at joanar@shaw.ca

It is proposed to do a special 40th-anniversary feature or supplement in our June newsletter. Members are asked to submit short articles, or even a couple of sentences, relating any special memories you have of meetings over the years. Of particular interest are those "pioneer" members who went to the very early meetings at Eileen and Ron's house, but any special memories or anecdotes will be of interest. Especially welcome are any photos of earlier meetings and events. There have been a lot of activities over the years in our Region, including two AGMs (1986 and 2007) and many memorable Jane Austen Days. You can submit your contributions to either the editor Elspeth Flood, or to Joan Reynolds.

RC's Corner

Michelle Siu steps down at the end of her term



Here I am with the last time I will write the words for the "RC Corner." A new RC will be elected at the December meeting.

Thank you to the membership for your faith in and support for my work serving as your Regional Coordinator. My extended gratitude to the

Programming Committee for their hours upon hours also seeing to the details that make our meetings so successful. I share the credit with the Programming Committee for each of the many, many times that someone said to me, "that was an excellent meeting!" and yes, I did hear that many times over the last seven years.

I feel the most satisfied with my ability to provide consistent technical expertise to our meeting presentations, making each one visually impressive. And then more recently for the successes we had with our

many Zoom meetings over 2020 and 2021. Even with a pandemic, our group was able to dependably meet and bring a bit of normalcy while the world around us continued to shift and change.

I want to thank Phyllis Bottomer for her introduction to the role of RC. I recall her ease and grace chairing meetings and then also connecting myself with others on the national level. Thank you for your leadership. And I hope that I, the succession plan you brought with you to that Montreal AGM, have done you proud, and that I have improved this position for the next person to fulfill the duties of Regional Coordinator. I have said many times over how much I enjoy our meetings when our group gathers. I hope that we continue to prosper and advance on JASNA Vancouver's excellent legacy. We have a ways to go and I look forward to seeing how we evolve.

Call for volunteer Treasurer

Our treasurer Elaine Wong has held the position for 6+ years. The position of Treasurer is volunteer and not voted on, therefore it has no term limits. But over the coming year we will look for a successor.

Call for Victoria AGM volunteers



We're less than 11 months out from the AGM in Victoria. Volunteers are needed in many areas, including but not limited to: introducing breakout speakers, attending tours as a local representative, proofreading, helping at

registration desk, filling a seat in the Emporium, technology expertise, and many others. To volunteer, please email Alison Dacia Brown, Coordinator of the JASNA 2022 AGM jasnavictoria2022agm@gmail.com, detailing your volunteer capability, time commitment, and home phone or cell phone contact info.

If you have ideas for a future meeting, have a topic or speaker you would like to see at our meeting, please email me or approach me or any member of the Program Committee.
– Michelle Siu



JASNA Vancouver Contacts

Regional Coordinator:	Michelle Siu jasnavancouverrc@gmail.com
Co-Coordinator:	Janice Mallison
Treasurer:	Elaine Wong treasurer.jasnavancouver@gmail.com
Program Committee chair:	vacant – looking for a volunteer
Newsletter Editor:	Elspeth Flood
Website coordinator:	Laureen McMahon
Facebook Administrator:	Joan Reynolds
Library:	Cathleen Boyle & Jennifer Cothran
Austen Extracts:	Aileen Hollifield
Bountiful Basket:	Phyllis Ferguson Bottomer
Outreach Coordinator:	Donna Ornstein

To contact any of these volunteers, email our Regional Co-ordinator at jasnavancouverrc@gmail.com.





Gallery

Happy Times Past and Future



Left: February 2020 screening of *Emma*, our last in-person meet-up before the plague. **Centre:** December 2015, Phyllis and Lindsay as Mr. & Mrs. Gardiner. **Right:** Christmas together 2019.



Left: December 2020, Zoom toast. **Centre:** Pam and Elaine, December 2017. **Right:** Silent Auction swag from 2018.



Memories of birthday cakes past



Wishing you all a happy holiday season.
Please join us for our next meeting in
February 2022



(Be sure to check with www.jasnavancouver.ca
for meeting news and updates)



Joan's lovely poster for our as-yet-unnamed next meeting; logo for our celebration of 40 years of JASNA-Vancouver.



This Newsletter, the publication of the Vancouver Region of the Jane Austen Society of North America, is distributed to members by email and posted on our website. Members who so request may receive a hard copy either at a meeting or in the mail. All submissions and book reviews on the subject of Jane Austen, her life, her works and her times, are welcome.

Email: elspeth.n.flood@gmail.com Or mail: Elspeth Flood
#501 – 1520 Harwood Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6G 1X9

JASNA Vancouver website: www.jasnavancouver.ca