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Keeping Up Appearances: Fidelity and Performance Issues in the Operatic Adaptation of Jane Austen's Mansfield Park

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Keeping Up Appearances:

Fidelity and Performance Issues in the Operatic Adaptation of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

in Music

by

Meagan Gale Charlly Martin

2019

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Keeping Up Appearances:

Fidelity and Performance Issues in the Operatic Adaptation

of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*

by

Meagan Gale Charlly Martin

Doctor of Musical Arts in Music

University of California, Los Angeles, 2019

Professor Vladimir Chernov, Co-Chair

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In this dissertation, I investigate the context and emergence of Jane Austen's novels as operatic source material, with a particular focus on the transformation of her third novel for Jonathan Dove and Alasdair Middleton's *Mansfield Park* opera. I consider the mutable concept of fidelity both as it relates to historically informed staging, costuming, and deportment and to the transfer of an original work to a new medium. I have assembled passages from etiquette and conduct manuals from the Regency period in order to assist current performers and directors in infusing greater believability into their performances through an understanding of the social

nuances and distinct physicality that characterized the British gentry class of the early nineteenth century. Reflections by composers Rachel DeVore Fogarty (*Persuasion*), John Morrison (*The History of England*), Daniel Nelson (*Pride and Prejudice*), and Aferdian Stephens (*Sense and Sensibility*); by librettists Marella Martin Koch (*Sense and Sensibility*) and Douglas Murray (*Persuasion*); and by composer/librettist Kirke Mechem (*Pride and Prejudice*) offer further insight into the adaptation process and into what makes Austen's works rich terrain for creators of new opera.

The dissertation of Meagan Gale Charlly Martin is approved.

Juliana K. Gondek

Anne K. Mellor

John A. Steinmetz

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2019

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INTRODUCTION

Opera is an art form known for its larger-than-life presentation. In traditional repertoire, singing actors project their unamplified voices in extreme ranges over a full orchestra to enact accounts of forbidden love, honor, betrayal, manipulation, and sacrifice. The grandest of operas feature opulent sets with a great number of personnel onstage at a given time. Jane Austen, on the other hand, is an author recognized for her remarkably realistic stories, which prize normal everyday life and describe it in the context of the British landed gentry of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—a relatively sheltered, calm realm of existence. Perhaps it is this seeming incompatibility that prevented the adaptation of Austen's work for the operatic stage until 2011, nearly two hundred years after her death in 1817. Now respected in scholarly and popular contexts alike in sites as varied as her native England, the U.S., Italy, Pakistan and China, Jane Austen is one of the most celebrated authors internationally and on the verge of a more thorough representation in operatic repertoire.[1]

Jane Austen in Context

Some scholars compare Austen to Mozart, citing her "penetratingly true pictures of human life and artistic achievements of a Mozartian perfection."[2] Each one of her novels may have the traditional ending of a man and woman overcoming societal obstacles and

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[1] "The Great American Read," PBS's 2018 poll to discover American readers' favorite novel, came out with Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* at number four, sandwiched between the *Harry Potter* series at number three and *The Lord of the Rings* series at number five. McGowan Transcriptions' survey of the most Instagrammed deceased authors put Jane Austen at number five. Mainstream Hollywood stars such as Anne Hathaway, Colin Firth, and Keira Knightley have starred as Jane Austen's characters or as Jane herself. The adaptations and commodifications of her life extend to live performance arenas (such as musical theater, theater, and opera), web series, board games, spin-off literature, Band-aids, mugs, action figures, magnetic poetry kits, and even tattoos. See chapter 4 for more information about Austen's current representation in opera.

[2] David Cecil, *A Portrait of Jane Austen, (*London: Constable, 1978), 8.

misunderstanding to find happiness in marriage; however, it is the remarkably truthful interactions Austen constructs along the way on this journey where her brilliance shines through, not the standard arc of the journey itself. Her writing is delightfully witty and focuses on the intellectual, emotional and social interplay of individuals—both those romantically and platonically involved—and how these individuals exist in the framework of their highly stratified and prescribed society. Her works are particularly revered for their heroines who have minds of their own at a time when women were expected to be subordinate and docile. These women do not settle for unloving if advantageous relationships, but instead maintain a belief in the possibility of a match that is truly harmonious and rooted in love, albeit frequently and coincidentally accompanied by wealth and advantages. Austen does not shy away from the quotidian; rather, she embraces the machinations and emotional depth lodged within everyday life, and her writing thrives because her carefully drawn characters remain recognizable across centuries.

Born to George Henry Austen, a clergyman, and Cassandra Leigh Austen in 1775 in Steventon, Jane was the seventh of eight children. Her family was on the fringes of the landed gentry—above middle class in rank, and giving her father the all-important distinction of being a gentleman, but they were not well-off enough financially to pass each day lolling around the house with servants doing every menial task for them. Mr. Austen had two livings[3] and land to farm, in addition to hosting a small boarding school, in an effort to make ends meet. Despite this need to work to stay financially afloat, in manners, education and mentality the Austens and the gentry in general were more aligned with the aristocracy than with the middle class, and Jane's

[3] A *living* described a position as a clergyman and its accompanying salary and benefits.

writings unapologetically depict the veneered interactions that characterized much of the gentility.

Jane developed enthusiasm for writing at an early age, and her family supported her talent. Her earliest writings, comprising her *Juvenilia*, are traced back as early as 1787. She frequently read excerpts of her projects at family gatherings, and her father even helped her try to get "First Impressions*,"* what would later become *Pride and Prejudice*, published in 1797. It was not until 1811 that one of her works was accepted for publication though, and that was *Sense and Sensibility*. *Pride and Prejudice* came next in 1813, followed a year later by *Mansfield Park*. The last novel published during her lifetime was *Emma* at the end of 1815, with *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey* released posthumously in the last week of 1817.[4] She published as "A Lady" for *Sense and Sensibility*—possibly with reference to the same choice of anonymity as other authors including Maria Edgeworth—and subsequently as the author of the preceding work(s). Her identity was not formally revealed until her brother's biographical notice after her death. However, the anonymous author of *Pride and Prejudice* was celebrated throughout England during the final years of her life. The Prince Regent, future King George IV, had a special interest in fiction and owned at least one copy of all of Austen's novels published during her lifetime. The morally-bankrupt royal even contrived a begrudging dedication from Austen for *Emma,* despite the fact that she "[hated]" him.[5]

Very little is known about Jane Austen's life because many of her letters were destroyed by her older sister Cassandra upon Jane's passing. Cassandra was Jane's best friend and primary

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[4] *Emma* was actually published at the end of 1815, but 1816 is listed on the title page. The same goes for *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey*, which were both published at the end of 1817, but 1818 appears on their respective title pages.

[5] Alison Flood, "One of Jane Austen's earliest buyers revealed as Prince Regent — who she 'hated,'" *The Guardian,* July 25, 2018, https://bit.ly/2uo5wlM.
He knew her identity through communication with her publisher.

confidant, but they spent much of their lives together, which cancelled the need for letters; thus, biographers are faced with many gaps in their knowledge of Jane's experiences. Even after turning to county records, family diaries, and letters from other members of the Austen family, there is still much about her life that historians must posit based on conjecture alone.[6] Jane is frequently viewed in terms of the original, outdated scholarship about her, which labeled her works as didactic, conservative, and as a sort of hushed pastime that she kept hidden as much as possible—misinformation rooted in part in the conformist image her brother painted of her in his biographical notice.[7]

While her accounts of romance are certainly not graphic or demonstrative, the idea of Austen as a prim woman intent on constant propriety is thoroughly disproved. Her own letters confirm the acute, biting sense of humor that laces her novels. Additionally, authorship by women was actually extremely common in her lifetime and was one of the only respectable professions a lady could pursue to help support herself and her family.[8] In the introduction to *Mothers of the Nation*, Anne K. Mellor clarifies that "more than 900 female poets, at least 500 female novelists, and numerous other female playwrights, travel writers, historians, philosophers, and political writers" published at least one volume in the period of 1780-1830.[9] Furthermore, both men and women sometimes opted to publish anonymously for a variety of reasons, so shame or embarrassment were not factors in Austen's decision to hide her identity.

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[6] Meredith Hindley, "The Mysterious Miss Austen," *Humanities: The Magazine for the National Endowment for the Humanities* 34 (2013), https://bit.ly/2CBn9Dd.

[7] In *Jane Austen, The Secret Radical*, Helena Kelly suggests that Henry's representation of Jane as the perfect conservative woman whose writing sprang effortlessly from her and who had no serious ambition for her novels was in part to protect her from defamation upon her passing, which other female authors were prone to at the time, as well as to hide the fact that she needed the income.

[8] Maria Edgeworth, for example, was one of the most celebrated English authors at the start of the nineteenth century and helped support her numerous younger siblings through her writing, since she was the second oldest of her father's twenty-two children.

[9] Anne K. Mellor, *Mothers of the Nation,* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 3.

Although female authorship was common, the novel as a genre did not yet elicit the same level of respect in literary circles in Austen's lifetime as it would decades later. Foreign editions of her works were riddled with modifications from the original texts—ranging from irony and humor lost in translation to actual significant changes to the plot—because of a regard for novels as low-brow literature that could be adjusted with little consequence. In a study of Austen's reception in France, Lucille Trunel explains that "many of Austen's translations transform her intentions, flattening her irony, suppressing whole passages about the importance of money in life and society or the characters' psychology, while lengthening her very precise sentences."[10]

Some of the earliest French translations of Austen's works were by Isabelle de Montolieu, a writer whose fame far eclipsed Austen's during her lifetime. Montolieu's *Sense and Sensibility* translation appeared in 1815, with *Persuasion* following in 1821.[11] Her renown as an author and her familiarity with the tastes of French readers gave Montolieu license to make changes to the novels so that they would be better received in France and other French-speaking countries; she had to "rewrite Austen's novels to a large extent to please a French public not yet accustomed to such simplicity and realism."[12] Unfortunately, these translations contained major alterations to the story line and had a huge impact on how Austen was perceived as an author.[13] Montolieu made Austen the typical female authoress, writing about themes of sensibility and punishment for the immoral, with her trademark humor and wit erased in the process.

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[10] Lucille Trunel, "Jane Austen's French Publications from 1815: A History of Misunderstanding," in *Global Jane Austen: Pleasure, Passion, and Possessiveness in the Jane Austen Community,* ed. Laurence Raw and Robert G. Dryden (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 22.

[11] Anthony Mandal and Paul Barnaby, "Timeline: European Reception of Jane Austen," in *The Reception of Jane Austen in Europe,* ed. Anthony Mandal and Brian Southam (London: Continuum, 2007), xxi-xxii.

[12] Trunel, "Jane Austen's French Publications," 24.

[13] For instance, in her translation of *Sense and Sensibility*, Montolieu adjusts Willoughby's actions by having him reconcile with Eliza, the woman he deflowers, impregnates, and then abandons in the novel.

French speakers had access to all of Austen's novels in their native language by 1824, but the translation output was more gradual in Germany and delayed by more than a century in Italy. The below table provides a picture of when the first complete translation of each of Jane Austen's six novels appeared in France, Germany and Italy, in comparison with its year of publication in England:[14]

Table 0.1: Publication Years for Translations of Austen's Novels

	Original Publication	France	Germany	Italy
Sense and Sensibility	1811	1815	1972	1945
Pride and Prejudice	1813	1821	1830	1932
Mansfield Park	1814	1816	1984	1961
Emma	1815	1816	1961	1945
Northanger Abbey	1817	1824	1948	1959
Persuasion	1817	1821	1822	1945

The first German translation was *Persuasion,* retitled *Anna: Ein Familiengemählde (Anna: A Family Portrait),* by Wilhelm Adolf Lindau. His translation work was considerably more loyal than that of Montolieu, though he did rename characters and places with German equivalents.[15] The second German translation was Louise Marezoll's *Stolz und Vorurtheil* (*Pride and Prejudice*). Her style echoed Montolieu's in terms of liberties taken with the original text. Marezoll rewrote many dialogue passages as summarized narrative and sentimentalized the novel's emotional content, resulting in a work that "lacks the painstaking structure of Austen's original and its nuanced tones" as well as her "subtle characterization through speech."[16] Neither

[14] Mandal and Barnaby, "Timeline," xxi-xxxvi.

[15] Annika Bautz, "The Reception of Jane Austen in Germany," in *The Reception of Jane Austen in Europe,* ed. Anthony Mandal and Brian Southam (London: Continuum, 2007), 94.

[16] Bautz, "Jane Austen in Germany," 95.

translation made a strong impression on the German public, so the majority of German-speakers remained ignorant of Austen's output until the resurgence of translations in the twentieth century.

Concluding the trifecta of the most dominant languages for operatic works in the 19th-century, an Italian-language translation of a complete novel by Austen did not appear until 1932; for the greater part of the 150 years following Austen's death, the Italian public was utterly unaware and uninterested in Austen's work. This disregard stemmed in part from a cultural divide. The Italian reader, "not engaged with the Englishness of the novels and consequently not fully able to appreciate the sophisticated and subtle social comedy, [saw] in the content only the description of the banal and the commonplace."[17] The complete absence of Austen's works from Italian readers' knowledge clarifies why her stories were not considered for operatic adaptation.

Such misrepresentation (or absence of representation) of Austen caused her to be characterized in a broad-stroked manner as a standard women's writer in the countries with the greatest operatic output (present-day Italy, France, Germany, and Austria). Trifling "feminine" works were not considered worthy of adaptation, so Austen's writings remained untouched for nearly two centuries even though opera has long turned to works of literature as material for musical reinvention.

Opera and Adaptation

Classical vocal music has a rich history of using adaptations of literary works as source material for the texts of art songs or as the basis of operatic plots. Some of the most successful operas—Bizet's *Carmen*, Verdi's *La traviata*, Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, Rossini's *Il barbiere*

[17] Beatrice Battaglia, "The Reception of Jane Austen in Italy," in *The Reception of Jane Austen in Europe,* ed. Anthony Mandal and Brian Southam (London: Continuum, 2007), 205.

di Siviglia, Puccini's *La bohème*—all have a basis in works of literature that pre-dated the musical geneses of the operas. In such cases, the novels, plays, short stories, or vignettes were made into libretto-form to serve the medium of vocal music dramatically embodied onstage. In the nineteenth century, coinciding with the rise of Romanticism, novels began to establish a strong foothold as source material in opera, transitioning from the dominance of stage works in the eighteenth century. This development gave rise to the recognition that both novels and operas have something plays do not: consistent access to the interiority of characters.[18] The role of the narrator in fiction is taken over by music in an operatic context, since "music in opera enables us to enter a parallel world beyond the semantic content of the words alone" by "simultaneously [providing] a commentary on the consciousness and access to the subconscious of operatic characters."[19]

Even with this added power of music, there is the issue of the content that must be cut to make a novel fit into the framework of an opera. An opera must be presented in a small enough size for one evening's entertainment, whereas a novel can be picked up and set aside and picked up again over the course of days and months. Schmidgall compares this process to painting, explaining that composers and librettists are "forced to reduce a large fresco into a miniature while somehow—through the amplifying power of music—maintaining the original's expressive magnitude."[20] Where spoken dramas thrive on quick, constant action, operas focus more on interior activity; creators seek out moments in the source material that allow for a break in the forward motion to explore the emotional experience of the character rather than the real-time

[18] While plays offer episodes of interiority through monologues, soliloquies and asides, this access is not ever-present as it is in opera due to the ongoing musical soundtrack.

[19] Michael Halliwell, *Opera and the Novel: The Case of Henry James* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 41.

[20] Gary Schmidgall, *Literature as Opera* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 9.

activity happening to and around her. Inevitably, some depth and detail of the source material is sacrificed due to this distillation. Condensing a novel into a libretto means "a loss of stylistic texture, a trimming of expansive plot lines and possibly fascinating side issues, and a removal of much psychological analysis."[21]

Even with these drawbacks, the argument for adapting instead of creating a libretto from scratch is a strong one. Using an existing source as a starting point means composers and librettists have an established dramatic framework to pull from, thereby easing the creative process, since many preliminary decisions about characters and plot lines are settled. When one chooses a work that has already enjoyed popular acclaim in its original form, the risk involved in the new venture also decreases; the creative team knows that the story and characters resonate with the contemporary public, or at least are familiar to them. Furthermore, there is also the simple question of absorbability. The music of an opera alone is a significant amount for a listener to process on a first hearing. When the characters and overall arc of the story are already known to the audience, they are able to "relax and let the music take them somewhere new and wonderful" without having to stay on edge to ensure they do not miss a significant plot point or confuse who is who.[22]

The degree of fidelity to the original material varies considerably. Sometimes the work is a jumping-off point; other times the aim is to be as faithful as possible to the original. In his investigation of operatic adaptations of Henry James's works, Michael Halliwell describes the

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[21] Linda Hutcheon, "From Page to Stage to Screen: The Age of Adaptation," Great Minds at the University of Toronto (2003), 45.
Yes, opera focuses on a character's emotional journey, which corresponds with psychological analysis, but the degree of written content in the novel that survives in the libretto is inevitably curtailed.

[22] Terrence McNally, "An Operatic Mission: Freshen the Familiar," *New York Times,* September 1, 2002, https://nyti.ms/2TybdaS.

three common degrees of adaptation as transposition, commentary and analogy.[23] Each level is progressively less faithful to the original material, becoming closer to a new work loosely inspired by the original as opposed to an attempt at closely recreating the work within the chosen medium. Whatever the goal, it is inevitable that the altered mode of presentation gives the work a unique, new life. Linda Hutcheon describes the contrast of mediums and of receivers' experiences in the following way:

"With literature, we start in the realm of imagination—which is simultaneously controlled (by the selected, directing words of the text) and liberated (that is, unconstrained by the limits of the visual or aural). We can stop reading at any point; we can re-read or skip ahead; we hold the book in our hands and feel (as well as see) how much of the story remains to be read. But in film and stage adaptations, we are caught in an unrelenting, forward-driving story. And we have moved from the imagination to the realm of direct perception—with its infinite detail and broad focus."[24]

There are clearly many factors at play when adapting works from one medium to another. Apart from those inherent in the nature of the mediums themselves, there is also the question of cultural and social influences and what causes a work to be deemed worthy of adaptation. The next section gives a sampling of three contemporaries of Austen who were commonly turned to for operatic adaptations.

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[23] Halliwell, *Opera and the Novel*, 37.

[24] Hutcheon, "From Page to Stage to Screen," 42-3.

Works of Austen's Contemporaries as Operatic Source Material

There are notable contemporaries of Jane Austen whose works are featured in significant adaptations in the operatic and art song canon. A primary example is Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), whose works were adapted by French, German and Italian composers in the nineteenth century. Massenet's *Werther,* adapted from *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* in 1892*,* is still regularly performed at houses such as the Metropolitan Opera and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. *Faust* proved to be a particularly inspiring source for multiple fine opera composers, with Berlioz's *La damnation de Faust* appearing in 1846; Gounod's *Faust* in 1859; Hervé's *Le petit Faust*, a parody of the Gounod work, later the same year; and Boito's *Mefistofele* in 1868.[25] Thomas' *Mignon*, inspired by *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, premiered in 1866 and achieved its 1500th performance at the Opéra Comique in 1919 before falling out of fashion. Goethe is also abundantly represented in art song, with settings by composers such as Schubert, Schumann, Wolf and Tchaikovsky.

Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) also figures prominently in the opera world, with his works transformed by leading composers such as Rossini (*Guillaume Tell),* Donizetti (*Maria Stuarda*), Tchaikovsky (*The Maid of Orleans*), and Vaccai (*La sposa di Messina*).[26] He was a particular favorite of Verdi, who wrote four operas based on his works: *Giovanna d'Arco, I Masnadieri*, and *Luisa Miller* in the 1840s, and *Don Carlos* in 1867.[27] His works were attractive to Verdi because both men were "deeply preoccupied with the battle for political freedom,

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[25] David Salazar, "Operas Based on the Works of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe," Opera Wire, https://operawire.com/operas-based-on-the-works-of-johann-wolfgang-von-goethe/.

[26] David Salazar, "The Opera Adaptations of Friedrich Schiller's Famous Works," Opera Wire, https://operawire.com/the-opera-adaptations-of-friedrich-schillers-famous-works/.

[27] Schiller's correlative works are titled *William Tell, Maria Stuart, Die Jungfrau von Orleans, Die Braut von Messina, Die Räuber, Kabale und Liebe*, and *Don Carlos*.

projecting the moral victory of the doomed individual over the power of the immutable State."[28] Schiller also authored the "Ode to Joy," which was set so famously by Beethoven in the final movement of his Ninth Symphony. Schiller's works had typically grand themes of fighting for freedom, for country, and for honor.

Perhaps the most relevant contemporary of Austen would be Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832). A fellow English-language author, Scott's prominent adaptations include Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor,* Rossini's *La donna del lago,* and Bizet's *La Jolie Fille de Perth*.[29] While his literature has declined in popularity since the nineteenth century, he was at one point arguably the most famous author in Europe, and his works were adapted more than fifty times for the operatic stage.[30] He first achieved renown as a poet with *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* in 1805. *The Lady of the Lake* came a few works later in 1810, and besides its operatic adaptation, it was transformed into a seven-part song cycle by Schubert in 1825: *Liederzyklus vom Fräulein vom See*.[31] When Scott transitioned to writing novels, he did so anonymously so as not to upset his poetry following. His "Waverley novels" went on to receive huge acclaim, and many guessed his authorship despite his attempt at anonymity. Austen herself commented on Scott's novel-writing in one of her letters to her niece, Anna, in 1814, the year of *Waverley*'s publication:

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[28] "Friedrich Schiller," Oberon Books, https://www.oberonbooks.com/friedrich-schiller.html.

[29] Scott's works are titled *The Bride of Lammermoor, The Lady of the Lake,* and *The Fair Maid of Perth*, respectively.

[30] Norman Lebrecht, "The novel of the opera," La scena musicale, July 8, 2004, https://bit.ly/2Fz0QQ8.

[31] Paul Dorgan, "Sir Walter Scott - 1771-1832," Utah Opera, March 3, 2017, https://bit.ly/2JAyARr.

"Walter Scott has no business to write novels, especially good ones.—It is not fair.—He has Fame & Profit enough as a Poet, and should not be taking bread out of other people's mouths.—I do not like him, & do not mean to like Waverley if I can help it—but I fear I must."[32]

Scott is credited as the founder of the genre of the historical novel,[33] a nod to the subject matter that helped him procure such a wide reading base. With life and death scenarios and sweeping descriptions of exceptional landscapes, his works were acceptable material for men and women alike. Since they had a historical foundation (however loose that basis may have been), his novels took on a higher status and acceptability for perusal. He and Austen were practically opposites in style, since his works were "large-scale, historical, set in Scotland, and written with exuberant panache" in contrast to Austen's focus on everyday occurrences and "painstaking attention to detail."[34] While there were a number of reviews of Austen's works during her lifetime, the majority were neither thorough nor included any true literary analysis. One of the most significant sources of recognition of Austen's authorship was a review believed to have been penned by Scott upon the publication of *Emma* in 1815, in which Scott compared Austen's style to the Flemish school of painting due to the subjects who are "finished up to nature, and with a precision which delights the reader."[35] Receiving this 5000-word write-up in *The Quarterly Review* gave Austen national and international reach unlike anything she had experienced before in her career, but it was the kind of write-up someone like Scott would have

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[32] *Jane Austen's Letters,* ed. Deidre Le Faye (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 289.

[33] Helena Kelly contests that there were actually dozens of predecessors to Scott. (Kelly, "The Secret Radical," 23.)

[34] Peter Sabor, " 'Finished Up to Nature': Walter Scott's Review of Emma," *Persuasions* 13 (1991), 88-99. https://bit.ly/2JG3cRt.

[35] *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage,* ed. B.C. Southam (London: Routledge, 1968), 67.

received time and time again. As Scott, Schiller and Goethe demonstrate, Austen's absence in classical vocal music is not due to the period of her output being unexplored for literary source material.

Women's Writings as Operatic Source Material

There is certainly a gender bias at play, and the reasons for it are deeply rooted in the history of gender roles and the comparatively limited opportunities that women have had in previous centuries, and continue to face in many countries, for education and for access to more cosmopolitan, varied circles. They had few chances to travel to different large cities and to observe the culture and ways of life that are present in urban centers, nor to network with others in their field during such travels. It is only in the past century that source material by women has begun to find a foothold in the operatic medium, and it is still an unsteady one. Below is a list of forty operas with source material by women, nearly all of which were created in the 20th or 21st century:

Table 0.2: Sampling of Operas with Source Material by Women

Opera	Creative Team	Source Material	Premiere
The Age of Innocence	David Carpenter (C, L)	*The Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton	Not yet premiered; scenes performed in 2013 in New York
Bel Canto	Jimmy López (C) Nilo Cruz (L)	*Bel Canto* by Ann Patchett	2015; Lyric Opera of Chicago
Bilby's Doll	Carlisle Floyd (C, L)	*A Mirror for Witches* by Esther Forbes	1976; Houston Grand Opera
Blood on the Dining Room Floor	Jonathan Sheffer (C, L)	*Blood on the Dining-Room Floor* by Gertrude Stein	2000; WPA Theatre

Opera	Creative Team	Source Material	Premiere
The Bonesetter's Daughter	Stewart Wallace (C) Amy Tan (L)	*The Bonesetter's Daughter* by Amy Tan	2008; San Francisco Opera
I cavalieri di Ekebù	Riccardo Zandonai (C) Arturo Rossato (L)	*Gösta Berlings Saga* by Selma Lagerlöf	1925; Teatro alla Scala
Cold Sassy Tree	Carlisle Floyd (C, L)	*Cold Sassy Tree* by Olive Ann Burns	2000; Houston Grand Opera
Dead Man Walking	Jake Heggie (C) Terrence McNally (L)	*Dead Man Walking* by Sister Helen Prejean	2000; San Francisco Opera
Divide Light	Lesley Dill (C)	Various texts by Emily Dickinson	2008; Montalvo Arts Center
Dulce Rosa	Lee Holdridge (C) Richard Sparks (L)	"Una venganza" by Isabel Allende	2013; Los Angeles Opera
Eric Hermannson's Soul	Libby Larsen (C) Chas Rader-Shieber (L)	"Eric Hermannson's Soul" by Willa Cather	1998; Opera Omaha
Frankenstein	Gregory Sandow (C), Thomas Disch (L)	*Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* by Mary Shelley	No full premiere yet; written 1979-1981
Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus	Libby Larsen (C, L)	*Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* by Mary Shelley	1990; Minnesota Opera Company
Frankenstein	Mark Grey (C), Julia Canosa (L)	*Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* by Mary Shelley	2019; La Monnaie
Genji monogatari	Minoru Miki (C) Colin Graham (L)	*Genji monogatari* by Murusaki Shikibu	2000; Opera Theatre of St. Louis
A Good Man is Hard to Find	David Volk (C) Librettist unknown	"A Good Man is Hard to Find" by Florence O'Connor	2003; Seney-Stovall Chapel
The Handmaid's Tale	Poul Ruders (C) Paul Bentley (L)	*The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood	2000; English National Opera

Opera	Creative Team	Source Material	Premiere
Jane's History of England	John Morrison (C)	"The History of England" by Jane Austen	2014; Longy School of Music at Bard College
Jubilee	Ulysses Kay (C) Donald Dorr (L)	*Jubilee* by Margaret Walker	1976; Opera South
The Kiss/Hubička	Bedřich Smetana (C) Eliška Krásnohorská (L)	*The Kiss* by Karolina Světlá	1876; Prague Provisional Theatre
Knight Crew	Julian Philips (C) Nicky Singer (L)	*Knight Crew* by Nicky Singer	2010; Glyndebourne Festival Opera
Little Women	Mark Adamo (C, L)	*Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott	1998; Houston Grand Opera
The Lodger	Phyllis Tate (C) David Franklin (L)	*The Lodger* by Marie Adelaide Belloc Lowndes	1960; Royal Academy of Music
The Lottery	TJ Martin (C) Librettist unknown	"The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson	Unknown; Parallel 45
The Making of Americans	Anthony Gatto (C) Librettist unknown	*The Making of Americans* by Gertrude Stein	2008; Walker Art Center
The Making of the Representative for Planet 8	Philip Glass (C) Doris Lessing (L)	*The Making of the Representative for Planet 8* by Doris Lessing	1988; Houston Grand Opera
Mansfield Park	Jonathan Dove (C) Alasdair Middleton (L)	*Mansfield Park* by Jane Austen	2011; Heritage Opera
Middlemarch in Spring	Allen Shearer (C) Claudia Stevens (L)	*Middlemarch* by George Eliot	2015; San Francisco's Z Space
Mrs. Dalloway	Libby Larsen (C) Bonnie Grice (L)	*Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf	1993; Cleveland Institute of Music
O Pioneers!	Barbara Harbach (C) Jonathan Yordy (L)	*O Pioneers!* by Willa Cather	2009; University of Missouri - St. Louis

Opera	Creative Team	Source Material	Premiere
Parable of the Sower	Toshi Reagon (C, L) Bernice Johnson Reagon (C, L)	"The Parable of the Sower" by Octavia E. Butler	2017; The Arts Center at NYU Abu Dhabi
Paradises Lost	Stephen A. Taylor (C) Kate Gale (L)?	*Paradises Lost* by Ursula K. Le Guin	2012; University of Illinois
Patience and Sarah	Paula M. Kimper (C) Wende Persons (L)	*Patience and Sarah* by Isabel Miller	1998; Lincoln Center Festival
Pride and Prejudice	Kirke Mechem (C, L)	*Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen	2019 (upcoming); Redwood Symphony (concert version)
Proving Up	Missy Mazzoli (C) Royce Vavrek (L)	"Proving Up" by Karen Russell	2018; Washington National Opera
4.48 Psychosis	Philip Venables (C)	*4.48 Psychosis* by Sarah Kane	2016; Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
Rebecca	Wilfred Josephs (C)	*Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier	1983; Opera North (Leeds, England)
Stolthet och fördom	Daniel Nelson (C) Sofia Fredén (L)	*Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen	2011; Vadstena Academy
Summer	Stephen Paulus (C) Joan Vail Thorne (L)	"Summer" by Edith Wharton	1999; Berkshire Opera
WISE BLOOD	Anthony Gatto (C, L)	"Wise Blood" by Florence O'Connor	2015; Walker Art Center
A Wrinkle in Time	Libby Larsen (C) Walter Green (L)	*A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle	1992; Opera Delaware
Wuthering Heights	Bernard Herrmann (C) Lucille Fletcher (L)	*Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë	No full premiere yet; written 1943-51
Wuthering Heights	Carlisle Floyd (C, L)	*Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë	1953; Santa Fe Opera

The list may look reasonably long, but opera-goers' familiarity with the majority of these works is trifling. This unfamiliarity stems in some cases from an opera's novelty but in most

from a lack of performances. *Dead Man Walking* is produced consistently at A-level houses, and Adamo's operatic rendering of Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* is also, relative to the other works on this list, performed often, particularly in college and university settings. *Mansfield Park* and *Proving Up* are beginning to carve a niche for themselves as well. Otherwise, the performance frequency is rare. Furthermore, this number of operas is tiny compared to the number of works within the operatic canon. As mentioned earlier, Walter Scott's works alone inspired fifty operas. Operabase's statistics of the hundred most performed operas since 2004 include none of the above examples, and it took scavenging to come up with even these forty operas. While this list in no way claims to be comprehensive, particularly when it comes to non-English language authors, it is indicative of just how small the fraction of adapted operas telling a story created by a woman are.

Overview

The preceding introduction gives a cursory sketch of the context of Jane Austen's emergence in operatic literature. In the next four chapters, I first investigate how her third novel, *Mansfield Park,* was adapted for the operatic stage by Jonathan Dove and Alasdair Middleton. Second, I relay relevant conduct and etiquette guidelines from her lifetime to help modern performers and directors more truthfully portray the period. Third, I discuss production elements and my first-hand experience portraying Fanny Price in performances of *Mansfield Park* in Los Angeles. Finally, I share information about other already completed or upcoming settings of Jane Austen's works in opera and classical art song.

CHAPTER ONE:

FROM NOVEL TO OPERA

Why *Mansfield Park*?

The Jane Austen work under particular investigation here is her third published novel, *Mansfield Park*. Austen wrote the work between 1811 and 1813, and it was published in 1814, on the heels of *Pride and Prejudice*, which had been released the preceding year. Her first published novel, *Sense and Sensibility*, appeared in 1811, and both *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* had been reprinted just before the release of *Mansfield Park*. The third novel proved to be less successful; the first edition sold reasonably well because of the expectations raised by the previous works, but the response was unenthusiastic. Most readers were surprised by the unexciting heroine, Fanny Price, and the more serious tone pervading the novel in general.[36] It paints a grim picture of the gentry class, references the unsavory practice of slavery in the British colonies, and has incestuous undertones in Fanny's particular regard for William and Edmund—her actual brother and her cousin with whom she grows up and eventually marries, respectively. The novel's second edition—750 copies released in 1816—saw only a third purchased within five years, and the remaining five hundred were sold at a significant loss. When *Emma* was released in 1815, it did not even list *Mansfield Park* among the works by the same author.[37]

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[36] In an article for *Persuasions*, Anne K. Mellor and Alex L. Milsom suggest that Fanny Price suffers from Stockholm syndrome, with her family at Mansfield Park as her captors.

[37] Sabor, "Walter Scott's Review of Emma."

It is ironic for Austen fans, then, to see the black sheep of her novels in the limelight in the opera world as the most prominent operatic adaptation of one of her works to date.[38] Jonathan Dove and Alasdair Middleton's *Mansfield Park* had its world premiere by Heritage Opera in July 2011 at Boughton House in Northamptonshire and featured Chris Gill as conductor and Michael McCaffery as director. Dove says that "[he] heard music" the first time he read *Mansfield Park* decades ago.[39] He had read *Pride and Prejudice, Persuasion* and *Sense and Sensibility* first, but "music never crossed [his] mind" in those instances.[40] *Mansfield Park* was different, and he largely credits that to the distinct nature of Fanny Price as a character. She is an outlier for Austen's heroines, which contributed to the novel's modest reception in Austen's time. Quiet and utterly devoid of confidence and charisma, Fanny is a far cry from the witty women at the heart of *Emma* or *Pride and Prejudice*. Dove explains his attraction to the story as follows:

"*I think it was the way the Cinderella-like heroine, Fanny Price, so often suffers in silence. There are clues to her feelings, but unlike the lively Emma Woodhouse, or the high-spirited Elizabeth Bennet, she does not express them. Her reticence invited music, as a way of revealing those hidden emotions."*[41]

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[38] Some would say it is actually quite fitting, since *Mansfield Park* is Austen's most political novel, with not so subtle criticism of the Church of England, British imperialism, and slavery. The title of the novel likely references Lord Mansfield, who was credited with causing the abolishment of slavery in England, while Aunt Norris' surname could be a reference to Mr. Norris of Liverpool, a known slave-trader. In terms of other adaptations, see chapter four.

[39] Jonathan Dove, "The silence of the lamb: Giving *Mansfield Park*'s Fanny Price a voice," *The Guardian*, September 11, 2017, https://bit.ly/2TWpgfA.

[40] The Grange Festival, "Transforming a Jane Austen novel into an opera," Youtube video, 4:02, Posted July 28, 2017, https://youtu.be/bpx6dbTXIvk.

[41] Jonathan Dove, "Singing Jane Austen," Gramophone U.K. Blog, September 7, 2017. https://bit.ly/2Yoww27.

Even Benjamin Britten considered adapting the novel under the title *Letters to William* in 1946.[42] Britten had Kathleen Ferrier in mind for Fanny Price and Peter Pears for Edmund Bertram, with Ronald Duncan as librettist, but he ended up setting the project aside in favor of *Albert Herring*.[43] One can see though that Britten, like Dove, had honed in on Fanny as someone who did not express her emotions publicly, thereby providing rich territory to be traversed by her letters to her beloved brother, William, who was her sole confidant besides her cousin Edmund. Britten's adaptation would have joined the tradition of operas with meaningful letter scenes, where emotions otherwise hidden are poured forth with fluidity and freedom due to the intimacy of a pen and paper combined with the distance of the intended recipient in the moment of creation, or where the recipient reads aloud another character's words and reacts with abandon due to this same distance in the moment of perception.[44] Dove and Middleton join the tradition themselves with a climactic correspondence scene in the second act, where the troubles of Julia, Maria, Henry, Mr. Rushworth, Edmund and Fanny all interweave as they sing their letters aloud before either sending them or deciding their contents are too forward to deliver.

Structure

As the librettist, Middleton faced the task so many writers adapting literary works for the stage have encountered over the years: compressing a multi-hundred page novel, full of rich

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[42] Austen, Jane, *Mansfield Park: An Annotated Edition,* ed. Deidre Lynch, (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016), 98, note 16.

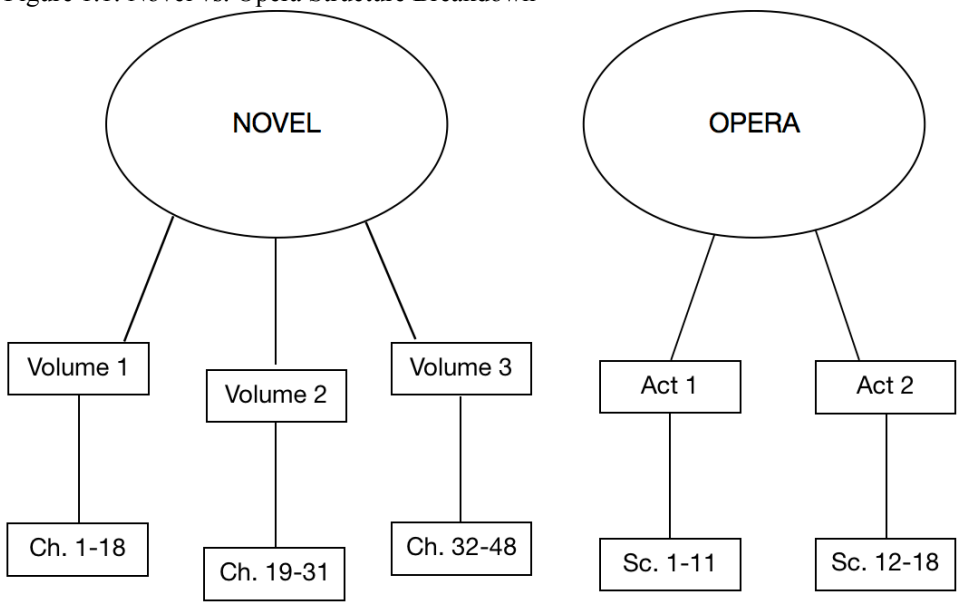
[43] Dove, "Giving Fanny Price a Voice."

[44] Samples of letter compositions in opera include those by Tatiana in Tchaikovksy's *Eugene Onegin,* Elizabeth McCourt in Moore's *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, the Countess and Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia,* the title character in *La Périchole*, the Governess in *The Turn of the Screw*, and multiple characters in Susa's *The Dangerous Liaisons*. Among letter recipients are Charlotte in Massenet's *Werther*, Lady Macbeth in Verdi's *Macbeth*, the women in Verdi's *Falstaff,* Violetta in Verdi's *La traviata*, Sharpless/Butterfly in *Madama Butterfly* and the Governess in *The Turn of the Screw*. Some of these examples are a consequence of the epistolary style that dominated novel-writing in the late eighteenth century and was present in the operas' source material.

passages of description and narration, into a single evening's or afternoon's entertainment. In the case of *Mansfield Park*, Middleton and Dove whittled it down to a mere hour and forty-five minutes. There is an inevitable transformation of the work via reassignment of narration to dialogue, descriptive passages translated into visuals through the elements of stagecraft, as well as distillation, such as the excision or compression of characters and plot lines. The forty-eight chapters of the three-volume novel are transformed into eighteen scenes divided between the opera's two acts. Dove and Middleton echo the novel's structure by entitling each act as a "Volume" and each scene as a "Chapter." Each scene begins with the chapter number and title sung by at least one character, like the chapter headings in a book.

Looking at this structure more specifically, one can first compare the contrasting skeletons of the two works— novel vs. opera.

Figure 1.1: Novel vs. Opera Structure Breakdown



The following tables provide a basic outline of how each section in the respective work is framed:

Table 1.1: Novel Framework

Volume/Chapter	Contents
VOLUME 1: Ch 1-18	-Begins with a description of the three Ward sisters and segues into the younger generation in adolescence. -Ends with the announcement of Sir Thomas' return from the West Indies, right after Fanny has conceded to read for the Cottager's Wife at a rehearsal in place of Mrs. Grant.
VOLUME 2: Ch 19-31	-Begins with Sir Thomas back at Mansfield Park and the flurry of everyone coming from the rehearsal. -Ends with Crawford's first proposal and Fanny in distress due to this unwelcome development.
VOLUME 3: Ch 32-48	-Begins with Sir Thomas pressuring Fanny to accept the engagement. -Ends with the narrator's proclamation to "Let other pens dwell on guilt and misery" as the young generation finds happiness or disgrace according to their previous actions.

Table 1.2: Opera Framework

Act/Scene	Contents
Act 1: Sc 1-11	-Opens with an introduction to Mansfield Park and its residents, with the young generation already grown. -Ends with Maria's wedding and Henry Crawford's declaration that he is now turning his attention to Fanny.
Act 2: Sc 12-18	-Opens with preparations for a ball in Fanny's honor. -Ends with disgrace for Maria and Henry, Edmund's realization of Mary's dubious sense of morality, and Fanny and Edmund expressing their love for each other.

Telescoping

The contrasting skeletons clarify just how much content was bypassed in the transition from novel to opera. Middleton scaled down plot lines and characters in order to facilitate the timeline of a work for the stage. Content from the first chapters of the novel is condensed into the opening scene of the opera to facilitate the audience having a full understanding of key facts more quickly. A primary example is the treatment of the background of the Ward sisters and of the circumstances of Fanny's transfer to Mansfield Park from her family in Portsmouth.

In the opening paragraph of the novel, Austen introduces Miss Ward (Mrs. Norris), Miss Maria (Lady Bertram), and Miss Frances (Mrs. Price) via a discussion of their success in marriage. Miss Maria marries first and best to Sir Thomas. Though the other two sisters are "quite as handsome" as the fortunate Miss Maria, they do not fare as well.[45] Miss Ward settles with a clergyman acquaintance of Sir Thomas, and Miss Frances makes the egregious decision to marry "to disoblige her family, and by fixing on a lieutenant of marines, without education, fortune, or connexions, [does] it very thoroughly."[46] A breach develops between the sisters, and eleven years pass before Mrs. Price reaches out to her family again, now with an inquiry for assistance necessitated by her "large and still increasing family, an husband disabled for active service, but not the less equal to company and good liquor, and a very small income to supply their wants."[47] The entire circumstance of Fanny's family is boiled down in the opening scene to Aunt Norris's reply to Lady Bertram's comment that Fanny is dutiful:

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[45] Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park,* (New York: Barnes and Noble Classics, 2004), 3.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid, 4.

"Dutiful? I'm sure she is dutiful. When the mother marries to disoblige her family, the daughter must needs be dutiful."[48]

Thus, Middleton establishes that Fanny is required to be a particularly obedient dependent within the Bertram household because she was born into problematic circumstances. She must make up for her mother's choice, and Aunt Norris reminds her on a daily basis of how lucky and privileged she is to live at Mansfield Park despite her lowly origins. The opera skips the portion of the novel when Fanny is struggling most acutely with the adjustment to life with her relatives by bypassing the chapters when the younger generation (Fanny, Tom, Edmund, Maria, and Julia) are children. However, the pithy passages from this section are woven into the opening scene via reminiscing dialogue, particularly as Julia reminds Fanny of her awkwardness upon her arrival at Mansfield:

"Do you remember, Fanny, how remarkably ignorant you were, Fanny, when you first came? You couldn't put together a map of Europe, or tell any of the principal rivers of Russia by name. Or repeat the chronological order of the Kings of England with the significant events of their reigns. And how Aunt Norris said how unfortunate it was for a girl to have neither looks nor brains."[49]

"Do you remember, Fanny, when you first came, Fanny, and you started to cry and Edmund had to try to dry your tears with a gooseberry pie."[50]

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[48] Jonathan Dove and Alasdair Middleton, *Mansfield Park: Chamber Opera in Two Acts,* Vocal Score (London: Edition Peters, 2011), 12.

[49] Ibid, 8-9.

[50] Ibid, 10.

Julia's cruel mockery, which Aunt Norris condones rather than condemns, takes the place of the multiple mentions of incredulity and of lack of compassion by the Bertram girls, Sir Thomas, Aunt Norris, the governess, and even the maids in the novel. Edmund's contrasting kindness is established in the opera via his happening upon Fanny's old history book, *McCartney's China*, and inviting her to reminisce about how he used to help her with her studies:

"Look, Fanny, look, the notes I made for you, I can hardly read them now. I hoped they'd help. Look the passages I underlined. Remember?"[51]

An additional facilitator of the condensed exposition is that Sir Thomas knows Mr. Rushworth from the onset of the opera, and Mr. Rushworth is likewise already engaged to Maria. In the novel Mr. Rushworth does not enter the picture until after Sir Thomas has left to attend to business in Antigua, and Maria's relationship develops to the point of engagement without her father's supervision or acquaintance with her intended. After Mr. Rushworth's embarrassing cow-chased entrance in the opera, Edmund and Sir Thomas jointly sing, "If this man had not twelve thousand a year, he would be a very stupid fellow."[52] The line's merit is manifold: it highlights similarity of thought between father and son; it earns a chuckle, or at least a smile, from an attentive audience; and it confirms that Mr. Rushworth's absurdity is indeed recognized by the discerning members of the Bertram household. Further, it is an example of an opinion that is

[51] Ibid, 11.

[52] Ibid, 14-15.

relayed as a thought in the novel being translated into an outward expression in the opera; in the novel, Edmund alone thinks the sentiment.[53]

While a handful of scenes find enough content in a single chapter, many use pieces from multiple chapters in the novel to construct the expedited arc.[54] In some instances, it is simply that four chapters' worth of the novel does not require more than one scene in the opera, since so much of those chapters is mental turmoil, full text of written letters, or references to characters and situations that are now nonexistent or too peripheral. It can be just one significant line of description or dialogue that survives a chapter and weaves its way into a new context in the opera. The cast of ten characters gives an immediate indication of content that is trimmed.

Cast

Fanny Price (mezzo-soprano)

Lady Bertram (contralto)

Sir Thomas Bertram (baritone)

Maria Bertram (soprano)

Julia Bertram (mezzo-soprano)

Edmund Bertram (baritone)

Aunt Norris (soprano)

Mary Crawford (coloratura soprano)

Henry Crawford (tenor)

Mr. Rushworth (tenor)

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[53] Austen, *Mansfield Park,* 35.

[54] Scene 3 pulls only from Ch. 3; Scene 6 from Ch. 11; Scene 8 from Ch. 16; Scene 13 from Ch. 28; Scene 16 from Ch. 45; and Scene 18 from Ch. 48. Examples of scenes pulling from many chapters include Scene 1 drawing from Ch. 1, 2, 3, and 4; Scene 2 from Ch. 3, 4, 5, and 6; Scene 9 from Ch. 15, 17, 18, 19, and 21; Scene 11 from Ch. 21, 23, 24, and 42; Scene 14 from Ch. 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, and 36; and Scene 15 from Ch 34, 44, 46 and 48.

To anyone familiar with the novel, there are surprising omissions. Tom Bertram, the elder Bertram son, is only referenced indirectly by the statement that Edmund is "a younger brother."[55] He cannot be completely eliminated, since Edmund's status as a younger brother was a significant distinction in that period. Any son other than the eldest had no guarantee of income from his family's estate and had to turn to one of the few acceptable professions for a gentleman: the clergy, the law, or the military. Edmund's plan is to become a clergyman, due in part to the convenience of his father having a living on his land. Additionally, Tom's absence means there is no concern about the grave illness he develops while Fanny is in Portsmouth. The trouble that besets Mansfield Park before the novel's conclusion is solely the romantic indiscretions of Maria and Henry, and to a lesser extent Julia's elopement.

Another character gone is Mr. Yates. In the novel, Julia's eventual husband appears at Mansfield Park as a visiting friend of Tom in Chapter 13 and plants the seeds for a theatrical, which Tom decides to initiate at Mansfield Park. He provides great comic relief in the ensuing chapters through his committed but terrible acting. In the opera, he appears only in a letter Julia writes to him in the correspondence scene and is utterly eliminated from the theatrical escapade. His and Tom's absence from the *Lovers' Vows* debacle is not the only factor simplifying that episode. Middleton circumvents the novel's thorny exchange when both Julia and Maria want to play Agatha, who has multiple emotional scenes with Frederick—the role Henry Crawford takes. When Henry sides with Tom that Maria should play the role instead of Julia, Julia realizes that Maria is the preferred sister, and she ultimately withdraws from participating in the production at all and simply sulks around the house while the others are rehearsing. In the opera, Julia is less

[55] Dove and Middleton, *Mansfield Park*, 36.

obviously snubbed by Henry, and her wish for more stage-time with him is concisely relayed in the following exchange:

J: I wish, Mister Crawford, we were to play a scene together.

H: I think the play excellently cast.

J: You look forward, then, to embracing my sister?

H: Your sister plays my mother. My embraces are filial.

J: I should not care to play your mother.

H: And I should not care to embrace you as a son.[56]

Perhaps the most surprising change, however, is that William Price is nonexistent; the libretto does not expressly indicate that Fanny has any siblings. The reasons for cutting him are understandable, however, when one considers that it provided a way for Dove and Middleton to focus on the relationship between Fanny and Edmund. Eliminating Fanny's beloved brother William meant heightening the significance of Edmund in Fanny's life, and therefore makes all her suffering when he is falling in love with Mary Crawford more tangible for the audience. In the novel, "Fanny loved [Edmund] better than anybody in the world except William: her heart was divided between the two."[57] Here in the opera, therefore, Edmund claims her whole heart.

A further significant excision is Fanny's return to her family in Portsmouth. Sir Thomas' medicinal exile is tidily avoided by condensing Henry's two proposals to a single one shortly after the ball, with further pursuit of Fanny only via written correspondence. Fanny simply

[56] Ibid, 147-50.

[57] Austen, *Mansfield Park*, 19.

remains at Mansfield Park with Lady Bertram and Sir Thomas for the duration of the opera, with the brief exception of the group outing to Sotherton in Scene 5. Mary Crawford is also in the country instead of visiting with her city friends when Maria and Henry's misdeed comes out in the paper, so she reads the paragraph to Fanny, who then comforts Lady Bertram and Sir Thomas in real time, instead of days following the discovery.

Final peripheral characters cut include Mrs. Rushworth and Mr. and Mrs. Grant. Aunt Norris references the Grants upon the introduction of Mary and Henry Crawford, which orients why the Crawford siblings are in Mansfield. However, all of the meals at the parsonage are cut, so the important aspects of those conversations are shifted to other contexts—a particularly memorable example being Fanny's advice to Henry Crawford after Maria's marriage that "we have all within ourselves a better guide, if we could attend to it, than any other person can be."[58] Mrs. Rushworth (the mother of Mr. Rushworth) is not mentioned at all in the opera.

Below is a sample of how Middleton adapted the novel for his libretto, with reference to the opera's second scene and chapter five of the novel. On the left is Austen's text, with bold indicating text copied exactly to the libretto, and underline indicating text slightly adapted in the libretto. The libretto in its final form, albeit eliminating interwoven lines by the Bertram sisters, is included on the right:[59]

[58] Dove and Middleton, *Mansfield Park*, 190.
Quoted here is Middleton's slight rearrangement of Austen's text, which is found on page 358 in the Barnes and Noble edition of the novel.

[59] It is unclear whether Middleton's change of the word *lady* to *woman* in the final line has particular significance or is simply a more pleasing word in this vocal context due to the alliterative impact it has when combined with *with*.

Table 1.3: Novel to Libretto Sample

Novel	**Opera**
Henry: **"I like your Miss Bertrams exceedingly, sister,**" said he, as he returned from attending them to their carriage after the said dinner visit; "**they are** very **elegant, agreeable girls**."	Henry*:* I like your Miss Bertrams exceedingly, sister, they are elegant, agreeable girls.
Mary: "**So they are indeed, and I am delighted to hear you say it. But you like Julia best.**"	Mary: So they are indeed, and I am delighted to hear you say it. But you like Julia best.
H: **"Oh yes! I like Julia best."**	H: Oh! Yes, I like Julia best.
M: "But do you really? for Miss **Bertram is in general thought the handsomest.**"	M: Maria Bertram is in general thought the handsomest.
H: "**So I should suppose. She has the advantage in every feature**, and I prefer her countenance; **but I like Julia best**; Miss Bertram is certainly the handsomest, and I have found her the most agreeable, but I shall always like Julia best, because you order me."	H: So I should suppose. She has the advantage in every feature. But I like Julia best.
M: "I shall not talk to you, Henry, but I know you *will* like her best at last."	M: Yes, you like Julia best. Maria Bertram is in general thought more agreeable.
H: "Do not I tell you that I like her best *at first*?"	H: I am not surprised. She has beauty and wit. But I like Julia best.
M: "**And besides**, Miss Bertram **is engaged.** Remember that, my dear brother. Her choice is made."	M: Yes, you like Julia best. And besides, Maria is engaged.
H: "**Yes, and I like her the better for it. An engaged woman is always more agreeable** than a disengaged. She is satisfied with herself. **Her cares are over, and** she feels that **she may exert all her powers of pleasing** without suspicion. **All is safe with a** lady **engaged: no harm can be done.**"	H: Yes, and I like her the better for it. An engaged woman is always more agreeable. Her cares are over and she may exert all her powers of pleasing. All is safe with a woman engaged; no harm can be done.

Musical Characterization

Dove and Middleton's chamber opera in two acts was originally composed for four-hand piano and has since been reworked by Dove for chamber orchestra—a version that premiered in 2017 at the Grange Festival on the occasion of the two-hundredth anniversary of Jane Austen's death. The orchestration features 13 players: a string quintet, single woodwinds, two horns, timpani, and piano.[60] Dove notes that piano is still prominently featured though, since "that was a very important part of the texture of the original and suggests something of the early nineteenth-century drawing room and young ladies' accomplishments."[61] He compares the four-hand piano version to a black-and-white original, while the orchestral version is "the more expensive, luxuriously hand-colored edition."[62]

The creative team achieves quick characterizations of the principal characters in their first scenes. The text itself, vocal writing and its accompaniment, in conjunction with the added visuals onstage, enable Dove and Middleton to provide a strong sense of the character with a fraction of the amount of text provided by Austen. Take, for example, the first extended solo lines of Lady Bertram, Sir Thomas, and Maria Bertram.

After asking Fanny to ring the bell for coal, Lady Bertram delivers a quasi-soliloquy to Pug, her beloved dog:

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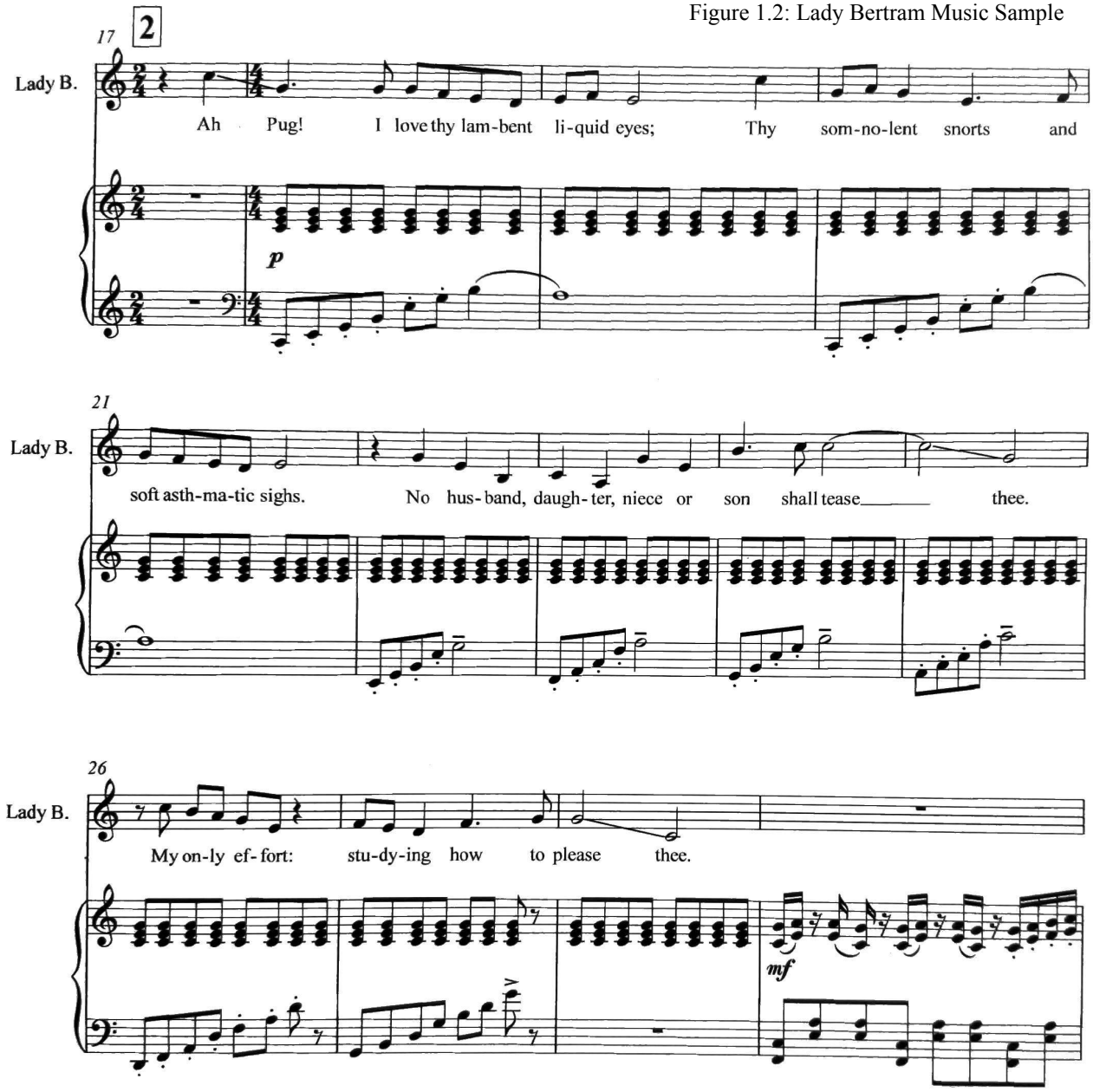
[60] David Truslove, "Grange Festival delivers an engaging *Mansfield Park* by Jonathan Dove," *Bachtrack,* September 18, 2017, https://bit.ly/2TUZ8le.

[61] The Grange Festival, "The new orchestration of Mansfield Park," Youtube video, 2:21, Posted July 28, 2017, https://youtu.be/L_vScrjzu-g.

[62] Ibid.

Figure 1.2: Lady Bertram Music Sample

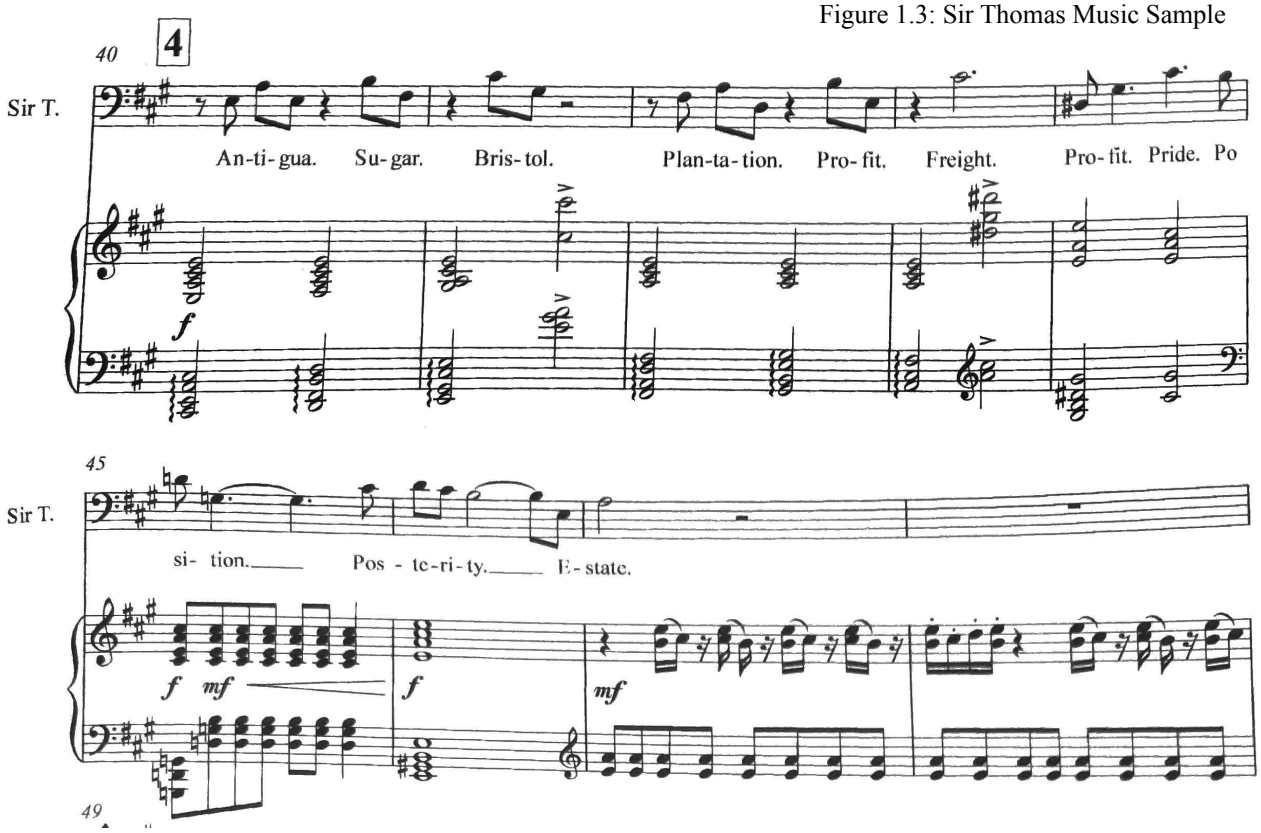


Designated a contralto, the performer portraying Lady Bertram should possess a voice of depth and weight. Her vocal line stays low and has note values predominantly of quarter note or larger, with eighth notes spanning at maximum a range of a minor third. The note values and small intervals provide a sense of her laziness. It would take a lot for her to move quickly or to cover a large distance physically, and it is the same for her voice; she prefers stasis and ease. Middleton also immediately clarifies that the primary source of love and the focus of her life is

her dog—not her husband or children. She would likely be staged sitting for the duration of the scene, holding Pug.

Sir Thomas also first asks Fanny to do something for him, but then has his solo entrance with a series of nouns:

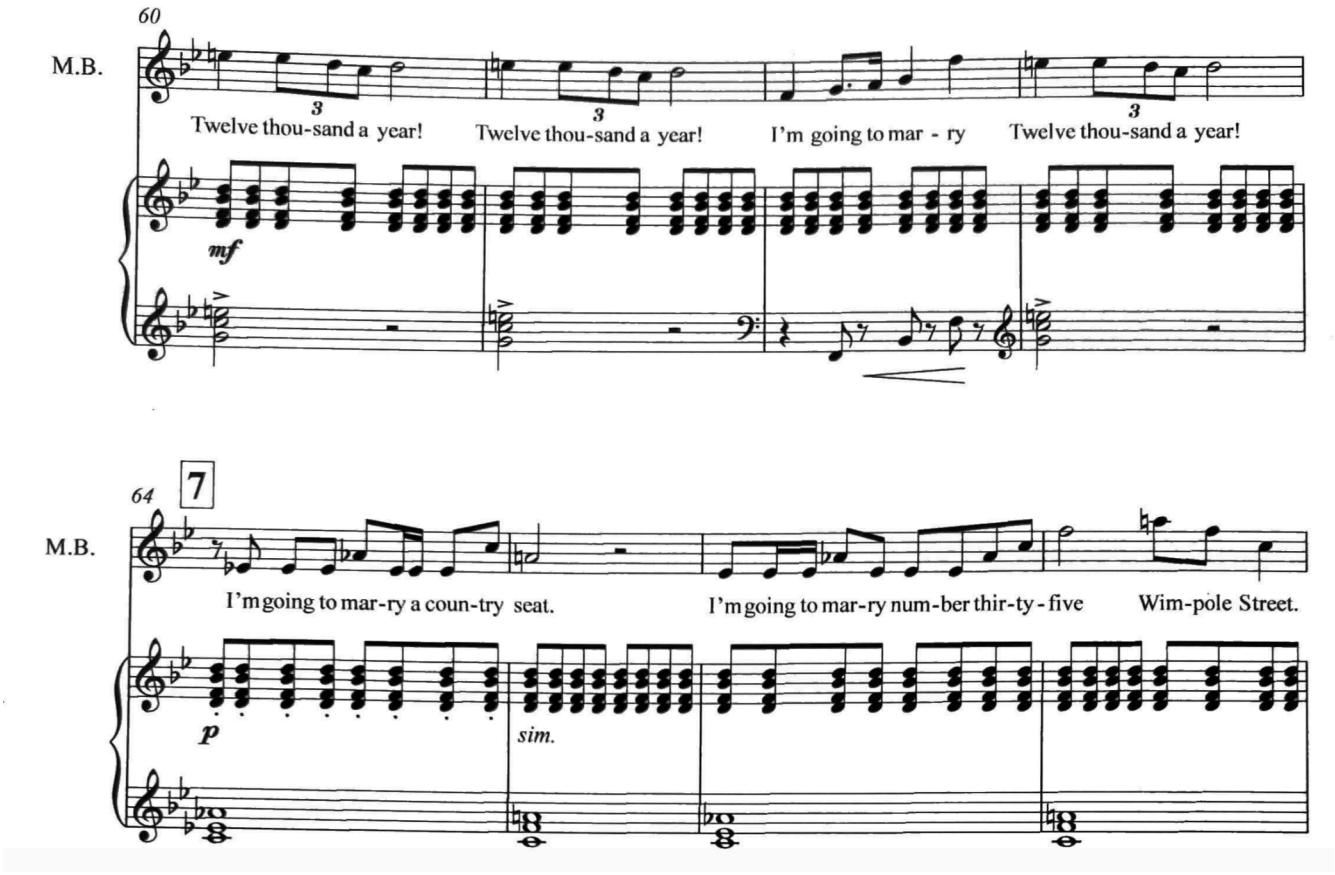
Figure 1.3: Sir Thomas Music Sample



Sir Thomas, a baritone, has an innate gravitas. The deeper male voice connotes authority and masculinity, and the contrasting accompaniment of half-note rolled chords after the relentless repeated eighth notes that precede his entrance (as during Lady Bertram's soliloquy) further heightens his grandeur and command of respect. The simple text obviates that he is concise and to the point, but it also conveys elegance. The vocal line is patterned, making it pleasing to the ear; there is nothing unexpected, which suggests his dedication to following societal norms. He would never wish to do or be associated with something surprising.

Similarly, Maria Bertram asks Fanny for the fashion plates and then expounds on her impending marriage.

Figure 1.4: Maria Bertram Music Sample



Maria is established as gold-digging, image conscious, and entitled. Her vocal line suggests a more youthful and spirited Lady Bertram. The recurring motive for "twelve thousand a year" moves in graceful, stepwise motion, and the triplets provide a feeling of expansion and space in her expression. As a soprano, the overall *tessitura*[63] sits higher and conveys her youth. Her vocal line suggests her trained elegance and propriety, but with slips out of decorum when she is particularly excited and sings a sudden larger, ascending leap. Her insipid account of what

[63] *Tessitura* describes the range of pitches where the majority of a role or musical selection sits.

she is marrying instead of whom is an ideal revelation of the contradictory nature of gentry life during Jane Austen's time—seemingly all politeness and grace but behind the surface insincerity, manipulation, and in some cases vapidity. Dove's use of bitonality throughout, with an unswerving B-flat major in the repeated eighth notes of the upper piano part pulsating over alternating C-major, A-flat major and F-major whole note chords in the lower piano part, is a clever musical manifestation of this inconsistency.

Just as Lady Bertram and Maria have a similarity in their vocal characterization, so too do Aunt Norris and Julia Bertram. Neither has an internal soliloquy entrance; rather, they are oriented outwards, wishing for their words to be heard by everyone in the room. They both have a preoccupation about not getting enough attention, so it follows that they would demand focus from those around them when speaking. Aunt Norris wants everything she does to be noted, so she puts in her two cents in all contexts. She is quickly identified as a busybody, chiding Fanny for not anticipating everyone else's desires. Similarly, Julia chooses to strengthen her own sense of self by debasing Fanny, bringing up memories of her ignorance, sadness and embarrassment upon her arrival at Mansfield.

Though Aunt Norris is labeled a soprano and Julia is a mezzo-soprano, both roles are *zwischenfach*[64] and could be performed by either voice type. Most significantly though, both Aunt Norris and Julia are vocally characterized by many short notes, causing quick delivery of text and awkward leaps. Just as with Lady Bertram and Maria, the older figure has a more solidly ingrained characterization, so Aunt Norris's leaps and the grating quality of her vocal lines are more extreme than Julia's, which are more subtle, since her personality is not yet as fixed due to

[64] *Zwischenfach* is a German term that describes an operatic voice that falls "between categories." In this case, the roles fall in the crack of soprano and mezzo-soprano, and thus could be performed by either. However, Dove's designation of the specific voice type he wants suggests he has a particular timbre in mind.

her youth. Julia is not nearly as refined as Maria; there is a gaucheness to her delivery, suggestive of her never being the favorite, whereas Maria has extra composure from always being complimented more by Aunt Norris and enjoying the benefits of being the eldest daughter. Julia emulates her sister in the occasional stepwise, elegant flow of her lines, but this flow is undermined by the quick delivery— again, out of some feeling of losing attention or not being able to say everything she wants before her listeners' focus shifts. Below is a sample of Julia's music from the fourth scene, when she finds out Henry Crawford has a barouche, and then of Aunt Norris' music regarding Fanny's dutifulness.

Figure 1.5: Julia Bertram Music Sample

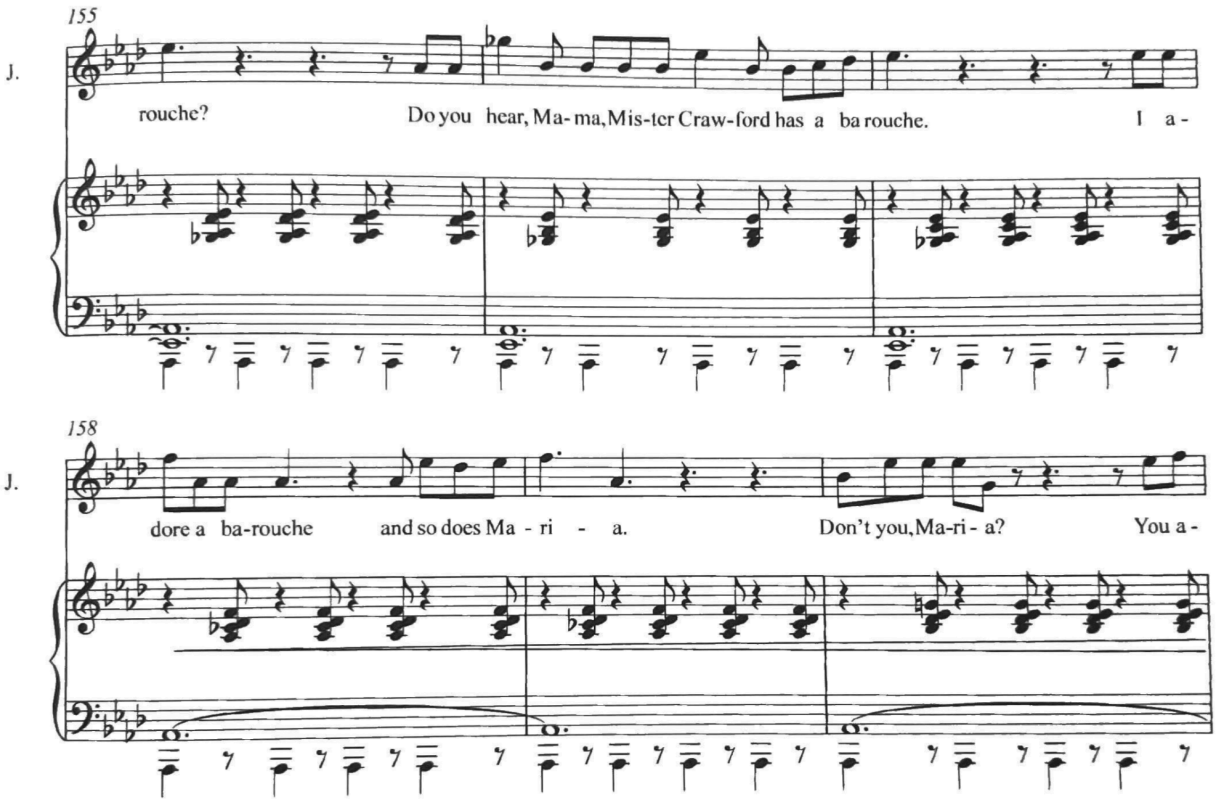
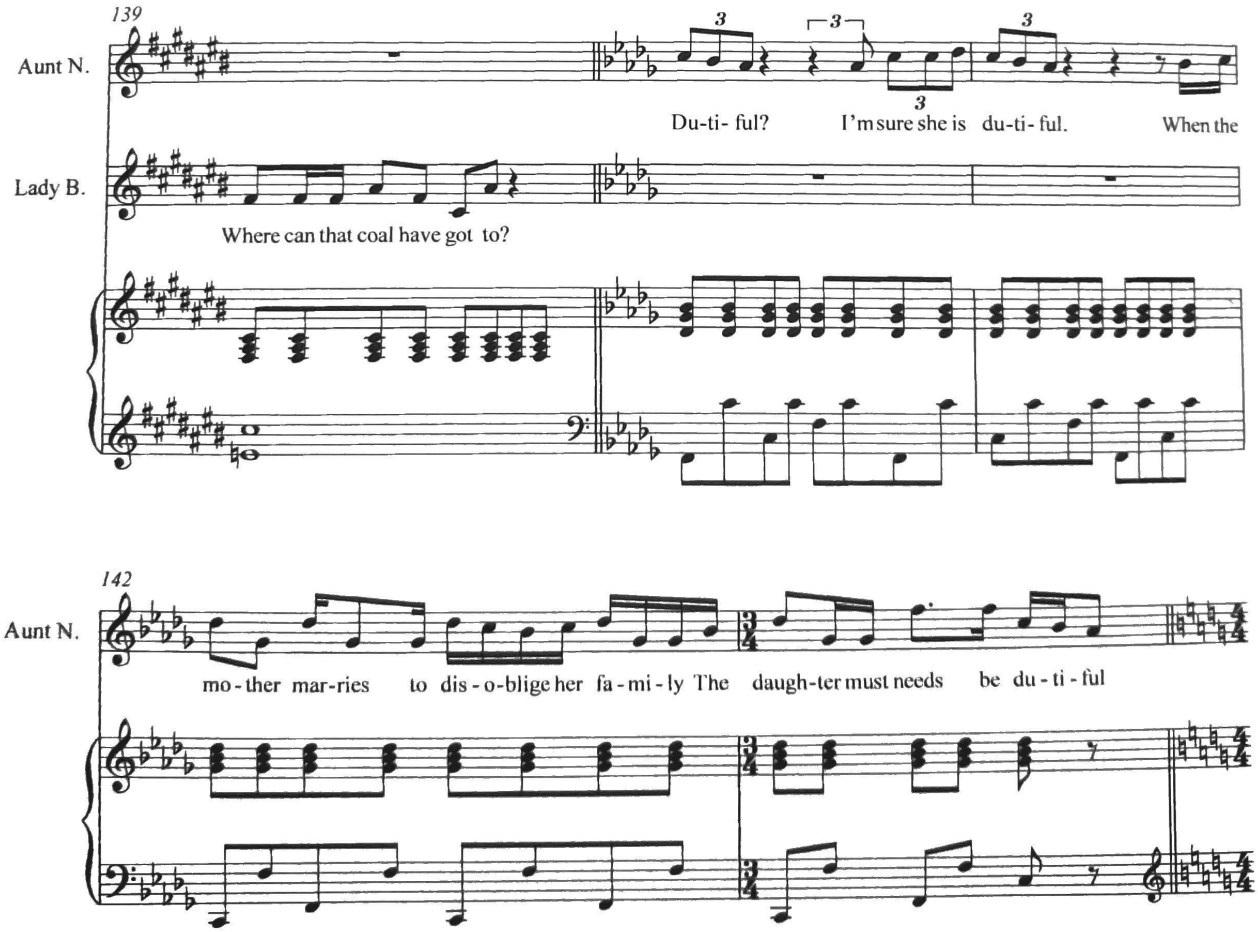


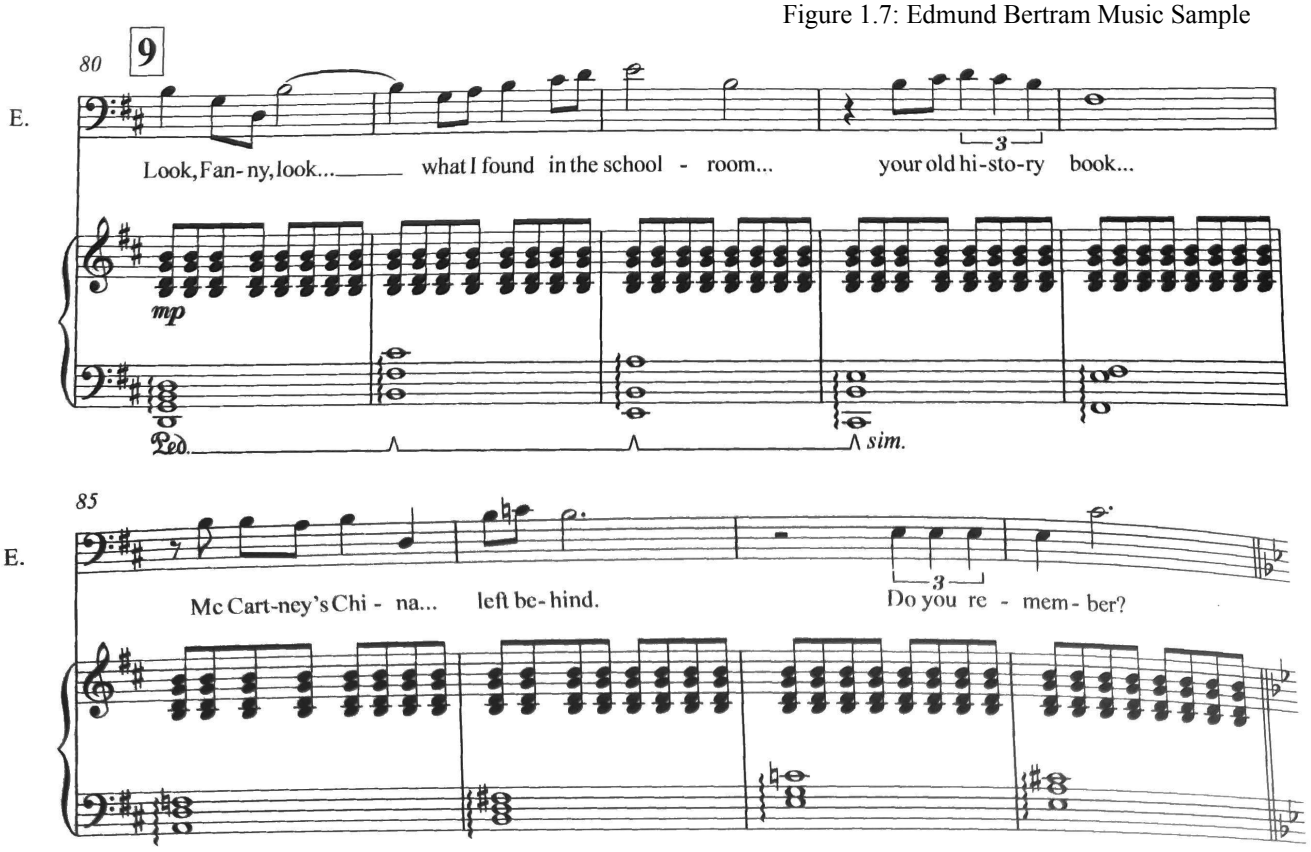
Figure 1.6: Aunt Norris Music Sample



In the opening scene, all characters except for Mr. Rushworth direct their first line to Fanny Price. Lady Bertram, Sir Thomas, and Maria all ask her to do something for them. In each case, Aunt Norris chides Fanny for having to be asked in the first place, calling her in turn ungrateful, complacent, and lacking in consideration. Edmund's entrance is then all the more contrasting for his interacting with her as a friend by inviting her to look at her old history book with him. Yes, taken plainly his statement is a command just as his parents' and sister's were, but it has a distinct affect behind it, since he wishes for her to share a pleasant reminiscence with him instead of merely asking her to complete a task that anyone is capable of doing him- or herself. His entrance comes after a flurry of eighth- and sixteenth-note accented calls of "Niece! Fanny!",

"Cousin! Fanny!", and "Fanny Price!" by her family, again with bitonality of clashing harmonies of A-flat major and B-flat major. Edmund's first line enters in a refreshing harmonious measure that is purely G-major, with note values now lasting up to a dotted half note, suggesting the sanctuary Fanny finds in Edmund—a sanctuary promptly dissolved by Julia butting in to remind Fanny of her inferiority upon her arrival at Mansfield.

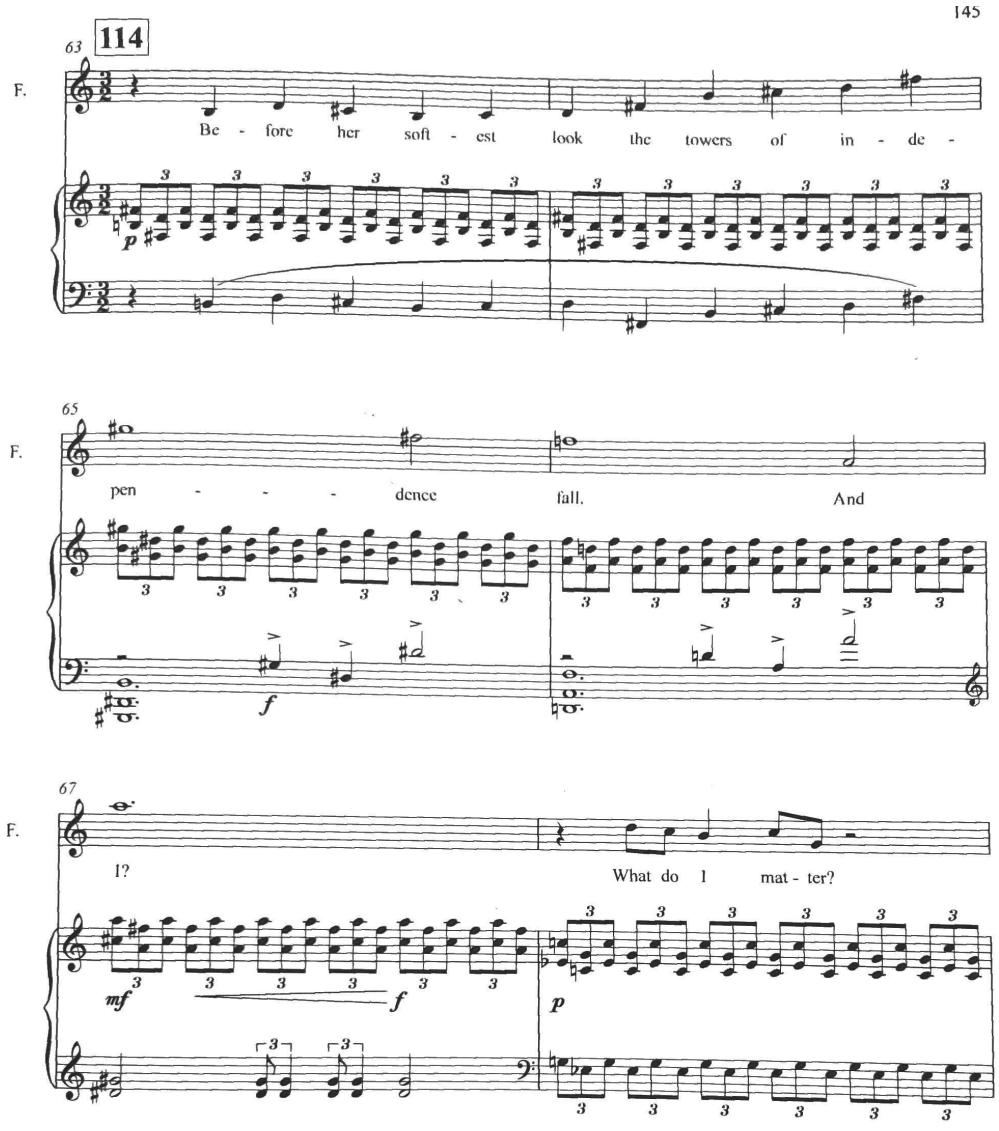
Figure 1.7: Edmund Bertram Music Sample



Fanny is the only one who does not have any extended line in the first scene. She is characterized instead by this lack of speech, by the way the others interact with her, and by her actions. Since so much depends on physical characterization, the director and the mezzo-soprano portraying Fanny have considerable freedom to choose whether Fanny still has signs of youthful spirit despite the place she holds in the household or whether she is jittery, fragile and downtrodden. As a mezzo-soprano, this singer should have a warm timbre, and the vocal lines in

this scene stay on the staff and are rather staid and measured—an indication of how Fanny keeps herself strictly composed and unobtrusive when with the family at large. Her emotional volatility is revealed only in her scenes alone or when she is interacting with Edmund, with whom she feels safest and most able to express herself. For instance, the tessitura moves up dramatically for the star-gazing scene—a suggestion of the rapturous joy Fanny finds in nature, particularly when sharing that observation with Edmund—as well as when she is anguished by Edmund's decision to act in *Lovers' Vows* in Scene 8, as demonstrated in the below excerpt.

Figure 1.8: Fanny Price Music Sample



Mr. Rushworth gets a unique introduction as Julia sees him running to the house while being chased by a cow. The cow chase is an invention of Middleton's but serves the rapid characterization of Mr. Rushworth as clueless and impressionable. When he finally enters and tries to speak, he is so out of breath that he says no complete sentences and conveys very little information. The piano's ascending sixteenth-note triplets punctuating each of Mr. Rushworth's gasped expressions transmit his frantic state as he recalls the rapid, threatening pursuit of the cow. He is wearing a silly hat, and Maria scolds him for representing her so poorly now that he is her husband-to-be. As a tenor, Mr. Rushworth is also served in a meta way—however subtly and to whatever limited an audience—by the fact that tenors are stereotyped as being unintelligent.[65]

The only characters whose formal introduction is delayed until the second scene are the visiting brother and sister from the city—Henry and Mary Crawford. It is noted in the score that they are to observe the first scene from the side, after Mary presents the family with the statement, "These, brother, are the Bertrams."[66] There is a mystery to them from the beginning, since they are onstage but say nothing more until after they have been appraised by Maria and Julia in the second scene. Their bond as siblings is clear; they understand each other even if they are not speaking sincerely, and they coordinate their musical lines with ease. The same goes for Maria and Julia; the regularity of their time together makes it easy for them to fall into a groove when in each other's company. Figure 1.10 demonstrates the rhythmic and textual harmony both pairs of siblings possess.

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[65] This meta connection is not applicable to fellow tenor Henry Crawford, however, who is all composure and calculation.

[66] Dove and Middleton, *Mansfield Park*, 1-2.

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Figure 1.9: Mr. Rushworth Music Sample

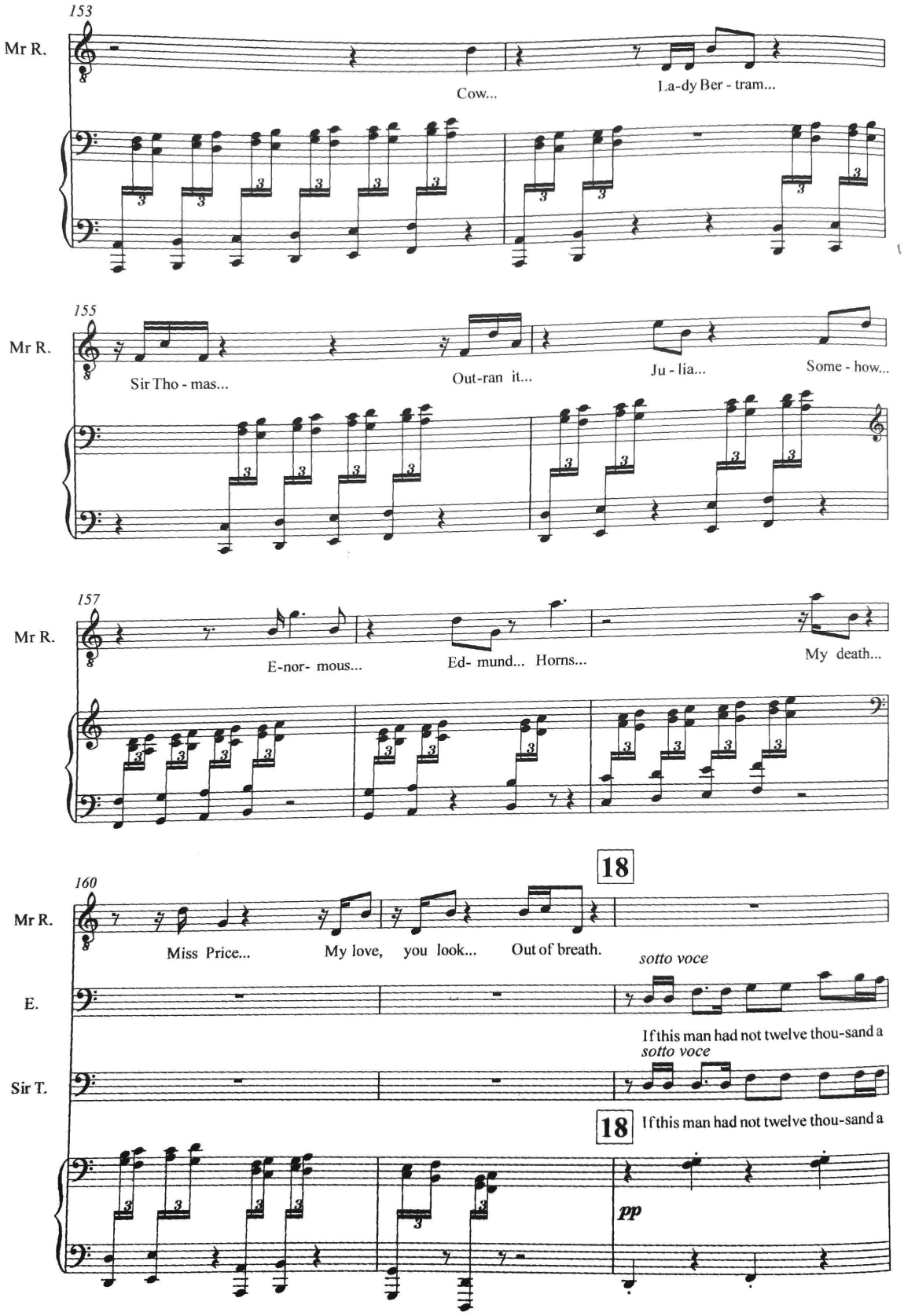
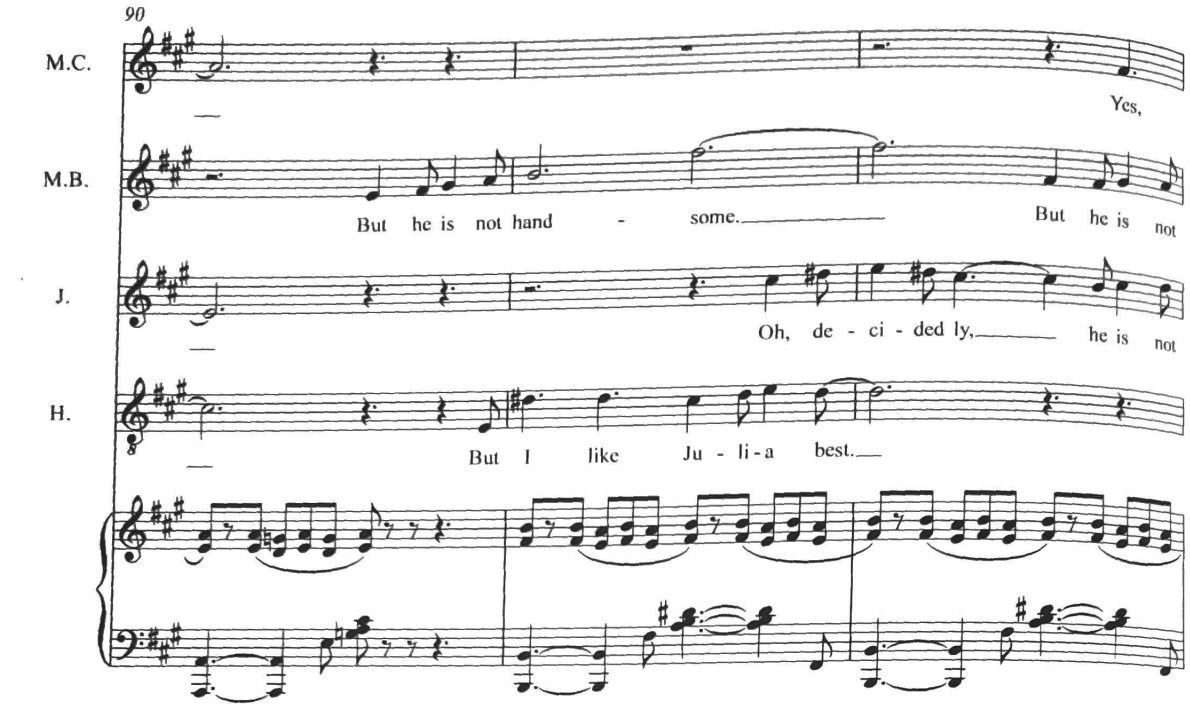
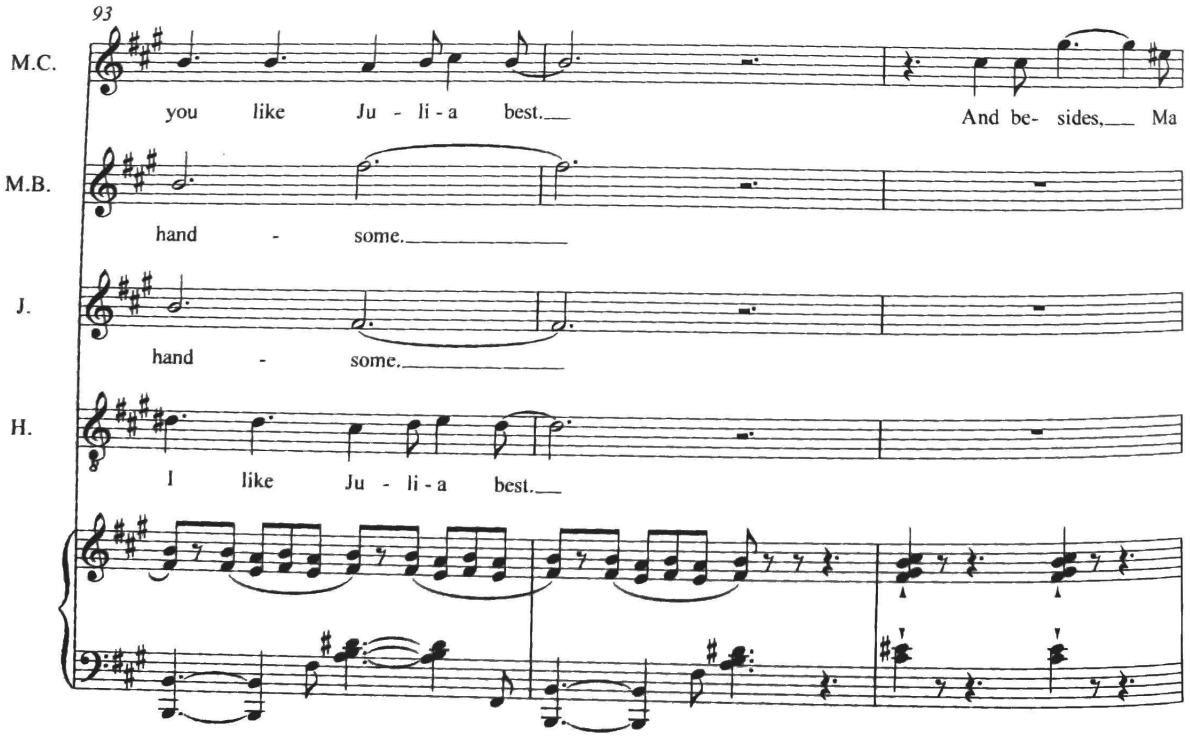


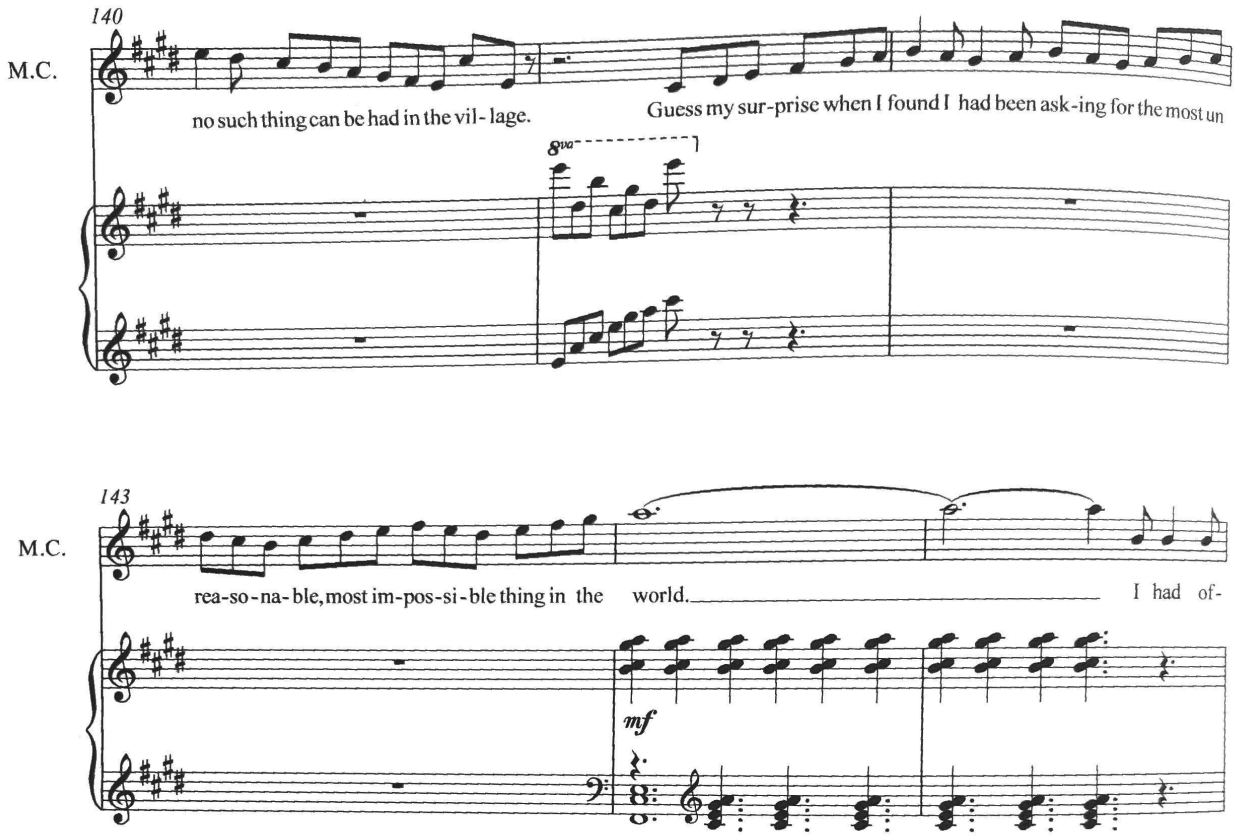
Figure 1.10: Siblings Music Sample





Mary's interaction with Edmund in Scene 2 is especially revelatory in terms of vocal characterization. Not only does it contain an extended amount of text, with no detail spared and undertones of amusement at the silly customs of the country, but Mary also is not shy about taking up time and moving through a wide range and multiple changes of pace. She is confident enough to slow down her expression, whereas Julia and Fanny, for instance, rarely hold a note for an extended period when interacting with others; they are less confident about taking up space or keeping the listeners' attention and so move through their sentiments more quickly. Mary, on the other hand, relishes being the center of attention and garners enjoyment from the idea that she is holding others' focus through her outwardly capricious, inwardly calculated, means of communicating.

Figure 1.11: Mary Crawford Music Sample



As a coloratura soprano, Mary has many notes in the upper extreme of her range—another indicator that she is not timid about expressing herself or making bold choices when communicating, even about simple daily happenings. While Fanny's high notes are saved for moments of particular emotional intensity, Mary throws them off without a care. In contrast with Fanny, who unequivocally refuses to act even though she must disappoint her cousins during the *Lovers' Vows* debacle, Mary is always acting even in everyday interactions. In Jane Austen's time in particular, "social life [required] a strong element of role-playing," and Mary was a professional-caliber actress in this context.[67]

Dove and Middleton paint effective pictures of the characters with the tools the score itself denotes: the union of music and text through the human voice, encompassing vocal timbre, articulation, pacing, dynamics, and the interplay of musical lines from other characters or the instruments. Those aspects then combine with the visuals of costumes, sets, and props and finally the personal affect of the actors embodying the characters. Each production will have different personnel both onstage and behind the scenes, so every presentation will have a unique dynamic among the characters. When it comes to a production set in Jane Austen's time, it is important for movement and modes of interaction to align with the societal norms suggested by the libretto. The next chapter gives modern directors and performers tools to engage with this period-specific mentality.

[67] Paula Byrne, *The Genius of Jane Austen* (Toronto: Harper Collins Publishers, 2017), 232.

CHAPTER TWO:

BEHAVIOR AND ETIQUETTE

Fidelity to the source material encompasses more than the written content of the score. When it comes to a period production, which for *Mansfield Park* means a production set circa 1810, it also involves informed choice of costumes, sets, physical embodiment, and deportment. Every time period has its idiosyncratic social norms. In Austen's time, appearance and modes of social interaction were particularly strictly coded and could have strong repercussions when left unobserved. One's appearance and behavior were regarded as an external manifestation of morality and of a virtuous mind. An unkempt exterior was a sign of a disordered, sullied mind; likewise, a beautiful appearance was equated with a wholesome, sound character—at least upon first impression.

Achieving Greater Believability On the Stage

The issues that performers and directors face in realizing the behaviors and mannerisms of the nineteenth century on stage are manifold, but attention to these aspects of the performance is an important investment. Historical research gives directors a foundation from which to develop their interpretation of the work via a greater alertness to hidden meaning behind characters' words, how characters should interact according to status and age, and the actions and modes of movement that are appropriate for the time. For performers as well, this research provides the vocabulary to make believable choices on stage for the moments when one does not have specific direction. When one understands the values and standards of the period, she is

empowered to react and to make choices in the moment on stage with the confidence that they will be period-appropriate responses. Familiarity with the culture of the time provides a depth of understanding of a character's method of interaction with his or her surroundings, without which a portrayal is superficial and uncertain, and thereby likely to leave an audience unconvinced and unmoved no matter the quality of the musical delivery.

When it comes to the inner life of a character—something Austen was particularly adept at portraying—this specificity of thought and understanding of expectations of the time makes the performers more engaging and more believable. It gives truth to the eyes and to the motivations of the blocking[68] while providing a consistency of purpose through the silences. Many of these choices are subtle and could be lost in a big performance space, but in the age of Opera in HD, subtleties have taken on higher status on the operatic stage. In the case of *Mansfield Park* specifically, the intended performance space is "great houses"—manors, mansions and other venues more intimate than a large opera house—so the subtleties are also more likely to be perceived by the audience.

The applicability of these findings stretches far beyond *Mansfield Park*, the opera. Any production set in early nineteenth-century England, be it theater, opera, musical, or film, requires historically-informed guidance; any artistic endeavor aimed at bringing the coded nature of daily life that was specific to the early nineteenth century to the present day must reference sources from that time. The information can also serve the performance of art song, since understanding the lifestyle of the character gives greater believability to the portrayal, even just at the level of the eyes and of the small gestures that are employed in a concert setting. These physical and

[68] *Blocking* refers to the specific, prescribed movements of actors within a staged production.

mental choices will serve the music by making the overall presentation one that is in harmony; the gestures and expressions will match the period that has been given life by the composer and librettist, so the audience will be able to sense a greater cohesion between the music, text, and visual representation of these elements. When parts of a production are aligned, the audience is ultimately more likely to be moved by the presentation.

It is worth noting, however, that a period production is not mandatory for an effective experience of a Jane Austen story. As the movies *Clueless* and *Bride and Prejudice* prove, the essence of her characters is recognizable across centuries and cultures, and her stories resonate with a contemporary audience even when portrayed in a setting other than nineteenth-century England.[69] A German version of Dove and Middleton's *Mansfield Park* was presented by Staatstheater Braunschweig in 2015 in a modernized setting. Based solely on the production photos, one can still guess who is who and feel the appropriate affect of the characters. It is simply a question of consistency, cohesion, and commitment, whatever the lens through which Austen's story is being told.

For those who wish to produce a period production or to inform their modernized production with a deeper understanding of the social constructs surrounding the opera's characters, excerpted below are passages from behavior and conduct manuals from Jane Austen's time, arranged according to relevant themes in *Mansfield Park.*

[69] *Clueless* is a retelling of *Emma*, in which the titular character is now a rich Beverly Hills high school student. *Bride and Prejudice* is a Bollywood reimagining of *Pride and Prejudice*.

Women's Education and Accomplishments

Young women of the gentry class in the Regency period were frequently educated at home either by parents or, in wealthy households, by a live-in governess as well as "master" teachers for topics such as dancing, drawing and music. This private home education could be supplemented by time at a boarding school, though girls were not permitted to attend public schools or universities.[70] The Bertram girls and Fanny are educated by a governess, Miss Lee. While reading, writing, English grammar, geography, and simple arithmetic were the most basic elements taught, girls' education was augmented by a number of "accomplishments" aimed at preparing them for courtship and married life.

It is important to comprehend the concept of the "accomplished woman." In *Pride and Prejudice*, Caroline Bingley and Mr. Darcy explain their definition to Elizabeth Bennet during an evening in the drawing room at Netherfield. Miss Bingley details that "no one can be really esteemed accomplished who does not greatly surpass what is usually met with. A woman must have a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing, and the modern languages, to deserve the word; and besides all this, she must possess a certain something in her air and manner of walking, the tone of her voice, her address and expressions, or the word will be but half-deserved." To this Mr. Darcy appends that the lady must also dedicate herself to "the improvement of her mind by extensive reading."[71]

While Fanny excels at the extensive reading side of things, she is criticized by her cousins and by Aunt Norris precisely because she has no wish to fulfill all the facets mentioned

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[70] Kirstin Olsen, "Education," in *All Things Austen: An Encyclopedia of Austen's World, Volume I*, (London: Greenwood Press, 2005), 229-30. In England, public school refers to the equivalent of an American private school. Public school, in the American sense, did not exist in England during the Regency period.

[71] Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice: An Annotated Edition,* ed. Patricia Meyer Spacks (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 73-74.

above. For the Bertram girls, who have been raised to view excelling at their accomplishments as the primary goal at this stage of their lives, such an indifference is incomprehensible. In the second chapter of the novel, one of the Bertram girls tells her aunt about Fanny's disinterest in learning artistic endeavors.

Miss Bertram[72]: *"I must tell you another thing of Fanny, so odd and so stupid. Do you know, she says she does not want to learn either music or drawing."*

Aunt Norris: *"To be sure, my dear, that is very stupid indeed, and shows a great want of genius and emulation. But, all things considered, I do not know whether it is not as well that it should be so, for, though you know (owing to me) your papa and mamma are so good as to bring her up with you, it is not at all necessary that she should be as accomplished as you are;—on the contrary, it is much more desirable that there should be a difference."*[73]

A lady's level of accomplishment is, thus, also a class marker. Aunt Norris suggests it is acceptable that Fanny not master all of the accomplishments, since she is not a gentleman's daughter.[74] Aunt Norris and Sir Thomas are both committed to maintaining the distinction between Maria and Julia on the one hand and Fanny on the other, since "their rank, fortune, rights, and expectations will always be different."[75] The guidelines below are intended for those

[72] It is not specified in the text whether it is Maria or Julia who is speaking.

[73] Austen, *Mansfield Park*, 17.

[74] One could also argue that Aunt Norris did not want Fanny to be accomplished enough to be potential competition for the Bertram girls.

[75] Austen, *Mansfield Park*, 10.

young ladies who do boast the genteel rank and, therefore, commit themselves fully to mastering the arts mentioned and may do so without fear of achieving above their station.

There is confirmation of the kinds of areas studied in *The Polite Lady; or, A Course of Female Education in a Series of Letters from A Mother to Her Daughter.* In this source, readers follow the correspondence between a mother and her daughter who has just arrived at boarding-school. The daughter reports what she is learning, and the mother expands on each topic, expressing why it is important and that the daughter, Sophia, submit herself fully to the guidance of her instructor. The first letter from Sophia summarizes her studies as follows:

"I am learning English, sewing, writing, cyphering,[76] *and dancing: and Mrs. Bromley says I shall soon begin to learn French."*[77]

Before Sophia's first letter, her mother had instructed her to work tirelessly on her penmanship and to acquire a dictionary so that she could check her spelling; she did not wish to receive a letter from Sophia until she had done her due diligence to write with a "distinct and legible hand" with no spelling errors.[78] Expanding on cyphering, Sophia's mother explains that it is a most critical skill:

"Without this, you must depend upon your memory for every farthing of money that passes through your hands. Without this, you can neither keep an account of the money you receive from

[76] *Cyphering* is an antiquated term for doing arithmetic.

[77] A Lady, *The Polite Lady; or, A Course of Female Education: in a Series of Letters, from a Mother to her Daughter* (Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1798), 21-22.

[78] Ibid, 20.

me, nor of what you expend yourself. Without this, you will be in danger of being cheated by every person you deal with. Without this, you will not be able to assist me in the management of our family, which, however I expect you should be in a few years; and still less will you be able to superintend the economy of your own, when, in the course of Providence, you come to be mistress of one. In a word, you will be altogether unqualified for several of the most important duties in life."[79]

Subsequent letters from Sophia to her mother signal the addition of drawing, vocal and instrumental music, and needlework to her education, the last of which her mother deems a most useful accomplishment. Drawing and dancing[80] were among the most popular pursuits of young ladies according to the retired governess who authored *A Legacy of Affection, Advice and Education:*

"Drawing, after dancing, I have generally observed to be popular among young ladies, and it ought to be so. It is an elegant art, and intellectually useful, for it obliges the mind to acquire accurate ideas of forms, and differences of forms, which could not otherwise be noticed."[81]

Only certain subjects were worthy of drawing, however. Sophia's mother clarifies that the forms must be realistic, as one would encounter them in nature:

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[79] Ibid, 23.
The focus on keeping track of expenses hints at the administrative work women did in the household. Mellor cites this and other historical practices in her introduction to *Mothers of the Nation* to emphasize that the concept of separate spheres was in fact an oversimplification.

[80] Further discussion of dancing is included in the "Appearance" section, since dancing impacts overall physical carriage in both men and women.

[81] A Lady, *A Legacy of Affection, Advice, and Instruction, from a Retired Governess, to the Present Pupils of an Establishment for Female Education, which she conducted upwards of forty years,* (London: Sir Richard Phillips and Co., 1827), 144.

"Let the objects from which you copy, be chiefly the works of nature; or, at least, such works of art, as are faithful imitations of nature; and carefully avoid every thing that is unnatural, whimsical, or romantic."[82]

The most prominent example of musical accomplishment in *Mansfield Park* is undoubtedly that of Mary Crawford, whose prowess on the harp is emphasized in both the novel and the opera. The harp was an instrument that was a particular marker of status due to its expense, so a skilled player was all the more likely to impress when aiming to ensnare a suitor. As *Mirror of the Graces* emphasizes, "the shape of the instrument is calculated, in every respect, to show a fine figure to advantage. The contour of the whole form, the turn and polish of a beautiful hand and arm, the richly-slippered and well-made foot on the pedal stops, the gentle motion of a lovely neck" are all on full display.[83] Mary certainly succeeds in enchanting Edmund with the harp, which he claims is "[his] favorite instrument."[84]

Sophia's mother, however, prefers that her daughter focus on harpsichord, guitar and vocal music:

"As most young ladies are taught to play on the harpsichord and guitar, I expect you will learn to perform on both these instruments, especially the first. But still I would have you to apply your chief attention to vocal music, because, in its perfection, it is of a far more excellent nature than

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[82] *The Polite Lady*, 29.

[83] A Lady of Distinction, *Mirror of the Graces; or, The English Lady's Costume* (London: B. Crosby and Co., 1811), 195.

[84] Austen, *Mansfield Park*, 57.
Dove and Middleton, *Mansfield Park*, 37-38.

that which is merely instrumental; the merit of the latter being always determined by its approach to the former."[85]

For all accomplishments, however, there is the expectation that an elegant young woman not excel too much. If she achieves an excellence comparable to those who work professionally, then she undermines herself by suggesting negligence in her other areas of study:

"She who is a mere singer, a mere dancer, a mere drawer, or, indeed, a mere any thing, has no title to the character of an accomplished woman. That is composed of competent knowledge of these and every other polite accomplishment, heightened and improved by company and conversation."[86]

The reason for the accomplishments is not only for a woman to be able to show herself well in public settings, thereby positioning herself for the best marriage prospect. These skills also have a more practical, basic application, as explained in *An Enquiry Into the Duties of the Female Sex* and *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters*:

"Let the pupil… be thoroughly impressed with a conviction of the real end and use of all such attainments; namely, that they are designed, in the first place, to supply her hours of leisure with innocent and amusing occupations; occupations which may prevent the languor and the snares of idleness, render home attractive, refresh the wearied faculties, and contribute to preserve the

[85] *The Polite Lady*, 31-32.

[86] Ibid, 33.

timid in a state of placid cheerfulness, which is the most favourable to sentiments of benevolence to mankind and of gratitude to God; and in the next place, to enable her to communicate a kindred pleasure, with all its beneficial effects, to her family and friends, to all with whom she is now, or may hereafter, be intimately connected."[87]

And, similarly…

"Your being taught needle-work, knitting, and such like, is not on account of the intrinsic value of all you can do with your hands, which is trifling, but to… enable you to fill up, in a tolerably agreeable way, some of the many solitary hours you must necessarily pass at home."[88]

The emphasis on having activities to fill the hours of the day highlights just how much time genteel women spent in the confines of their homes, with nothing to entertain themselves except their own talents. Sophia's mother follows Mr. Darcy's line of thinking that spending leisure hours with a meaningful book is an excellent use of time:

"There is no way… in which you may pass your time with greater pleasure than in reading good and sensible books. […] It is an inexhaustible source of useful instruction, and delightful entertainment. And it has this advantage above all other amusements, that here you may choose your company as you please."[89]

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[87] Thomas Gisborne, *An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex,* (London: Strand, 1823), 80.

[88] John Gregory, *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters,* (Dublin: Thomas Ewing and Caleb Jenkin, 1774), 59.

[89] *The Polite Lady*, 134-35.

For all of the study women would pursue, however, there was an expectation of sharing one's knowledge only when called upon to do so, and possibly not even then as a woman in search of a husband. *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters* reveals that women had to be careful about demonstrating intelligence:

"If you happen to have any learning, keep it a profound secret, especially from the men, who generally look with a jealous and malignant eye on a woman of great parts, and a cultivated understanding."[90]

Austen references this concept herself—in her typical witty fashion—in a passage from *Northanger Abbey,* where she states, "To come with a well-informed mind is to come with an inability of administering to the vanity of others, which a sensible person would always wish to avoid. A woman especially, if she have the misfortune of knowing anything, should conceal it as well as she can."[91]

Sophia's mother reminds her to "employ two or three hours every day in revising all the different parts of [her] education."[92] Thus, it is entirely appropriate for Maria, Julia, and Fanny, and even Lady Bertram and Aunt Norris, to pass time in scenes when they are not otherwise occupied doing needlepoint, reading, studying maps, copying sheet music, or letter-writing in a production of the opera. The Miss Bertrams could also be drawing or painting. Aunt Norris

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[90] *A Father's Legacy,* 36-7.

[91] Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey (*London: Penguin Group, 2012), 90.

[92] *The Polite Lady,* 32.

undoubtedly spends the most time cyphering of these women—she probably would not allow any woman but herself to take on the task.

Men's Education

Men's education echoed women's in the earliest stages. Boys were first educated at home and then usually sent to either a boarding school or public school. It was considerably rarer for a boy not to be sent away for his education at some point. Edmund attends Eton College, one of the renowned public schools, before continuing his education at Oxford University. The content of boys' education differed from women's after the preliminary stages. While women began acquiring accomplishments, men at Eton College, for instance, faced a curriculum of "writing, arithmetic, Euclidean geometry, algebra, Greek and Roman history, a handful of English literary classics such as the works of Pope and Milton, and Latin and Greek grammar."[93]

Reading was one pastime that was equally appropriate for both men and women, though men were expected to focus only on "serious reading."[94] The author of *The Accomplished Gentleman* suggests the following as appropriate titles for consumption by a gentleman:

"The books I would particularly recommend among others, are, Cardinal Retz's maxims, Rochfaucault's moral reflections, Bruyer's characters, Fontenelle's plurality of worlds, Sir Josiah Child on trade, Bolingbroke's works, *for style, his* Remarks on the history of England, *under the name of Sir John Oldcastle;* Puffendorff's Jus Gentium, *and* Grotius de Jure Belli et

[93] Olsen, "Education," 236.

[94] Philip Stanhope, *The Accomplished Gentleman: or, Principles of Politeness and of Knowing the World,* (Dubin: Wogan, Bean, and Pike, 1782), 41.

Pacis: *the last two are well translated by Barbeyrac. For occasional half-hours or less, read the best works of invention, wit and humour, but never waste your minutes on trifling authors either antient [sic] or modern."*[95]

Another distinction was regarding the study of music. Playing an instrument as a gentleman was not seen as an asset; it actually could have quite the contrary effect on a man's reputation:

"There is another amusement too, which I cannot help calling illiberal, that is, playing upon any musical instrument. Music is commonly reckoned one of the liberal arts, and undoubtedly is so; but to be piping or fiddling at a concert is degrading to a man of fashion. If you love music, hear it; pay fiddlers to play to you, but never fiddle yourself. It makes a gentleman appear frivolous and contemptible, leads him frequently into bad company, and wastes that time which might otherwise be well employed."[96]

When it came to sharing knowledge they had acquired, men were instructed as follows:

"Reserve [your learning] for learned men, and let them rather extort it from you, than you be too willing to display it. Hence you will be thought modest, and to have more knowledge than you really have."[97]

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[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid, 35.

[97] Ibid, 53.

Appearance

Accomplishments meant nothing if the figure executing those activities did not look good while doing so. For women in Austen's time, "the secret of preserving beauty [was] found in three things: Temperance, Exercise, Cleanliness."[98] Clear skin in particular was necessary to be considered beautiful, since it gave "an assurance of the inherent residence of three admirable graces to beauty; Wholesomeness, Neatness, and Cheerfulness."[99] In order to maintain clear skin, women had to be mindful about their eating and be sure to include "gentle and daily exercise in the open air."[100] Riding on horseback was not enough to ensure a good figure, as the author of *Mirror of the Graces* makes a point to emphasize:

"If a girl wishes to be well-shaped and well-complexioned she must use due exercise on foot*."*[101]

The author of *An Enquiry Into the Duties of Women* summarizes the path to health concisely:

"Wholesome food, early hours, pure air, and bodily exercise, are instruments not of health only, but of knowledge."[102]

When following this exercise regimen, ladies had to ensure they were properly attired:

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[98] *Mirror of the Graces,* 33.

[99] Ibid, 44.

[100] Ibid, 38

[101] Ibid, 135

[102] *Duties of the Female Sex*, 90.

"I would strenuously recommend, for health's sake, as well as for beauty, that no lady should make one in any riding, airing, or walking party, without putting on her head something capable of affording both shelter and warmth."[103]

There was specific protocol for dress in every circumstance according to a woman's age, figure, and social status. For women seeking a husband, it was particularly important to strive for a mid-point between looking prudish and provocative:

"Something between the well-dressed quaker and a theatrical fine lady is the golden mean which you should constantly attempt."[104]

To achieve this modesty, there were regulations of which parts of the body had to be covered at the varying times of day.

"Custom regulates the veiling or unveiling the figure, according to different periods in the day. In the morning[105] *the arms and bosom must be completely covered to the throat and wrists. From the dinner-hour to the termination of the day, the arms, to a graceful height above the elbow, may be bare; and the neck and shoulders unveiled as far as delicacy will allow."*[106]

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[103] *Mirror of the Graces*, 46.

[104] *Legacy of affection*, 143.

[105] The definition of "morning" in Jane Austen's time extended past the modern definition of morning up until the time one started preparing for dinner, which usually ranged from 3-6pm.

[106] *Mirror of the Graces*, 95.

Mirror of the Graces offers sample fashion plates of a lady's attire for morning/domestic dresses, carriage or promenade dresses, and evening-wear.

Figure 2.1: Morning or Domestic Dresses

Figure 2.2: Carriage or Promenade Dresses

Figure 2.3: Evening Dresses

The petticoat and chemise, a shirt-like garment that ended above the knees, were a lady's only undergarments, with the possible addition of bloomers. Dress fabrics of the time were extremely thin, so, without these thicker under-layers, women left very little to the imagination. Women's fashion was a common favorite for satirical cartoonists precisely because of this propensity for oversharing when it came to the details of one's figure.

Figure 2.4: *The Graces in a High Wind* by James Gillray © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

To avoid this embarrassment, the author of *Mirror of the Graces* implores ladies to give due attention to proper coverage:

"The Chemise, (now too frequently banished,) ought to be held as sacred by the modest fair, as the vestal veil. No fashion should be able to strip her of that decent covering; in short, women should consider it as the sign of her delicacy, as the pledge of honour to shelter her from the gaze of unhallowed eyes."[107]

"In no case a true friend or lover would wish you to discover to the eye more of the 'form divine' than can be indistinctly descried through the mysterious involvements of, at least, three successive folds of drapery."[108]

Figure 2.5: Beau Brummel, 1805

Men's fashion was also revealing, but in a different way. Men's clothing of this period was focused on creating a sleek silhouette with form-fitting breeches and precisely tailored coats.

[107] *Mirror of the Graces,* 78.

[108] Ibid, 91.

Aside from how they were dressed, men and women both needed to move well. Sophia's mother urged her to attend to her dancing judiciously so that she could avoid embarrassment at social gatherings:

"[Dancing] will give you a natural, easy, and graceful air to all the motions of your body, and enable you to behave in company with a modest assurance and address. Besides, it is an art in which you will frequently be obliged to shew your skill in the fashionable balls and assemblies, to which your birth and connexions will intitle [sic] *you to be introduced; and to appear ignorant or awkward on these occasions could not fail to put you to the blush. It will likewise contribute greatly to your health, as it is a kind of exercise which you may take when the badness of weather, or other circumstances, hinder you from going abroad."*[109]

When a woman danced, it was all about conveying "ease and grace."[110] Women were trained in "the sociable country dance, the graceful minuet, the lively quadrille, and the fashionable waltz" for years before they "came out" into society so that they could shine when that all-important time arrived for them to enter the marriage market.[111] For the English country dance, for instance, the expectations were as follows:

"The female, who engages in [the English country dance], must aim at nothing more, in treading its easy mazes, than executing a few simple steps with unaffected elegance. Her body, her arms,

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[109] *The Polite Lady,* 25.

[110] *A Father's Legacy,* 65.

[111] *Legacy of affection,* 143.

the turn of her head, the expression of her countenance, all must bear the same character of negligent grace, of elegant activity, of decorous gaiety."[112]

Dancing related to overall physical presence and carriage. It was a required study for all genteel and upperclass ladies and gentlemen.

"[Dancing] comprehends every motion, every gesture, every attitude of the body; and she who cannot walk, or stand, or even sit in a genteel, graceful manner, does not deserve the name of a good dancer."[113]

The author of *The Accomplished Gentleman* almost exactly echoes these sentiments when advising men:

"To acquire a graceful air, you must attend to your dancing; no one can either sit, stand, or walk well, unless he dances well."[114]

Social Graces

To all these physical nuances it was necessary to add the more intangible social graces—whom to talk to, about what, and in what manner; whom to defer to in each situation; in short, how to interact so that you would maintain respectability rather than engender ridicule. Simply

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[112] *Mirror of the Graces,* 183.

[113] *The Polite Lady,* 26.

[114] *The Accomplished Gentleman*, 11-12.

put, "there [was] nothing, however minute in manners, however insignificant in appearance, that [did] not demand some portion of attention from a well-bred and highly-polished young woman," and it was the same for men.[115] The theme was to make other people feel good about themselves, no matter the flattery required.

"The great art of pleasing in conversation consists in making the company pleased with themselves. You will more readily hear than talk yourselves into their good graces."[116]

This meant strategizing about how much to reveal about oneself. For women, this consisted in deferring to her company's knowledge, appearing to be informed by others even if she already knew something herself, and in general nursing a feeling of superiority in male acquaintances.

"A fine woman shows her charms to most advantage, when she seems most to conceal them."[117]

"'Tis the duty of a young lady to talk with an air of diffidence, as if she proposed what she said, rather with a view to receive information herself, than to inform and instruct the company."[118]

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[115] *Mirror of the Graces,* 199.

[116] *A Father's Legacy*, 37-8.

[117] *A Father's Legacy*, 64.

[118] *The Polite Lady*, 205.

"The retiring grace, the gentle force, the winning modesty, are the qualities, the true characteristics of our sex. Our strength consists in our weakness. Our power of conquering lies in at least appearing to be conquered. Our strength of argument lies in our habitual deference, and our very anger is to be displayed, not by railing, but by our dignified reserve, and merely by an abatement of our usual amenity."[119]

For men, the most important factor was finding the balance of openness and guardedness:

"The general rule is to have a real reserve with almost every one, and a seeming reserve with almost no one : For it is very disgusting to seem reserved, and very dangerous not to be so. Few observe the true medium."[120]

"Be particularly careful not to speak of yourself, if you can help it."[121]

"A gentleman who is acquainted with life, enters a room with gracefulness, and a modest assurance, addresses persons whom he does not know, in an easy and natural manner, and without the least embarrassment. This is the characteristic of good-breeding, a very necessary knowledge in our intercourse with men."[122]

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[119] *A legacy of affection,* 145.

[120] *The Accomplished Gentleman,* 27.

[121] Ibid, 3.

[122] Ibid, 2.

Women had to excel at trifling conversation, since they were not permitted to discuss anything else in mixed company. Thus, for men to interact well with women, they too had to be a master of everyday niceties. The following are three examples of guidance from *The Accomplished Gentleman*:

"There is a fashionable kind of small-talk, which, however trifling it may be thought, has its use in mixed companies: of course you should endeavour to acquire it. By small-talk, I mean a good deal to say on unimportant matters; for example, foods, the flavour and growth of wines, and the chit-chat of the day. Such conversation will serve to keep off serious subjects that might create disputes. This chit-chat is chiefly learned by frequenting the company of the ladies."[123]

"If ever you would be esteemed by the women, your conversation to them should be always respectful, lively, and addressed to their vanity. Every thing you say or do, should tend to shew a regard to their beauty or good sense."[124]

"[Women's] little wants and whims, their likes and dislikes, and even their impertinencies, are particularly attended to and flattered, and their very thoughts and wishes guessed at and instantly gratified by every well-bred man."[125]

[123] Ibid, 18.

[124] Ibid, 9.

[125] Ibid, 7.

However, in the case of Edmund, it is actually his refreshing genuineness and artlessness that end up drawing Mary Crawford to him. He fails to follow the expected pattern of uniformly flattering women, and it makes him a source of fascination for Mary:

> *"Without his being a man of the world or an elder brother, without any of the arts of flattery or the gaieties of small talk, he began to be agreeable to [Mary]. […] he was not pleasant by any common rule, he talked no nonsense, he paid no compliments, his opinions were unbending, his attentions tranquil and simple. There was a charm, perhaps, in his sincerity, his steadiness, his integrity."*[126]

Introductions were another complicated situation. People could only interact if they had been introduced by a mutual acquaintance. All greetings towards non-family members required a bow or curtsy. If a man and woman met in the street, a woman had to acknowledge the man first in order for them to converse; if the woman did not initiate contact, the man could not approach her.

Morality & Marriage

Fanny Price is a very devout young woman with an unswerving moral compass. Growing up with Edmund, a future clergyman who takes his vocation seriously, as her primary influencer, it follows that she would attribute significant weight to strict piety. What Mary Crawford views as an outdated chore—namely, regular attendance of church—Fanny considers to be of utmost

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[126] Austen, *Mansfield Park*, 58.

importance. In the novel, when the party visits Sotherton, there is an extended episode in the family chapel where Mary reveals her disregard and disdain for the clergy and for the demands they put on the family and servants. Fanny is outraged at Mary's disrespectful tone towards those working in the religious vocation, and Mary regrets her comments only after discovering that Edmund means to take orders.

A reference to religion is common to the conduct books of both men and women of Austen's time. Women were particularly advised to "let religion and morality be the foundation of the female character."[127] A woman's devoutness was supposed to indicate a greater suitability for marriage, and it is precisely Fanny's character that ultimately makes her victorious over Mary Crawford in capturing Edmund's heart.

"Every man who knows human nature, connects a religious taste in your sex with softness and sensibility of heart; at least we always consider the want of it as a proof of that hard and masculine spirit, which of all your faults we dislike the most. Besides, men consider your religion as one of their principal securities for that female virtue in which they are most interested."[128]

Religion also served as a basis for the hierarchy of the relationship between husband and wife. Women were supposed to be subordinate in accordance with the dictates of Scripture and their status as "the weaker sex."

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[127] *Mirror of the Graces,* 14.

[128] *A Father's Legacy*, 24-5.

"The constitution of nature and of the human frame, which manifestly allots different offices of life to the different sexes, seems no less clearly to indicate a certain degree of subordination to be the duty of the weaker sex. The holy scriptures, confirming these suggestions of natural reason, and guarding against the perpetual conflicts by which, the peace and harmony of families would be destroyed, were a complete equality of rights to subsist between the husband and the wife, have expressly pronounced submission to be the general duty of the latter. 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church.'"[129]

Courtship was extremely conservative by modern standards. Marriageable women were practically never allowed to be alone with a suitor, and the only respectable physical contact was a grasp of the hand or while the couple was dancing. In fact, "a touch, a pressure of the hands, [were] the only external signs a woman [could] give of entertaining a particular regard for certain individuals."[130] If men overstepped in their physical contact or choice of conversation with a woman, the lady had to defend her honor by promptly adjusting her manner towards the man:

"When any man, who is not privileged by the right of friendship or of kindred, to address her with an action of affection, attempts to take her hand, let her withdraw it immediately with an air so declarative of displeasure, that he shall not presume to repeat the offence [sic]."

[129] *Duties of Men*, 601.

[130] *Mirror of the Graces*, 170.

"If any of these fellows begin to talk in a lewd and immodest strain, seem at first not to understand them; but if they persist in their impertinence, without being checked or restrained by the mistress of the family, then leave the company outright."[131]

Loss of virtue—which was essentially equated with chastity—was irreconcilable in a woman. Be it premarital sex or adultery, a woman whose sexual nature became too prominent would be promptly exiled from her usual company. While men could work their way back to respectability within general society after a breach of conduct, once a woman's reputation was sullied, she was expelled from certain circles forever.

"If a man lose his character for want of courage, in one instance, he may, by some extraordinary effort of valour, recover it in another; but a woman's character once lost, can never be regained: like a fallen star, she sets to rise no more."[132]

Maria falls into this trap through her misconduct with Henry Crawford. Her first mistake is in allowing her vanity to lead her to a marriage destined to bring her unhappiness simply because of the fortune and advantages she will enjoy as Mr. Rushworth's wife. She disregards the warning of her father, which anticipated the outcome suggested by the authors of *An Enquiry Into the Duties of the Female Sex* and *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters:*

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[131] *The Polite Lady*, 198.

[132] Ibid, 191.

"The prospect of wealth and magnificence, of the continuance and of the encrease of pleasures supposed to from the pomp of dress and equipage, from sumptuous mansions, shewy furniture, and numerous attendants, dazzles the judgement; imposes on the affections; conceals many defects in moral character, and compensates for others; and frequently proves the decisive circumstance which leads the deluded victim to the altar, there to consign herself to splendid misery for life."[133]

"Do not marry a fool; he is the most intractable of all animals; he is led by his passions and caprices, and is incapable of hearing the voice of reason. It may probably too hurt your vanity to have husbands for whom you have reason to blush and tremble every time they open their lips in company."[134]

After meeting Henry, Maria falls for a man who has no qualms about toying with women's affections, another type warned against in these conduct manuals:

"Very few men will give themselves the trouble to gain or retain any woman's affections, unless they have views on them either of an honourable or dishonourable kind. […] Besides, people never value much what is entirely in their power."[135]

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[133] *Duties of the Female Sex*, 131.

[134] *A Father's Legacy,* 133-34.

[135] Ibid, 110.

Maria is too readily available to Henry, so he loses interest. As a gentleman who does not have a profession, Henry, like Tom, is faced with too much free time and falls into poor habits and company because of idleness. Unlike Tom, however, Henry had no strong male role model, so his morality is all the more tainted. His and Mary's example of their bawdy Admiral uncle undermines their understanding of what is morally contemptible:

"It may not be useless to observe, that to trifle with the feelings, and studiously to make an impression on the heart of another, without any serious purpose of marriage, shews either a most culpable want of consideration, or, if done with design, the most ungenerous and deliberate cruelty."[136]

Henry is so bored that he does not care if he hurts Maria and Julia, or later Fanny. He simply seeks a means of keeping himself amused and of acting out his predatory sexual energy, which goes counter to both past and modern dictates of compassionate living. In Jane Austen's time, as now, people were urged to "constantly bear in mind the golden maxim, of doing to others as you would have them do to you, if your situations were reversed."[137]

[136] *Duties of Men*, 601.

[137] *A legacy of affection*, 149.

CHAPTER THREE:

REALIZING *MANSFIELD PARK* ONSTAGE

I will now reference my own experience playing Fanny Price in a production of *Mansfield Park* at University of California, Los Angeles in spring of 2017.

Setting

The director, Peter Kazaras, had opted for a period production and, following the dictates of Dove and Middleton, found an ideal location: the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library in Los Angeles. This historic building happens to house a first edition of Austen's *Sense and Sensibility,* but, more significantly for the production, the presentation room features beautiful, intricate wooden paneling along the walls, which are decorated with large, antique paintings that reach up to the high ceiling. The walls have ornate candle holders, and what ended up the stage-left side of the room featured high glass window-doors. Since our performances were at 2pm, we were able to use natural lighting to complement the glow from two hanging chandeliers, as well as to utilize these doors for the star-gazing scene, the Sotherton excursion, and Mr. Rushworth's cow-chased entrance, among other general entrances and exits. Finally, the vestibule on the stage-right side of the room with its tiling and domed ceiling was an ideal means of implying different locations. For the Sotherton episode, Kazaras staged Edmund and Mary within the vestibule, while Maria and Henry were just outside one of the sets of window-doors on the opposite side and Fanny remained inside the room with the audience.

Since the location itself took care of establishing the desired ambience, set pieces were minimal. The production used one cushioned bench that could sit two people, which was alternately against the upstage wall on the stage-left side to serve as a station for Lady Bertram and Fanny and being moved by Fanny in the mainstage space as needed. Two tables with floral arrangements finished the scene: one mid-size, long wooden table upstage center with a large arrangement of white flowers in the middle, an ornamental plate on display on the stage-right side, and a small wooden box on the stage-left side (housing Fanny's embroidery); and a smaller round wooden table in the far stage-left corner, again with an arrangement of white flowers, and tucked behind it Fanny's shawl that she used for the Sotherton scene.

Figure 3.1: *Mansfield Park* at the Clark Library

Props

The props were also kept to a minimum outside of those called for explicitly in the libretto, which are numerous: the book of fashion plates, the post, a stuffed dog to serve as Pug, Mr. Rushworth's "shocking hat" and "pink satin cloak," the scripts for *Lovers' Vows*, Edmund's

pocket watch, Fanny's amber cross, the chains from Mary and Edmund, and Aunt Norris' infamous cream cheese and baize. Items that could have appeared but were instead mimed were the letters for the correspondence scene, as well as the newspapers for the scene when Maria and Henry's escapade is revealed. Multiple books appeared onstage—the "old history book" Edmund shares with Fanny, which she was later reading when he announced his plan to take part in *Lovers' Vows*, a second book Edmund carried and read, and another that Fanny perused with Lady Bertram. Fanny also had embroidery she worked on at the back bench in scenes when she was not reading.

Figure 3.2: Fanny Price and Her Embroidery
Photo taken by James Darrah at a rehearsal before the items on the table were finalized

Appearance

The production's costumes, designed by Raquel Barretto, clearly convey the essence of the gentry class in Regency England. She included the essentials that define the period for each gender. For women that equates to "a long ankle-length dress, with a high empire waistline resting just under the bust" with either short or long sleeves covering the shoulders and paired with shoes of a neutral color.[138] Men were dressed in the requisite knee-length breeches or trousers, tailcoat, chin-height white shirt, waistcoat,[139] cravat, and either knee-high black boots or white stockings and flat, soft-leather shoes.[140]

Added touches for characterization included an ornate necklace on Lady Bertram; a golden necklace, earrings and headband on Maria; a necklace and headband on Julia; and a necklace and earrings on Mary. Fanny wore no jewelry until the ball. As women who are already married or widowed, both Lady Bertram and Aunt Norris had a covering on their hair and their neckline—Lady Bertram via a slightly higher neckline included on the dress itself, and Aunt Norris with an added *fichu*.[141] Mr. Rushworth's costume also featured the flair of excessively frilly trim on the cuffs of his white shirt. Items this production did not include but that should be considered include gloves for both men and women at the ball and for the Sotherton excursion. This outdoor trip could also merit a top hat and walking stick for the men and a bonnet or parasol for the ladies.

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[138] "Lady's Regency Wardrobe," Jane Austen Festival.

[139] Today we would call a waistcoat a vest.

[140] "Gentleman's Regency Wardrobe," Jane Austen Festival.

[141] A *fichu* is a triangular piece of cloth, frequently white, folded and draped around a woman's neck and shoulders and gathered at the front to fill in a low neckline.

There are certain adjustments for context that a stage production simply cannot follow unless it has an endless budget and lighting-quick costume change abilities—among them the requirement that women don a different kind of dress for morning, promenade, and evening wear. Similarly, men would not have danced in their knee-high boots; they would have changed into the soft-leather flats with white stockings for dancing, just as women would have worn flat shoes for dancing and half-boots for outdoor excursions. Understandably, however, in this production each character had one costume, which meant one basic dress or coat ensemble and one pair of shoes. Barretto and Kazaras aimed for historical accuracy within the confines of their budget and with the aim of facilitating smooth transitions from scene to scene. One has to achieve a balance between pedantic attention to detail on the one hand and serving the theatrical experience on the other, and Barretto and Kazaras found a way to stay true to the period in essentials—and many details—while not compromising the unique requirements of a staged production.

In terms of hairstyle, all women have their hair pulled back. The basic rules to follow for women's hairstyling are "centre parting, high bun on top of the head, a few tiny curls to frame the face, and a clean bare back of the neck […] to elongate the nape of the neck."[142] The trend for men's hair was to have it slightly shorter on the sides with height on top of the head, and some curls hanging down the front of the forehead, in conjunction with sideburns but an otherwise clean-shaven face.

[142] "Lady's Regency Wardrobe," Jane Austen Festival.

Physicality

As evidenced by the excerpts from the conduct manuals in the preceding chapter, requirements for physical carriage were precise and focused on elegance in the Regency period. Accordingly, Kazaras brought in etiquette and movement expert Nicola Bowie as a choreographer and consultant for the production. Bowie instructed us in basic positions we could rely on, such as hands clasped just below the bustline for women, or one hand gripping the inner edge of the tailcoat and the other behind the back or gracefully hanging at one's side for the men. Every held standing position for a man had a posed quality to it, with one leg slightly forward and bent, showing off the line of the leg and coupled with erect posture. Such a display was executed calculatedly by Henry Crawford at every opportunity in this production.

Figure 3.3: Leisurely Stances of Mary and Henry Crawford

For myself as Fanny, I was particularly aware of the constriction of the costume. The focus on cinching up the bust and having a tight fit across the shoulders meant I had limited mobility of my arms, as well as compromised expansion of my rib cage. Bending down to move the aforementioned bench throughout the first act required maneuvering, particularly when paired with the train on my dress. Navigating around the train meant I needed to think ahead when placing myself for an extended period, thereby turning in the proper direction to have a nice drape of the dress while also setting myself up for an easy transition toward whichever direction I was blocked to move next. It was particularly inelegant to fuss with one's clothes during this period, so I aimed to avoid having to move the dress by hand whenever possible. The fitted look gentlemen aspired to during the Regency period meant that men in the production had similar constriction to deal with, albeit with even more layers of confined clothing.

The need to exude grace translated for me as constant mindfulness of my arms, unceasingly erect posture, and gentle movements. Each motion required deliberation and coolness, with a thought toward extension of the limbs and creating a beautiful picture at every given moment. Modesty was as critical as gracefulness, so maintaining close leg position was paramount, both in standing and sitting. While seated at the bench, I emulated the newly-coined "Duchess Slant"—the elegant, lady-like way of crossing the ankles when seated that is employed by Kate Middleton, the Duchess of Cambridge.[143] Furthermore, it was important to be cognizant of the slightest variations in facial expression. It was inelegant to reveal too much in one's expression or to distort one's face, so reactions had to be more subtle and frequently limited to the eyes.

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[143] The British royal family still has strict codes for physicality, as evidenced by the recent discussion of Meghan Markle's mastery of said "Duchess Slant." This same leg position is referenced in *The Princess Diaries* when Julie Andrews' character, the Queen of Genovia, is teaching her clumsy granddaughter how to behave like a princess.

There was also the question of obeisances—bows and curtsies upon greeting, acknowledging, or taking leave of another person. Fanny probably curtsies most of anyone in the opera because of the opening scene, when she is called upon so many times to fulfill a task and must acknowledge the request being made to her as well as Aunt Norris' subsequent chiding. In a short interview, Bowie reviewed information about various considerations of physicality within the production. Bowie outlines how to execute the aforementioned obeisances as follows:

"For the woman: place the right or left foot behind on the ball of the foot and bend both knees. Keep your body upright and lower your head at the same time. The hands/arms can be held at the waist or at the sides of the body. Stretch the knees and raise the head and place the foot behind back to a neutral position.

For the men: if they were outside and wearing their hats, lift the hat off keeping the upper arm at shoulder level, hinge from the hips about 45 degrees keeping the feet in a "military" first position and return to the upright position placing the hat back on the head. They would do the same inside but without the hat.

Bows and curtsies would be done at any time when we might shake hands today. In addition, servants would be required to bow and curtsy each time they entered a room or left a room depending on the grandeur of the house."[144]

[144] Nicola Bowie, email interview, May 18, 2019.

Additionally, Bowie explains essential aspects of carriage that must be adjusted as follows:

"In the case of any 'period' production a performer has to have a much greater awareness of a very upright posture by comparison to the posture of today. In this particular period the female silhouette was very simple (unlike the previous three centuries) and although some women still wore corsets giving them a rigid upper torso, younger women did not. You would never slouch either sitting or standing. You would hold your hands easily by your sides or clasped at your waist. You would never cross your legs but only at the ankle.

For the men the same rules apply. Some men known as "dandys" did wear corsets. Their pants were skin tight and waistcoats and jackets very fitted. They wore elaborate cravats tied high up the neck and so in the period only they had more restriction than the women. In addition, the use of the hat was essential to a gentleman's appearance. How to remove the hat and replace in a greeting was an art in itself. REMEMBER 'good posture was a sign of good breeding.' You would never be allowed to relax in the same way as we do today."[145]

Finally, an important scene for physical considerations is the ball. All elements of grace and excellent posture remain, but below Bowie explains how she chose the specific steps for the dance:

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[145] Bowie, email interview, May 18, 2019.

"I choreographed a basic quadrille which was a popular dance of the day at all dances or balls. Although usually done in groups of four, as we had six principals,[146] I had to adapt it. The step used was a basic forward waltz. Remember everyone would have learned to dance in those days as it was the main platform at which to meet a prospective husband or wife."[147]

Vocalization

When it came to the actual singing, we were all coached in Received Pronunciation of English diction. As an American, for me that meant more precise elocution of consonants, implied but not pronounced final r's, and heightened differentiation between vowel sounds. It was, in general, a more energetic and elegant English.

In terms of Fanny's vocal line, the primary challenge was negotiating the extreme shifts in range. In large ensemble numbers her part sits low, even dipping to a low G for "Follies and Grottoes." As referenced previously, however, when she is particularly emotional, her part lifts to high Gs and As. It was important for me to maintain the height in the sound despite the frequently low tessitura so that I could reach those higher lying phrases without strain. That necessitated a similar mental focus not to be weighed down by Fanny's troubles or to sink in my own physical and emotional strength due to my identification with her character; if I gave over to her trials too fully, my vocal production would suffer.

While Fanny's timbre remains fairly consistent throughout the opera—she will not act, after all—there is an opportunity for timbral manipulation by Mary and Edmund in the scene when they rehearse *Lovers' Vows*. In our production, Mary took on a straight-tone, pinched sound

[146] In our production, Fanny, Mary Crawford, Lady Bertram, Henry Crawford, Edmund, and Sir Thomas participated in the dancing.

[147] Bowie, email interview, May 18, 2019.

when portraying Amelia, while Edmund was all histrionics with a bellowing voice and tasteless slides into the upper pitches as Anhalt. In contrast, for the “Follies and Grottoes” ensemble passages, we all sang straight tone to provide an eerie backing and sufficiently subordinate volume to allow the exchange between Henry and Maria, and their impending folly, to take center stage.

CHAPTER FOUR:

A BROADER LOOK AT AUSTEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MUSIC

Included here is data about other adaptations of Austen's works in vocal music, as well as more specifics about the premiere and performance forces for *Mansfield Park*. While the lists cannot claim to be comprehensive, since it is impossible to be aware of every adaptation in existence around the world, they give an idea of the popularity of Austen's works in musical theater, and of the burgeoning quantity of works now giving voice to Austen in classical vocal music.

Operas Adapted from Austen's Works

Mansfield Park

Chamber Opera in 2 acts

Jonathan Dove, composer; Alasdair Middleton, librettist

Based on: *Mansfield Park*

Duration: 105 minutes (60 minutes Act 1; 45 minutes Act 2)

Orchestration: 4-hand piano; or 1111 2000 timp, string quintet, piano

Publisher: Edition Peters

Premiere - 4-hand piano version: July 30, 2011 - Heritage Opera, Boughton House, Northamptonshire, U.K.

Premiere - chamber orchestra version: September 16, 2017 - Grange Festival, The Grange, Hampshire, U.K.

Language: English; German translation performed in 2015

<u>Cast</u>

Fanny Price: mezzo-soprano

Lady Bertram: contralto

Sir Thomas Bertram: baritone

Maria Bertram: soprano

Julia Bertram: mezzo-soprano

Edmund Bertram: baritone

Aunt Norris: soprano

Mary Crawford: coloratura soprano

Henry Crawford: tenor

Mr. Rushworth: tenor

World Premiere Cast

Fanny Price - Serenna Wagner

Lady Bertram - Nuala Willis

Sir Thomas - John Rawnsley

Edmund Bertram - Thomas Eaglen

Maria Bertram - Eloise Rutledge

Julia Bertram - Paloma Bruce

Aunt Norris - Birgit Rohowska

Mary Crawford - Sarah Helsby Hughes

Henry Crawford - Nicholas Sales

Mr. Rushworth - Darren Clarke

Stolthet och fördom

Opéra comique in 3 acts

Daniel Nelson, composer; Sofia Fredén, librettist

Based on: *Pride and Prejudice*

Duration: 140 min.

Orchestration: fl (alt. picc.), ob, clar (alt. bass clar), hrn, tpt, hrp, perc (1 player), pno, 2 vln, vla, vc, db. (can also be played with an augmented string section)

Publisher: Swedish Music Information Center

First performance: July 21, 2011 - Vadstena Academy, Vadstena Castle, Vadstena, Sweden

Cast

Lizzy: soprano

Mr. Darcy: baritone

Lydia: soprano

Mr. Wickham: tenor

Charlotte: mezzo-soprano

Mr. Collins: baritone

Mrs. Bennet: contralto/mezzo-soprano

Mr. Bennet: bass-baritone

Jane: soprano

Mr. Bingley: tenor

Steward at Pemberley: spoken role

Jane's History of England

One-act opera

John Morrison, composer; Jane Austen, librettist[148]

Based on: *The History of England*

Duration: 19 minutes

Orchestration: piano (A 440) or fortepiano (A 415)[149]

Premiere: May 1, 2014 - Pickman Hall, Longy School of Music of Bard College, Cambridge, MA, U.S.A.

Language: English

Cast

Jane 1 (Funny Jane): soprano[150]

Jane 2 (Angry Jane): soprano

Chorus 1: soprano

Chorus 2: soprano

Chorus 3: soprano

Master of Ceremonies: soprano

[148] Austen's text is used verbatim, with some cuts, for the libretto.

[149] Note from the composer: "Since performing it at A415, and always regretting using all black notes on the piano, I've made a version down a half-step."

[150] Note from the composer regarding the cast: "pretty much all sopranos; could stand a mezzo for Jane 1."

Pride and Prejudice

Opera in Two Acts

Kirke Mechem, composer and librettist

Based on: *Pride and Prejudice*

Duration: 139 minutes

Orchestration: 2222 2210 timp., perc. harp strings

Publisher: G. Schirmer

Premiere: April 6, 2019 (concert version) - Redwood Symphony at Cañada College Main Theatre, Redwood, CA, U.S.A.

Language: English

Cast

Elizabeth Bennet: Mezzo

Mr. Darcy: Baritone

Jane Bennet: Soprano

Mr. Bingley: Tenor

Mrs. Bennet: High soprano

Mr. Bennet: Bass

Mr. Collins: Bass-baritone

Lady Catherine de Bourgh: Contralto

Lydia: Soprano

Mr. Wickham: Baritone

Charlotte Lucas: Soprano

Miss Bingley: Mezzo

Chorus

Sense and Sensibility

Opera in progress

Aferdian Stephens, composer; Marella Martin Koch, librettist

Based on: *Sense and Sensibility*

Anticipated structure: five acts; 150-165 minutes

Anticipated orchestration: Double Winds, Double Brass, Two Percussion, Harp, Piano, Strings

Anticipated premiere: not yet known; workshop of some scenes to occur in Fall 2019

<u>Current Cast Plan</u>

Elinor Dashwood: mezzo-soprano

Marianne Dashwood: soprano

Mother Dashwood: contralto

Fanny Dashwood: mezzo-soprano

John Dashwood: tenor

Edward Ferrars: lyric tenor

Mrs. Jennings: soprano

John Willoughby: lyric baritone

Lucy Steele: coloratura soprano

Colonel Brandon: baritone

Chorus of Men and Women

Persuasion

Opera in progress

Rachel DeVore Fogarty, composer; Douglas Murray, librettist

Based on: *Persuasion*

Anticipated structure: three acts; 150 minutes

Anticipated orchestration: Small chamber orchestra with piano (woodwinds, strings)

Anticipated premiere: not yet known

Current Cast Plan

Sir Walter Elliot: tenor

Elizabeth Elliot: soprano

Anne Elliot: soprano

Captain Frederick Wentworth: baritone

Admiral Croft: bass

Mrs. Croft: mezzo-soprano

Mary Elliot Musgrove: mezzo-soprano

Louisa Musgrove: coloratura soprano

William Elliot: tenor

Captain Harville: baritone

Italian singer: soprano or tenor, (chorus/ensemble)

Chorus

Supernumeraries (non-singing):

Charles Musgrove

Vicountess Dalrymple

Miss Carteret

Song Cycles Inspired by Austen's Works

Marianne Dashwood: Songs of Love and Misery

Aferdian Stephens, composer; Marella Martin Koch, librettist

Based on: *Sense and Sensibility*

Genre/Structure: Song cycle; 17 minutes

Premiere Date: June 10, 2016

Premiere Location: Jan Popper Theater, Los Angeles, CA, U.S.A.

Premiere Performers: Meagan Martin, mezzo-soprano and Inga Kapouler Gartner, pianist

Language: English

Elinor Dashwood: A Song Cycle

Aferdian Stephens, composer; Marella Martin Koch, librettist

Based on: *Sense and Sensibility*

Genre/Structure: Song cycle; 14 minutes

Premiere Date: July 21, 2018

Premiere Location: Marc Scorca Hall, National Opera Center, New York, NY, U.S.A.

Premiere Performers: Meagan Martin, mezzo-soprano and Robert Frost, pianist under the auspices of The Rally Cat

Language: English

Musicals Inspired by Austen's Works

B: Book, M: Music, L: Lyrics

Table 4.1: Musicals Inspired by Austen's Works

Title	Creators	Novel	Premiere Date	Premiere Location	Premiere Company
Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility: A Musical	Karen Burnett Hamer (B, L) Jessamine Hamer (M)	Sense and Sensibility	December 2011		Tin Roof Productions
Sense and Sensibility	Paul Gordon (B, M, L)	Sense and Sensibility	April 8, 2015	Courtyard Theater, Chicago, IL, USA	Chicago Shakespeare Theater
First Impressions	Abe Burrows (B) George Weiss, Bo Goldman, Glenn Paxton (M, L)	Pride and Prejudice	March 19, 1959	Alvin Theater, New York City, NY, USA	Broadway
Pride and Prejudice	Bernard J. Taylor (B, M, L) Additional Lyrics by Michael Yelland and Frank Bacon	Pride and Prejudice	1993	Madison Theatre, Peoria, IL, USA	
Pride and Prejudice: A Musical	Karen Burnett Hamer	Pride and Prejudice	2009		Tin Roof Productions
Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice: A Musical	Lindsay Warren Baker & Amanda Jacobs (B, M, L)	Pride and Prejudice	February 27, 2010		Chamber Opera Chicago
Pride and Prejudice: The Musical	Richard Croxford & Mark Dougherty	Pride and Prejudice	August 14, 2013	Everyman Palace, Cork, Ireland	Everyman Palace
Pride and Prejudice: A Romantic Musical	Jon Jory (B) Peter Ekstrom (M, L)	Pride and Prejudice	July 18, 2015	Main Street Theater, Houston, TX, USA	Main Street Theater

Title	Creators	Novel	Premiere Date	Premiere Location	Premiere Company
Pride and Prejudice: The Musical	Lawrence Rush (B, M, L)	Pride and Prejudice	November 8, 2016	Rhoda McGaw Theatre, Surrey, U.K.	Working Amateur Operatic Society
Pride and Prejudice	Paul Gordon (B, M, L)	Pride and Prejudice	August 11, 2018 (workshop)	Lucie Stern Theater, Palo Alto, CA, USA	TheatreWorks (workshop)
EMMA: THE MUSICAL	Paul Gordon (B, M, L)	Emma	August 25, 2007	Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, Mountain View, CA, USA	TheatreWorks
Emma	Meghan Brown (B, L) Sarah Taylor Ellis (M)	Emma	No formal premiere yet; workshop in April 2018	London, England (workshop)	
Northanger Abbey: The Musical	Robert Kauzlaric (B) George Howe (M, L)	Northanger Abbey	June 2016	Lifeline Theatre, Chicago, IL, USA	Lifeline Theatre
Northanger Abbey	John Blaylock (B, L) Jonathan Fadner (M)	Northanger Abbey	August 4, 2017	MST&DA's Howe Theater, New York, NY, USA	Common Man Musicals
Persuasion	Barbara Landis (B, M, L)	Persuasion	2011	Athenaeum Theatre, Chicago, IL, USA	Chamber Opera Chicago
Persuasion: A New Musical	Harold Taw (B) Chris Jeffries (M, L)	Persuasion	July 12, 2017		Taproot Theatre Company

Table 5.1: Chronology of Austen's Works[151]

c. 1787-1793	Short works, collectively called the Juvenilia, written.
c. 1794	*Lady Susan* written, but without a conclusion.
c. 1795	"Elinor and Marianne" written (later revised as *Sense and Sensibility*).
1796	"First Impressions" begun (later revised as *Pride and Prejudice*).
1797	"First Impressions" completed and offered by Austen's father to a publisher, but rejected sight unseen.
c. 1798-1799	"Susan" written (later retitled "Catherine" and posthumously published as *Northanger Abbey*).
1803	"Susan" sold to a publisher, but never published.
c. 1804	*The Watsons* begun but not finished.
1805	*Lady Susan* completed.
1810	*Sense and Sensibility* accepted for publication.
1811	*Sense and Sensibility* published. Extensive revision of "First Impressions" as *Pride and Prejudice* begun. *Mansfield Park* begun.
1812	*Pride and Prejudice* purchased by publisher.
1813	*Pride and Prejudice* published. *Mansfield Park* completed and accepted for publication. Second editions of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility* published.
1814	*Mansfield Park* published. *Emma* begun.
1815	*Emma* completed and published (1816 shown on title page). *Persuasion* begun.
1816	*Persuasion* completed. "Susan" repurchased from publisher and revised as "Catherine." Second edition of *Mansfield Park* published.
1817	*Sanditon* begun but not finished. *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* published together posthumously with "Biographical Notice" by Henry Austen (1818 shown on title page).

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Interviews and Reflections:

Composers and Librettists Discuss the Adaptation Process

Daniel Nelson, composer of *Stolthet och fördom*

What makes *Pride and Prejudice* good source material for an opera? What is challenging about it?

> I had long been interested in revisiting the operetta form in order to see if it could be a relevant framework for storytelling in contemporary music. (I've often wondered what would have happened if the operetta, instead of evolving into the stage musical, had developed in a different direction, somehow becoming it's own autonomous form.) It seemed to me that Opera Buffa had pretty much disappeared completely from contemporary music. Was it possible to write a modern opera which, instead of being dark and serious, conveyed lightness and humor, but without falling into superficiality? Since the stories of Jane Austen inherently embody lightness and wit while simultaneously conveying a dark undercurrent, it seemed to me that they would be the perfect vehicle for me to use in examining the operetta or opera buffa styles. That we ended up with *Pride & Prejudice* of all her novels was because I have always had a predilection for writing for the female voices, and that specific story has a lot of really good roles for sopranos.

The main challenge of using *Pride & Prejudice* as the basis for an opera is that almost the entire audience already has an opinion on how the story should be staged. Most commonly, the audience might expect an operatic version which closely mirrors either the BBC mini-series or the Joe Wright movie with Keira Knightley in the lead role. The challenge here, obviously, is to present an original and personal version of the work while not straying too far from the very colorful portraits that Jane Austen so descriptively painted.

The second challenge of the *Pride & Prejudice* was that it has so very many characters. We decided at a rather early stage in our work that we unfortunately had to do away we some of the key players. This was in order to shorten the length of the opera. Otherwise we would not have had the time to delve deeper into the characters, as we would have had to move the plot along at a dizzying pace. We finally decided to cut Lady Catherine de Bourgh and the story lines that surround her.

Similarly, there is an abundance of locations where the story plays out, way too many for a 3-act opera. However, this was solved at an early stage during our work process when we decided to assign each of the three acts their own respective location: Act 1 is at a ball, Act 2 is at Longbourne, and Act 3 in the Countryside. The result of this plan was that we had to move several of the book's scenes both geographically as well as chronologically for the story to make sense. The beauty of opera, however, is that the music can very successfully connect, imply, and fill in whatever is missing in the staging.

What caused you to begin this musical journey with Jane Austen?

> The mix of wit, passion, wickedness, goodness, morality, turpitude, graciousness, and humor is intoxicating. Her stories are so incredibly multi-faceted and complex. That they are still relevant and modern 200 years after they were written is inspiring in and of itself!

What was your approach to the adaptation process? How did you make choices about cuts and conveying content that was narration or description in the novel in a performative setting?

> This question I have to leave mostly to my librettist as she did almost all the work on this, and presented me with a finished libretto. Instead of simply extracting the libretto from the original text, Sofia Fredén did a wonderful job of writing new material, into which she incorporated many of the more well known quips and quotes from the book. The result was a flow between her text and Austen's text that was so seamless that even the audience didn't know when the were listening to original dialogue or Sofia's dialogue. Having freed herself from the literal words of the book, I believe gave us lots of room to maneuver around the narrative and descriptive portions of the book.

What is it that evokes "Jane Austen" in music? Did you think about her affect as an author while composing, or did you just focus on the characters and the story at hand?

> Jane Austen's novels are so modern still today, that a composer can approach the work from any stylistic vantage point. I really do not think that the best score to a Jane Austen story is necessarily one that pays hommage to late 18th century musical styles and rhetoric. Rather, it seems to me, that her stories are best enhanced or supported by attempting to supply them with a fresh, vibrant and original sound which is tailored specifically to how the composer wants to present the story and its characters.

Aferdian Stephens, composer of *Marianne Dashwood: Songs of Love and Misery*, *Elinor Dashwood: A Song Cycle*, and an upcoming *Sense and Sensibility* opera

What makes *Sense and Sensibility* good source material for an opera and song cycles? What is challenging about it?

> In my view it would have to be the characters in the novel. Austen's writing in *Sense and Sensibility* is somewhat of a paradox for me. On one hand, her characters are clearly drawn and engineered. They are flesh and blood. On the other hand there are some subversive qualities that each of these characters have that Austen either consciously or unconsciously injected into each of them, which she leaves for the reader to discover. She's extremely subtle. It's this paradox that makes adapting her work challenging.

What caused you to begin this musical journey with Jane Austen?

> Meagan Martin, a fantastic mezzo-soprano, commissioned my librettist collaborator, Marella Martin Koch, and me for a song cycle based on the character of Marianne Dashwood. After both reading *Sense and Sensibility* and writing the cycle, I went to Marella Martin Koch and suggested that we adapt the novel into a full-length opera and she agreed.

How has your process varied for each song cycle and the opera?

The song cycles are much smaller pieces and therefore needed to be concise and concentrated in their construction. With the opera, there is a much larger canvas on which the composer and librettist can work. However, just because Marella and I have a larger canvas to work on does not mean that the opera does not have to be compressed. With the opera, we have to be just as judicious in what moments we decide to use from the novel and also to be careful with those moments and to make sure they do not overstay their welcome.

What was your approach to the adaptation process? How did you make choices about cuts and conveying the content that was narration or description in the novel in a performative setting?

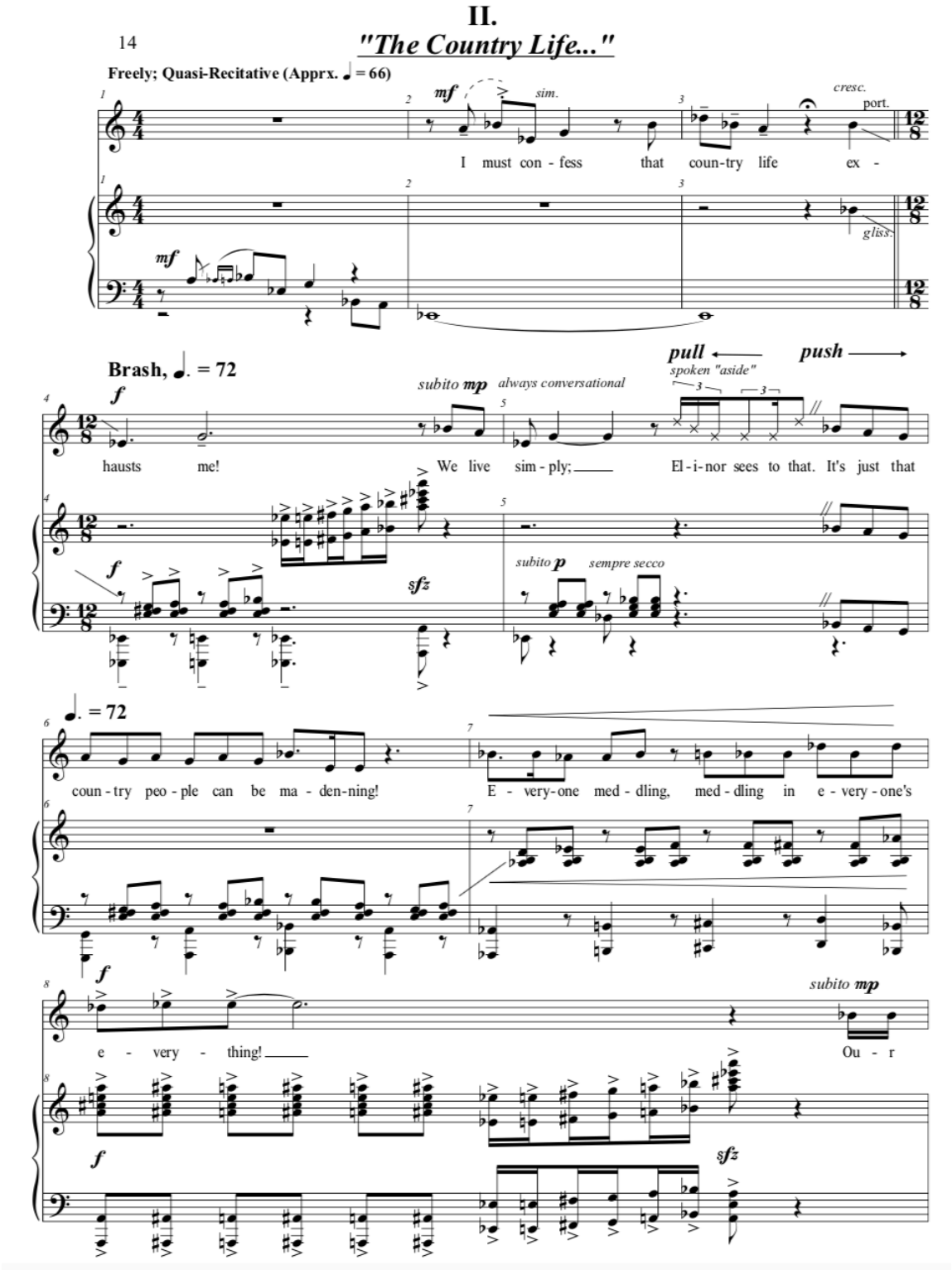
Since we are still working on the piece, Marella and I are still "testing" out scenes from the novel and checking to see what we need and what we don't need. In regards to the narrator and the conveying of descriptive scenes, Marella and I are of the school of "show rather than tell" if that makes any sense.

What is it that evokes “Jane Austen” in music? Do you think about her affect as an author when composing, or are you just focused on the characters and the story at hand?

It’s a difficult question to answer in my view. I think there’s a certain trap that composers can fall into if they try to define or create a “Jane Austen” sound or try in some way to sonically duplicate her essence as an author. I try my best not to think about her so much as I do her characters as well as the action and the drama of the story. I do try to delve deep into the inner lives of her characters, understand their secrets, and try to reveal as much of their truth as I possibly can. My hope, with a capital “H,” is that if I’ve done my job right the audience will forget that I’ve composed anything and will instead be under the illusion that the characters are singing themselves and the orchestra is behaving in reaction to both the characters’ inner lives as well as the drama and action of the piece.

Score Sample of Stephens' *Marianne Dashwood: Songs of Love and Misery*

Figure 5.1: Sample of *Marianne Dashwood: Songs of Love and Misery*



Marella Martin Koch, librettist of *Marianne Dashwood: Songs of Love and Misery*, *Elinor Dashwood: A Song Cycle*, and an upcoming *Sense and Sensibility* opera

What makes *Sense and Sensibility* good source material for an opera and song cycles? What is challenging about it?

> Jane Austen was one of a kind. The characters she gave us in her novels are vivid from first introduction yet continue to deepen and develop with each page. They inspire fierce loyalty and extreme contempt because they are Regency-era versions of us and everyone we know – from ruthless social climber to awkward pariah, over-involved mother to handsome rake.
>
> Austen's work delights us to this day with its intense, conspiratorial specificity and relentless, probing scrutiny. Reading any of her books, you will inevitably discover potent words extolling the actions of brave heroines and the men who admire them, but also comically merciless descriptions of dull dinner party guests and spoiled children.
>
> Austen's ability to bring her characters to such full life is what makes adapting her work to other mediums, and opera in particular, a unique and thrilling challenge. Novels are limited only by the imaginations of their readers, but when writing for the stage, practical considerations – especially financial ones – must be acknowledged. For instance, the difference between ten characters and twenty could mean the difference between your opera ever seeing the light of day. Along the same lines, while Austen can afford to have

her characters travel freely from one residence to another and from city to city, onstage each of those locations costs money to construct and adds thousands of dollars in crew time and materials costs. Focusing the story, distilling it to its essence and including only key players and places, is, therefore, a large part of the task. Yet when every character who appears in an Austen work is so memorable and contributes to the action of the story, deciding who and what to keep can be difficult. To convert one of her stories into an opera libretto requires a certain amount of courage, as to do her work justice in translation, one must – counterintuitively – omit hundreds of lines of Austen's trademark wit to substitute concise lyrics, whether original or text-based. What might take ten pages in the novel must unfold in a single line onstage.

I believe another major reason Jane Austen's novels have not been more widely adapted for the operatic stage is that they feature female protagonists who by and large struggle yet achieve their desires – a concept morbidly unfamiliar to the genre even today, with the majority of new opera commissions still awarded by male general directors to male composers and librettists and subsequently interpreted by male conductors and directors.

These warnings and opinions aside, *Sense & Sensibility* is particularly excellent source material for an opera. The relationships are fascinating – whether between sensible Elinor and her practically mad sister Marianne, or between usurping Fanny Dashwood and her mother-in-law. The given circumstances are high-stakes and relatable: a beloved father dies and his widow and daughters are left destitute. Thematically, it deals with universal

themes like family, love, and responsibility and asks questions that would appeal to all ages, such as whether or not it is possible to fall in love more than once in a lifetime.

What caused you to begin this musical journey with Jane Austen?

I have always loved Jane Austen. When I read her books or watched film adaptations of her work – *Mansfield Park, Sense & Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice, Emma, Persuasion* – it always felt like I was spending time with a friend. In part, this may have been because I was – I come from a family of devoted Austenites and am rarely in a position to experience her mastery alone. Genius must be shared!

My sister mezzo-soprano Meagan Martin inspired composer Aferdian Stephens and me to investigate the possibility of adapting *Sense & Sensibility* for the stage when she commissioned us to write an original Marianne Dashwood song cycle for her in 2015. She followed this request with a second commission in 2017 for a sister song cycle for Elinor Dashwood. By that time, Aferdian and I had been completely sucked in. We did not want to move on or start a new project, we just wanted to keep meeting and talking about Jane Austen. We both knew the material was simply too good to pass up. We were in too deep.

How has your process varied for each song cycle and the opera?

Aferdian and my process together as well as my own process personally evolved considerably between the first song cycle and the second and again between the second song cycle and the beginnings of the opera.

I wrote the text for the Marianne cycle quickly, fresh out of graduate school. I used long lines and internal rhyme designed to show off Marianne's impulsivity, brilliance, and passion. I set clear technical boundaries for myself in terms of song form, scansion, and rhyme and felt the character emerge from within this structure.

The Elinor song cycle was more challenging for me for several reasons. First, Aferdian and I had already moved through the major story points of the novel in Marianne's song cycle. Now in Elinor's song cycle, we were going to have to address the same events from a new perspective and entirely new events to dramatize. While Marianne's song cycle begins with her mourning the loss not just of her father but of her old life as the family leaves Norland month's after his passing, Elinor's begins with an urgent reflection on the implications of her father's death in the immediate aftermath of the loss.[152] Likewise, although Marianne's song cycle skips her illness altogether and ended with the discovery of a peaceful, steadfast love with Colonel Brandon, Elinor's song cycle ends around fifty pages before the novel, with her urgent entreaties of Marianne to recover from her fever.

[152] See libretto excerpts on pages 115-16.

Another challenge posed by the Elinor cycle was that Aferdian and I both wanted to use the opportunity to deepen our exploration of the source material as well as our own writing styles. For this reason, we decided to experiment with a comparatively direct, more prose-based style for the libretto, which was challenging for me to work my way into.

Lastly, I ran into serious difficulties activating Elinor, a character who spends much of her time thinking and worrying about others but doing little to advance or express her own desires or needs. Elinor is the assumed protagonist, yet she is far from the most interesting character on the page. Her stoic resolve and determination to endure in the face of life's many challenges is admirable but not very exciting. Marianne, on the other hand, undergoes a massive transformation and dominates the narrative completely, since so much of Elinor's story revolves around her concern for her impulsive, vulnerable sister and mother.

Fortunately, the Elinor cycle and the issues it raised for me has proven to be a useful study for the forthcoming opera libretto.

What was your approach to the adaptation process? How did you make choices about cuts and conveying the content that was narration or description in the novel in a performative setting?

See above and below.

How much do you turn to Austen's own words when composing your libretto? Are you integrating verbatim passages from the novel whenever possible, or are you adapting more freely? If the latter, what are your parameters for maintaining the feel of Austen's original text?

Because Aferdian and I decided to adapt the story years after I formed a deep relationship with Emma Thompson's brilliant and Oscar-winning film adaptation, I have not felt any pressure to confine myself to using Austen's exact text. My goal is to be faithful to the spirit of Austen's original while finding new language that communicates the urgency of the characters' situations. For this reason, I usually draft my own interpretation of a scene and then reread the novel to ensure it is grounded in accuracy.

Right now I have somewhere between half and one-third of the libretto completed. I rarely lift from Austen's text, but this could change as I complete the work. In those few instances where I do pull lines straight from the source, I choose succinct phrases that I feel are likely to inspire deep connection through the addition of music. For instance, Mrs. Jennings' opening aria uses the line "cold ham and chicken out of doors," which I pulled from Austen's narration in Chapter 7. The phrase is used in the novel as she describes Sir John Middleton's proneness to compulsively recruiting and entertaining guests. Silly Sir John and his self-absorbed wife Lady Middleton have been eliminated from our opera, but the phrase "cold ham and chicken out of doors" is so welcoming, delightful, visual, and specific that I was inspired to save it for Mrs. Jennings' first introduction as she welcomes the Dashwood family to Barton Cottage, their new home.

Marella Martin Koch Libretto Samples

“Goodbye” - Song 1 from *Marianne Dashwood: Songs of Love and Misery*

I woke and told the trees goodbye.

I walked alone and wept.

Of all the things I wish I could have kept, I’ll miss them the most.

Their perfect leaves—my bosom friends—

will gasp, then fall unseen into oblivion.

I woke and told the trees goodbye.

And things may worsen yet.

We’re driven from our home; we had to let the servants go.

Now we go, too—now we set off—

set off to try, to start another life as best we can.

Every ending brings a new beginning.

Out of night’s cold darkness, morning dawns.

Tears, once dry, cannot be wet again...

Most broken bones will mend...

But Father’s gone!

I woke and told the trees goodbye.

I thought my heart might break.

But I see I am stronger—I can make myself go on.

My spirit soars—although I weep—

to know, to know through pain how fully I'm alive!

"Father is gone" - Song 1 from *Elinor Dashwood: A Song Cycle*

Father is gone.

We are lost.

Mother and Marianne weep,

delicate as autumn leaves,

unsettled by everything.

Their voices rise in pain.

Like a powerful dam that has broken, they wail.

Father is gone.

I have tears, too, but someone must carry on—

someone must think of the future,

of how to survive.

Father is gone,

but Father would want me to keep them alive.

Rachel DeVore Fogarty, composer of an upcoming *Persuasion* opera

What makes *Persuasion* good source material for an opera? What is challenging about it?

> I think the love story between Anne Elliot and Captain Wentworth is very operatic; it has at its root a regretted decision made under coercion, and we get to watch Anne come into her own, amidst a highly dysfunctional family, combining courage and vulnerability with humor. Cutting down and combining the characters was the hardest part; Doug was integral in figuring all that out. Another difficulty is the complexity of the language; it's difficult to communicate the plot through the recitative in such a way that it can be easily understood. I'm still trying to problem solve there.

What caused you to begin this musical journey with Jane Austen?

> I love reading Jane Austen; her insight into the human condition is unmatched; she has a wonderful knack for making threatening people and situations look utterly ridiculous through her humor, showing foolish people making poor decisions, sometimes including her heroines in those situations, and then revealing how people can choose to grow in wisdom or remain fools. Her characters are universal; I can think of people I know who remind me of the people in her stories.

What is your approach to the adaptation process? How are you making choices about cuts and conveying the content that was narration or description in the novel in a performative setting?

I owe all of that to Doug; he wrote an entire, cohesive libretto that I have been working from to set the text to music. He took a lot of time figuring out the structure; we discussed which characters were critical and which were not; and then he incorporated poetry from the era the book was written into many of the arias to convey the emotional states of the characters and pair nicely with the plot in the recitative.

Do you have any upcoming performances/workshops of scenes from the opera? Do you have an anticipated completion date?

I'm still working on completing a score with piano reduction. From there, I will begin orchestrating and start looking into workshopping scenes. Anticipated completion date next year for the score with piano, hopefully.

What is it that evokes "Jane Austen" in music? Do you think about her affect as an author when composing, or are you just focused on the characters and the story at hand?

I think for me, my primary goal is to translate emotion into sound. Jane Austen's storytelling lends to that well, in a way that the emotion is always understated, under the surface, but ever-present. To me, it is a restrained emotion, a longing, that comes out in the way the melodies are constructed. From there, it's focusing on the characters and communicating the right tone for each scene and moment and then stringing them together to tell the story.

Douglas Murray, librettist of an upcoming *Persuasion* opera

What makes Persuasion good source material for an opera? What is challenging about it?

> We initially thought that its simple, stream-lined plot would work best. The plot is actually more complex than we anticipated.

What caused you to begin this musical journey with Jane Austen?

> The composer contacted me--we had a mutual friend who told her that I was both an Austen person and a music lover.

What is your approach to the adaptation process? How are you making choices about cuts and conveying the content that was narration or description in the novel in a performative setting?

> I worked out a plan and we discussed it together.

How much do you turn to Austen's own words when composing your libretto? Are you integrating verbatim passages from the novel whenever possible, or are you adapting more freely? If the latter, what are your parameters for maintaining the feel of Austen's original text?

I attempted to use many of Austen's words and phrases, though I decided to write in verse and use traditional meter (iambs, trochees, etc). Additionally, after I attended a performance of Verdi's *Otello*, I wanted to make the libretto less static and include more people interrupting each other for dramatic purposes.

Below is an excerpt from an essay Mr. Murray shared at SUNY Plattsburgh's Jane Austen and the Arts Conference in 2017.

Today's first aria will commence Act II, which moves the action to Lyme. This selection will be preceded by an orchestral interlude which will suggest both the expanse, energy, and vigor of the sea and also Anne's increasing vigor. This orchestral music will accompany Anne's solitary, early-morning walk, and then Anne will sing this afternoon's first musical selection, an ecstatic expression of Anne's new-found vigor. But the aria is not completely untroubled. The libretto contains a central section in which Anne recalls the confining life of her life among the landed aristocracy. And the libretto will conclude in question, not affirmation.

In constructing the text of this aria, I have stolen images and lines from everywhere: from Austen's words in *Persuasion* itself (surprisingly rich source for poetic imagery), from Wordsworth, from Charlotte Smith (though right now I can't identify the Smith passages), from Alexander Pope's "Epistle to a Lady" and, anachronistically, from Gerard Manley Hopkins. I have placed the literary texts in the right column and have indicated borrowed words in red:

Aria text	Literary Source
First sight of silver Sea!	
Kindest sublimity!	. . [Anne's] bloom and freshness of youth restored
Awakening mute hearts once more to singing!	by the fine wind which had been blowing#
Sea-winds that fan gaunt cheek!	Less thin in her person, in her cheeks#
They eloquently speak,	
Half-conscious of the solace they are bringing!	. . . while it [the "gentle breeze"] fans my cheek Doth seem half-conscious of the joy it brings+
The skylark mounts the dome	
Toward its azure home,	[Memories of Shelley, George Meredith
Mellifluous notes of gold behind it flinging!	and Vaughan Williams' "The Lark Ascending"]
In quiet discontent,	[Cf. Thoreau's "lives of quiet desperation"]
By iron and gold long pent,	
In lonely rooms, with no good will residing—	References to Pope, "Epistle to a Lady": And when she sees a friend in deep despair,
We linger in despair,	Observes how much a chintz exceeds mohair.^
In chintz and in mohair,	
Soul shriveled, mind constricted, heart in hiding.	My heart in hiding stirred for a bird.*
We speak just as we ought,	She speaks, behaves and acts just as she ought
But reach no gen'rous thought,	But never, never reach'd one gen'rous thought
And virtue is too painful an endeavor.	Virtue she finds too painful an endeavor,
We live without a heart,	Content to dwell in decencies forever.^
We die without a start,	
Content to dwell in decencies forever.	Sources: #Austen, Persuasion +Wordsworth, The Prelude, Book I ^Pope, "Epistle to the Lady" *Hopkins, "The Windhover"
First sight of silver Sea!	
Kindest immensity!	
With energy to stir and vex creation!	
Can hearts bereaved and lost	
Recover from hard frost?	
Can waste lands be restored to habitation?	
Can human hearts survive long deprivation?	

John Morrison, composer of *Jane's History of England*

What makes Austen's *The History of England* good source material for an opera? What is challenging about it?

> What makes *The History of England* good source material for an opera is that it is a libretto already, suitable for setting without having to devise a libretto from it. The challenge is that it comes from a single voice, a single person, and has no real poetic sections which might be used for arias. The challenge was for me, though, an opportunity to experiment with the genre itself. I used heightened recitative as the dramatic vehicle, avoiding what I consider to be a shortcoming of opera, the predictable and unrealistic nature of the aria in most operas.

What caused you to begin this musical journey with Jane Austen?

> My colleagues at the Longy School of Music of Bard College asked me to compose a 15-minute opera for them, using voices all in the soprano range. The request was made in mid-December for an opera that would be premiered in May of the succeeding year! My initial response was that I didn't have the time, since the completed score would be due in three months. However, my wife showed me a copy of *The History of England*, and it was immediately clear that the book itself was hilarious, that all one needed to do was to set the text, extract a few choice words for a group to repeat as commentary, and it could

be successful. Before saying yes and embarking on the process, though, I realized that I would need to move quickly, worry very little about pitches, and not at all about rhythm. I asked if experimental approaches would be suitable, got a yes, and proceeded!

What is your approach to the adaptation process? How did you make choices about cuts?

Since I needed a fifteen-minute portion when set, I read through the text aloud, and found a section that seemed to be able to produce that length. The portion I chose to set was from Henry VI to Elizabeth. There was a clear dramatic arc in the section, arriving at Elizabeth. Once into composing, and upon reaching Elizabeth, I realized I had enough duration at the point where it now ends, which seemed just right. On the other side of the stop, the story continues somewhat placidly, undramatically, with references to Sir Walter Raleigh and such, so it was an ideal place to end! The ending place allows a softening of Jane's anger, a reverential close that suits Jane Austen's writing.

What is it that evokes "Jane Austen" in music? Do you think about her affect as an author when composing, or are you just focused on the characters and the story at hand?

My intention was to heighten the affect already in the text. I perceived that Jane Austen was sometimes amused by what she related, and that she moved into anger, disgust, and beyond through the course of the text. So I decided to have two singers deliver the text, Funny Jane and Angry Jane. The text already contains the rhythm, so I decided that I

would determine a pitch contour using a symmetrical pitch set as primary pitches that singers could embellish as desired, and provide the rhythm that was imbedded in the text as they wished to convey it.[153] As we move through the text, we rise higher and higher in the pitch set (C, Db, Eb, Gb, Bb, Eb, A), therefore reaching the tritone at the height of the drama, when Jane shows her utter hatred of Elizabeth. So the affect is the story, is the attitude Jane Austen has towards the cast of characters she plows through.

How would you describe your opera? I found the video online — it seems to be largely recitation over music or recitative, with sung passages to emphasize particular words or phrases. Would you agree with that? Is the powerpoint slide and acting by the choristers a format you would hope for other presenters to emulate, or can you envision a different set-up that would serve the work equally well or better?

I would call the whole heightened recitative with commentary by chorus, much as in the baroque period. The powerpoint presentation is optional, and the actions of the chorus are open to change as well. The presentation allows for portability and ease of mounting. When we took the opera to England, we only rehearsed with the two Janes (both English citizens, everyone else came from Longy) for a total of six or seven hours, with a rather practice run at Trinity Laban Conservatoire in Greenwich before the performance at Chawton House. So the format, allowing the two Janes complete freedom of expression,

is highly workable. Someone could change the actions of the chorus, use different stage sets, and that would be great with me. That said, I love the slides!

Score Samples of Morrison's *Jane's History of England*

Figure 5.2: Score Sample from *Jane's History of England* (Page 33)

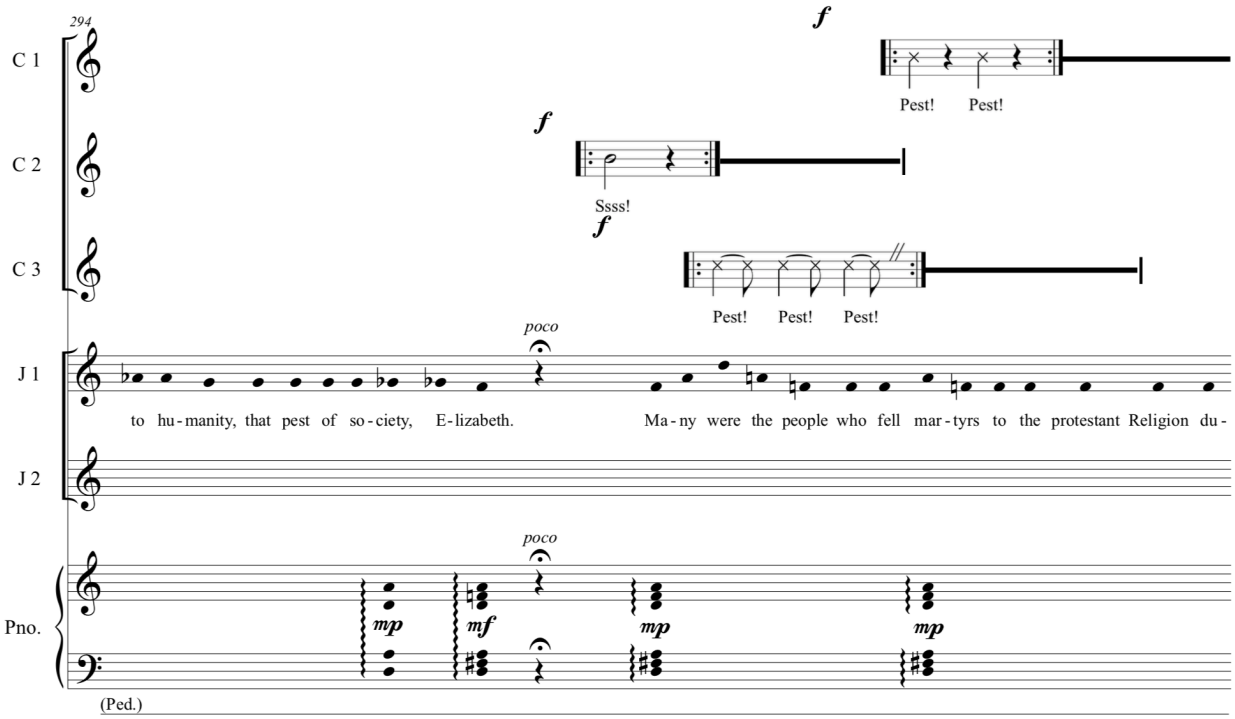
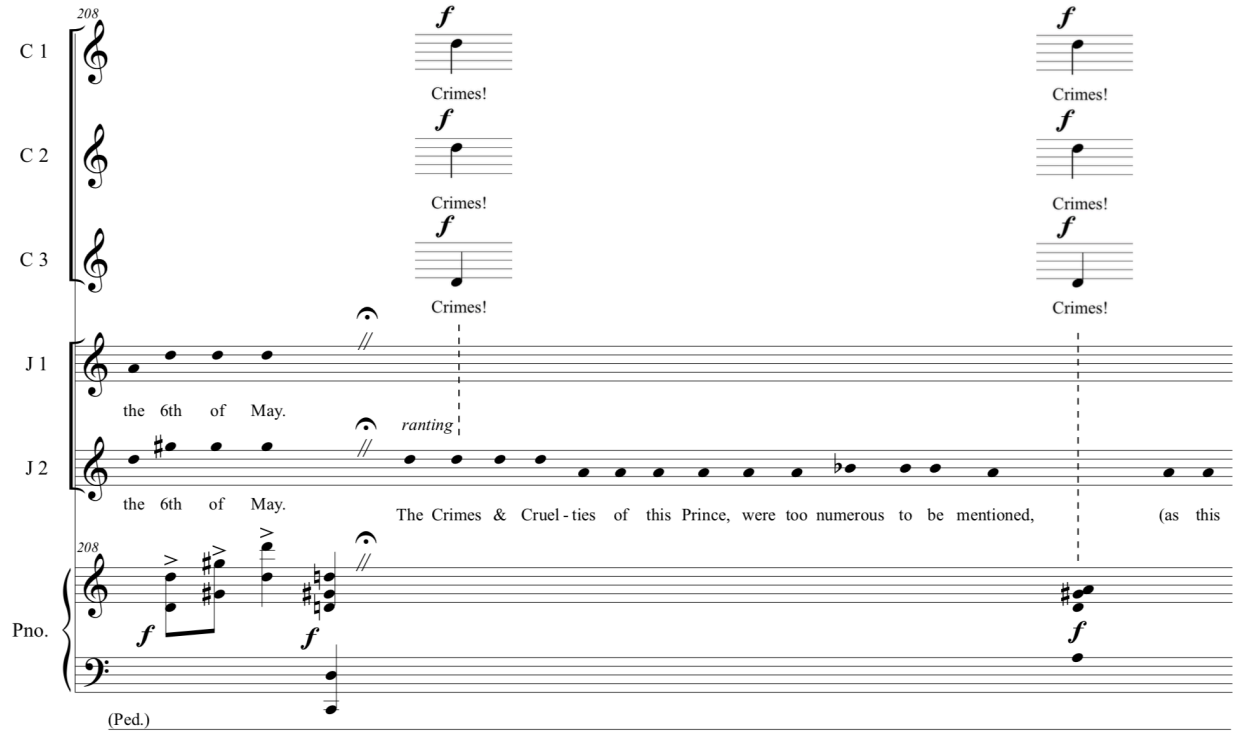


Figure 5.3: Score Sample from *Jane's History of England* (Page 45)



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Kirke Mechem

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

From Novel to Opera

Nearly fifteen years have elapsed since I began the libretto for my opera on *Pride & Prejudice*. Now that the first performances with orchestra have been scheduled, Jane Austen fans want to know, "How is the opera different from the novel?" I am embarrassed to admit that I have forgotten many of the changes. I have been so involved with setting my libretto to music, orchestrating it, rehearsing workshops and making several revisions, that I have slipped into the bizarre assumption that my text is the real one. Well, for the opera it *is*, but of course it could not exist without Jane Austen's brilliant novel.

That is the reason for this essay. I wanted to remember exactly where and why the opera diverges from the novel. To do this I had the great pleasure of reading the novel again, making notes as I compared it to the libretto. This may interest only performers of the opera, but as I have completed my "research," I might as well put it into an accessible form. Who knows? It may also interest opera lovers and fans of the novel, and might even help one or two young librettists or composers put together their own operas.

Some people naïvely believe that an opera is simply a musical setting of a play or of scenes from a novel, like fitting music to a poem. It is no such thing. Opera is a mixture of musical and dramatic forms. To begin with, plays — and especially novels — are much too long to be set to music "as is." It takes about five times as long to sing a paragraph as it does to read it. (Austen's novel has almost 400 pages; the opera libretto 36.) Many cuts must be made; scenes and characters must be telescoped and locales rearranged. Narration must be turned into dialogue.

First, the bad news: below is a list of the characters and places in Austen's novel that do *not* appear in the opera. (That still leaves twelve important characters, quite enough for any opera.)

Two of the Bennet sisters (Kitty and Mary)

One of Bingley's sisters (Fanny) and her husband (Mr. Hurst)

Sir William and Lady Lucas, parents of Charlotte (Lady L. appears but does not sing.)

Mrs. Phillips (Mrs. Bennet's sister)

Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner (Mrs. Bennet's brother and his wife)

Miss De Bourgh (Lady Catherine's daughter)

Colonel Fitzwilliam (Darcy's cousin)

Georgiana Darcy (Darcy's sister)

Hill (housekeeper at Longbourn)

Mrs. Reynolds (housekeeper at Pemberley)

Pemberley (though it will be shown in projections as Elizabeth describes her visit there to Jane)

London (which Jane visits and where Wickham and Lydia are found)

Other places: the village of Meryton; the Lucas's home; the Collins's parsonage near Rosings; and many others where action briefly takes place.

But the most important omission is Jane Austen herself, as narrator. Her wonderful irony, humor, and insights sparkle on every page. In a sense, every adaptation, whether opera, play or film, is only an imitation. There is only one genuine *Pride and Prejudice* — the novel.

But some adaptations to other art forms can be fine works in their own right. I am thinking in particular of the beautiful, well-cast 1995 BBC television series of *Pride & Prejudice* which luxuriated in its stunning scenery and five-hour length. Films of normal length, plays, and certainly operas cannot cover so much ground. But in opera, music can heighten and deepen the personalities and emotions of the characters, adding another dimension to the story. Verdi's *Otello*, for instance, I find even more gripping than Shakespeare's original play. I am not so foolish as to claim such power for my opera, but I can assure the fans of Jane Austen that whatever my failings, they are not the result of my loving her novel any less than they do.

ACT I, Scene 1

The second paragraph of Jane Austen's novel encouraged me to use a chorus to represent some of her narration: "However little known the feelings or views of such a [single man in possession of a good fortune] may be on his first entering a neighborhood, this truth [that he must be in want of a wife] 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.*"* The chorus, accordingly, represents the townspeople and friends of the Bennets. In keeping with operatic tradition and to differentiate the chorus from the soloists, the chorus sings in verse, usually rhymed. Throughout the opera, I use Jane Austen's own words wherever possible, only making changes necessary for modern comprehension, for brevity, or for musical reasons. I have tried to arrange that the important words and actions occur in about the same order as in the novel.

The first scene of the opera does not begin where the novel does, at the Bennets' home, Longbourn House. In order to get the action moving quickly, we plunge right into a welcoming ball at Netherfield, Mr. Bingley's recently acquired mansion. (This is not the ball that takes place at Netherfield in Chapter 18.) After the chorus begins the exposition, Mr. and Mrs. Bennet sing almost verbatim some of their first conversation in the novel. Much of the development of the characters — and of the story — is sung in the first scene as a minuet is danced. When looking for a subject for a new opera, *Pride & Prejudice* appealed to me because so much of its first half takes place at dances. The main goal of an opera composer (and librettist) is, or should be, to let music tell the story wherever possible. In this case, Austen's plot *requires* that a dance — called an "assembly" — be underway. She does not specify what kind of steps are being danced, but as the minuet was popular in England at that time, I have composed an original minuet largely in the style of the period. It has sections in minor keys for Miss Bingley and Mrs. Lucas, and gives the chorus opportunities to express their (Austen's) feelings about the characters.

An example of a *musical* form used to enliven what was originally only description is the very short women's choral piece after Darcy has insulted Elizabeth with the remark, "She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me." Austen describes Elizabeth's reaction with this

one sentence, “She told the story with great spirit among her friends, for she had a lively, playful disposition, which delighted in any thing ridiculous.” That seemed an invitation to show Elizabeth singing a playful chorus with her girl friends, “What’s a handsome man to me?”

Likewise, the ending of Scene 1 is set to the fragment of another dance, as Bingley invites the assembled guests to join in “an old English jig,” which will be developed in the opera’s finale.

ACT I, Scene 2

Jane Austen once said that because she did not know how men spoke to each other when ladies were not present, she would not try to reproduce such dialogue in her novels. That may be the reason a very important conversation in Chapter 6 between Darcy and Bingley — revealing the former’s growing interest in Elizabeth — is rendered only as a single paragraph of description. But I, as a man, do know how men talk to each other, and had no compunction about casting this conversation as a short duet. (It still uses many of Jane Austen’s own words.) This gave me the chance to write warmer music for Darcy than he has had before, music that reappears later in the opera at appropriate moments. These phrases are easy to recognize by their augmented triads — ambiguous chords quite different from the solidity of Darcy’s usual dignified, measured major and minor triads against a pedal note.

Because I have omitted some characters, important words spoken by one of them must be given to another character. For example, it is not Sir Lucas who tries to get Elizabeth to dance with Darcy in this scene, it is Bingley.

Omitting certain scenes has also obliged me to transfer important episodes to other scenes. The longest such segment in the novel is the visit that Jane makes to Netherfield in Chapters 7-12. She catches "a violent cold" and must remain five days. Elizabeth's extended visit to comfort her gave Austen an opportunity to show all the principal characters together, exposing each one's flaws and idiosyncrasies with hilarious irony. That scene, however, is so long and discursive that I have moved the most interesting and revealing of its episodes to the private assembly at Longbourn, which is the locale of this second scene.

As an opera-goer I have always loved conversations that were linked to dances yet still moved the action or character development forward — a pleasure that is unique to opera, and much more interesting than recitative or unmelodic arioso. So I expanded this dance scene to include a pair of original gavottes. The gavotte was not typically danced in England at that time, but as a moderate dance in common meter it is well suited to be the background for conversation and a vocal quartet. The quartet is actually two conversations: Darcy and Miss Bingley in the garden, Charlotte and Elizabeth in the house. The two conversations are staggered so that the audience can understand both.

Among the dances moved from Netherfield to Longbourn is a lively Scotch reel, which Darcy vainly asks Elizabeth to dance with him. Later in the same scene she does accept his invitation to dance a stately sarabande (my Variations on a Theme by Handel), which enables the two to engage in the verbal sparring — "it's your turn to say something now" — which in the book does not occur until Chapter 18. Placing it here permits this scene to move toward its climax through a variation in which Mrs. Bennet's coloratura ostentatiously and presumptuously assures everyone within earshot that not only will Jane and Bingley have a brilliant wedding, but

that Elizabeth and Lydia will thereby "meet many other rich men." (In the novel this occurs at supper.) This is too much for Darcy. Jane Austen has not told us exactly when Darcy decides that he and the Bingleys must return to London to escape this aggressive, uncouth company. But in an opera, we need to see and hear it in music. Accordingly, I turned an old English folk tune into a prescient song that Lydia sings with her mother and all the soldiers, one that is sure to make clear what a gulf exists between Darcy and the Bennet family:

> A soldier boy, a soldier boy [sailor boy in the original],
> A soldier boy for me.
> If ever I get married,
> A soldier's wife I'll be.

During this song, Darcy and Miss Bingley, after perfunctory farewell bows, lead a reluctant Bingley out of the house, to the deep dejection of Jane and Elizabeth.

ACT I, Scene 3

I have delayed the appearance of one of Austen's most famous characters until the final scene of Act I. This is the ridiculously pompous clergyman, Mr. Collins. He is one of three characters in the novel that Austen portrayed as unmitigated caricatures. (The others are Mrs. Bennet and Lady Catherine de Bourgh.) Literary caricatures are a wonderful gift to composers; they give us license to employ the same kind of broad satirical humor in music as the author did with words. Collins's self-important yet obsequious manners are hilariously displayed in the novel far beyond what we have time for on stage. Still, his contribution to the main story — his proposal of marriage to Elizabeth — is quite enough to mark him as one of the great comic characters in literature.

In the novel Wickham is dealt with before Mr. Collins, but in the opera he appears after Collins has proposed to Elizabeth to provide time in the same scene for Lydia to have heard of Charlotte's engagement to Collins. The back story of Wickham and Darcy has had to be considerably shortened, and the ball at Netherfield described in Chapter 18 has been omitted, as many of its events were shown in the previous scene.

Mr. Collins enters to the music of an ancient English folksong, "The Vicar of Bray," a satirical tale of a clergyman who quite easily changes his doctrine according to the political winds of the day. I have used only a fragment of this tune; most of Mr. Collins's lines are delivered to the accompaniment of various clichés of operatic sanctimony, many of them employing the harp. (Those high-minded readers who object to musical clichés will also have to object to the dozens of pompous verbal clichés Austen puts into the mouth of Mr. Collins.) The transfer of his matrimonial intentions from Elizabeth to Charlotte must be done even more quickly in the opera; news of their engagement comes from Lydia instead of from Charlotte herself the next day.

This news, together with a letter from Miss Bingley confirming that her brother will never return to Netherfield, precipitates the crisis that brings Act I to a close. In the novel, this letter arrives at the beginning of Volume II. But operas, like plays, need such scenes of crisis and despair to bring down the curtain at intermission.

In this final scene of Act I, when Jane is faced with the desertion of her lover, Austen gives her these words: "He will be forgot, and we shall all be as we were before." This is so strikingly similar to one of my favorite Sara Teasdale poems, "Let It Be Forgotten," that I decided to let Jane sing that short poem to music I adapted from a piece I had composed many

years before. (Could Teasdale have been inspired by Austen's heroine, or is the poem's emotional content so common that thousands of heartbroken lovers could express themselves in similar, though not such poetic words?)

The awful effect of Miss Bingley's letter and Charlotte's "odious betrayal" creates a hullabaloo of outrage at Longbourn. Each of the four women has a different view of these events, giving the composer an opportunity for a suitably flamboyant quartet to end the act.

ACT II, Scene 1

The first chapter of Austen's Volume II, which discusses the events just described, contains some of her most profound insights into "the inconsistency of all human characters." Elizabeth's comments on Jane's naïve acceptance of Miss Bingley's hypocritical and dissembling letter are as wise today as they were then. But jewels of this nature are better left to the novel, where readers may savor them at their leisure.

The opera must omit the visit to Longbourn by Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner, nor can it make room for Jane's six-week visit to them in London. In doing so, we pass over the treachery of Miss Bingley, who caused Jane to believe that Bingley was in love with Darcy's sister. We find out the untruth of this ruse later in the opera; for now we must concentrate on Elizabeth and Darcy.

The first scene of Act II takes place at Rosings, the vast estate of Lady Catherine de Bourgh, Darcy's aunt. Charlotte, now Mrs. Collins, has invited Elizabeth to stay for six weeks at the parsonage. In the novel Darcy closely observes Elizabeth playing the piano. For logistical

reasons the operatic scene takes place in the garden, not in the drawing room, so Elizabeth is playing cards instead.

The main business of this scene is Darcy's surprising proposal to Elizabeth and her angry rejection of him. I have omitted his visits to the parsonage and have plotted to send the two on a stroll in the park and garden. When Darcy finally bursts forth with his declaration of love it is with the exact four sentences Jane Austen gave him in the novel. Unfortunately for the librettist, however, she then employs two paragraphs of description, rather than dialogue, to convey his emotions and thoughts. This forces the librettist to translate these descriptions into the heated words of Darcy's most important aria. Austen is more helpful in giving us the actual words of Elizabeth's indignant refusal, though for musical reasons some rearrangement and paraphrasing was necessary.

But please note: both the librettist and composer are enormously grateful to Jane Austen for giving us such a powerful and passionate scene to work with.

ACT II, Scene 2

Almost the entire content of this scene is devoted to Darcy's letter to Elizabeth and her reaction to it. The opera can conjure this in a way that is not possible in a novel — that is, the two actions take place more or less simultaneously. It is a week later; Elizabeth is back at Longbourn, not at Rosings where in the novel Darcy wrote his letter. The lights go down; a spotlight on a desk at stage right shows Darcy writing (singing) the letter, while a messenger delivers it to Elizabeth in her garden at stage left, where she reads and reacts to it point by disconcerting point. This is the pivotal scene in their relationship. After vigorous denials,

Elizabeth must admit the truth about Wickham and she gradually comes to see that Darcy misunderstood Jane's feeling toward Bingley. In her principal aria, she realizes that her own pride and prejudices have been shameful — "Till this moment, I never knew myself" — even though she cannot pardon Darcy's contempt for her family.

Combining the writing and reading of the letter into one scene obviously saves time, but more significant is that in a duet the singers can musically dramatize the conflict with more passion and immediacy.

ACT II, Scene 3

It is the following summer. Elizabeth has just returned home from a tour to the Midlands. Its high point, as all *Pride and Prejudice* fans know, was a visit to Pemberley, Darcy's estate in Derbyshire, where Darcy himself — contrary to what Elizabeth had been told — was at home. How can I justify the opera's omission of that famous scene at Pemberley?

Four chapters of the novel are devoted to the visit. It is a long and quite diffuse part of the story, which for the opera would require several new characters and a new stage-set; it is also spread over a great deal of time. Yet only one really important point emerges from this visit — Elizabeth discovers that Darcy has transformed himself from haughty and reserved to tender and informal. This can effectively be conveyed by Elizabeth to Jane — and to the audience — at their home, with the help of a projection showing what she describes. And please remember: if the opera were to include the entire story of the novel, or even as much as the five-hour BBC film does, we would end up with a four-evening cycle of Wagnerian length.

Elizabeth has had to return suddenly from Pemberley because of the news that Lydia has run away from Brighton with Wickham. The latter half of this scene reveals the details of this appalling affair, and finally, the news that the couple has been found in London, and will be made to marry. Mr. Bennet has been in the city and assumes that his brother-in-law Gardiner had to pay Wickham an enormous sum. The only change from the novel is that Mr. Bennet brings home this news instead of it coming later in an express letter from Mr. Gardiner.

ACT II, Scene 4

Lydia, despite the disgrace she has brought upon her family, represents only a sub-plot in the opera. I omit most of the emotional discussions (Chapters 8-9 of Volume 3) about her wedding to Wickham and the banishment of the couple to the far north of England. Our final scene begins at Longbourn with a party to celebrate the engagement of Jane to Bingley, who with Darcy's blessing has returned to his Netherfield mansion. But Darcy's behavior is again reserved and somewhat distant, leading Elizabeth to fear that he could never tie himself to such a disreputable family, a member of which now is the man he so justly hates. *Brother-in-law of Wickham?* Impossible!

The crucial difference from the novel in this scene is the manner in which Elizabeth learns that it was Darcy, not her Uncle Gardiner, who found the wayward couple in London and bribed Wickham to marry Lydia. I saw no reason to bring Lydia and Wickham back into the opera, nor to include the long letter from Mrs. Gardiner about Darcy's part in the transaction. For the opera, Darcy's help is just as plausibly revealed by Lady Catherine during her preposterous visit to threaten Elizabeth against any relationship with Darcy. In the novel, Lady Catherine

already knows about Lydia's disgrace, and has heard rumors of a connection between Elizabeth and Darcy, so why could she not also have discovered her nephew's part in the rescue of Lydia?

The opera also accelerates Lady Catherine's offstage meeting with Darcy. After leaving Longbourn, she has met him on the road and complains of Elizabeth's scandalous refusal to disown the rumors connecting the couple. This gives Darcy the hope that Elizabeth's feelings have changed and the courage to risk another proposal.

I am sorry that more time could not be devoted to the final flowering of the love between Jane and Bingley, but I have tried to show enough of it to satisfy opera-goers, most of whom will be eager to see the end of the Darcy/Elizabeth story. Jane Austen's portrayal of their final reconciliation is very beautiful. It cannot be as extensive in the opera, of course, but I have given it my most beautiful music. And I like to think (flatter myself?) that opera does have an advantage in rendering the finale of such a story as this. A celebration by a large group of people is a natural and wonderful assignment for music. I have built the final pages around a development of the fugal subject from the opening scene and of many of the other melodies first heard there. And it also seemed fitting to repeat Jane Austen's famous observation at the beginning of both novel and opera: that a single young man with wealth of his own must be in want of a wife.

Character Descriptions in *Mansfield Park*[154]

Fanny:

Ch. 2, p11: "She was small of her age, with no glow of complexion, nor any other striking beauty; exceedingly timid and shy, and shrinking from notice; but her air, though awkward, was not vulgar, her voice was sweet, and when she spoke her countenance was pretty."

Ch 2, p16: "Fanny could read, work, and write, but she had been taught nothing more."

Ch 2, p18: "[Lady Bertram] always found her very handy and quick in carrying messages, and fetching what she wanted."

Ch 2, p18: "… though Fanny was often mortified by [Maria and Julia's] treatment of her, she thought too lowly of her own claims to feel injured by it."

Ch 2, p19: "[Edmund] knew her to be clever, to have a quick apprehension as well as good sense, and a fondness for reading…"

Ch 2, p19: "… she loved [Edmund] better than anybody in the world except William: her heart was divided between the two."

Ch 3, p23: "'I could never be important to anyone.'"

Ch 3, p23: "'You have a good sense and a sweet temper, and I am sure you have a grateful heart, that could never receive kindness without wishing to return it.'" (Edmund)

Ch 3, p23: "'I shall remember your goodness to the last moment of my life.'" (to E)

Ch 3, p24: "… it would be delightful to feel myself of consequence to anybody!"

Ch 3, p24: Fanny's fear of riding at first

[154] All page numbers reference the Barnes and Noble Classics edition of the novel.

Ch 3, p29: "… she really grieved because she could not grieve." (upon Sir Thomas's departure)

Ch 4, p31: "She talked to [Lady Bertram], listened to her, read to her; and the tranquility of such evenings, her perfect security in such a *tête-à-tête* from any sound of unkindness, was unspeakably welcome to a mind which had seldom known a pause in its alarms or embarrassments."

Ch 4, p33: "She regarded her cousin as an example of everything good and great, as possessing worth which no one but herself could ever appreciate, and as entitled to such gratitude from her as no feelings could be strong enough to pay. Her sentiments towards him were compounded of all that was respectful, grateful, confiding, and tender."

Ch 5, p43: "Few young ladies of eighteen could be less called on to speak their opinion than Fanny."

Ch 7, p57: "Having formed her mind and gained her affections, he had a good chance of her thinking like him." (E)

Ch 8, p71: "Her own thoughts and reflections were habitually her best companions."

Ch 12, p102: "… had her confidence in her own judgment been equal to her exercise of it in every other respect, had she been sure that she was seeing clearly, and judging candidly, she would probably have made some important communications to her usual confidant."

Ch 14, p116: "For her own gratification she could have wished that something might be acted, for she had never seen even half a play, but everything of higher consequence was against it."

Ch 15, p132-34: description of the east room and Fanny's possessions and emotional journeys

Ch 17, p139: “Her mind had never been further from peace. She could not feel that she had done wrong herself, but she was disquieted in every other way. Her heart and her judgment were equally against Edmund’s decision; she could not acquit his unsteadiness; and his happiness under it made her wretched.”

Ch 18, p145: Fanny helping Mr. Rushworth learn his part

Ch 21, p171: “… you seemed almost as fearful of notice and praise as other women were of neglect.” (Edmund repeating Mary’s words)

Ch 22, p180-1: Fanny and nature (at the parsonage)

Ch 23, p191: “She rated her own claims to comfort as low even as Mrs. Norris could.”

Ch 27, p230: “Two lines more prized had never fallen from the pen of the most distinguished author—never more completely blessed the researches of the fondest biographer.” (when Fanny receives a note from Edmund)

Ch 27, p232: Fanny’s hopes for the ball

Ch 28, p240: “… she was a great deal too much frightened to have any enjoyment till she could suppose herself no longer looked at. Young, pretty, and gentle, however, she had no awkwardnesses that were not as good as graces.”

Ch 28, p243: Fanny getting tired at the ball

Ch 31, p264: “There was wretchedness in the idea of its being serious; there were perplexity and agitation every way. She was distressed whenever Mr. Crawford spoke to her, and he spoke to her much too often…”

Ch 32, p273: “She would rather die than own the truth.” (that she loves E)

Ch 34, p294: how to win Fanny (according to E)

Ch 35, p306: “I should have thought… that every woman must have felt the possibility of a man’s not being approved, not being loved, by someone of her sex at least, let him be ever so generally agreeable. Let him have all the perfections in the world, I think it ought not to be set down as certain that a man must be acceptable to every woman he may happen to like himself.”

Ch 37, p320-321: Fanny’s idealized thoughts about belonging and love at home in Portsmouth

Ch 38, p332: “… [she] was glad to have the light screened from her aching head, as she sat in bewildered, broken, sorrowful contemplation.” (upon Fanny’s return to Portsmouth)

Ch 39, p341: “In a review of the two houses, as they appeared to her before the end of a week, Fanny was tempted to apply to them Dr. Johnson’s celebrated judgment as to matrimony and celibacy, and say that though Mansfield Park might have some pains, Portsmouth could have no pleasures.”

Edmund:

Ch 2, p14-15: facilitating letters to William

Ch 2, p16: “Edmund was uniformly kind himself.”

Ch 2, p19: “… and the character of Edmund, his strong good sense and uprightness of mind, bid most fairly for utility, honour, and happiness to himself and all his connections. He was to be a clergyman.”

Ch 2, p19: “Edmund’s friendship never failed [Fanny]: his leaving Eton for Oxford made no change in his kind dispositions.”

Ch 2, p19-20: “Without any display of doing more than the rest, or any fear of doing too much, he was always true to her interests, and considerate of her feelings, trying to make her good qualities understood, and to conquer the diffidence which prevented their being more apparent; giving her advice, consolation, and encouragement.”

Ch 2, p19: “… he recommended the books which charmed her leisure hours, he encouraged her taste, and corrected her judgment; he made reading useful by talking to her of what she read, and heightened its attraction by judicious praise.”

Ch 4, p30: “… how well Edmund could supply [Sir Thomas’s] place in carving, talking to the steward, writing to the attorney, settling with the servants, and equally saving [Lady Bertram] from all possible fatigue or exertion in every particular but that of directing her letters.”

Ch 7, p58: “… without his being a man of the world or an elder brother, without any of the arts of flattery or the gaieties of small talk, he began to be agreeable to [Mary]. […] he was not pleasant by any common rule, he talked no nonsense, he paid no compliments, his opinions were unbending, his attentions tranquil and simple. There was a charm, perhaps, in his sincerity, his steadiness, his integrity.”

Ch 7, p66: Edmund vexed with himself for Fanny’s neglect

Ch 13, p113: “‘Don’t imagine that nobody in this house can see or judge but yourself. Don’t act yourself, if you do not like it, but don’t expect to govern everybody else.’” (Tom to E)

Ch 23, p192: “‘A woman can never be too fine while she is all in white.’” (E)

Ch 27, p229: “But he was deceived in her; he gave her merits which she had not; her faults were what they had ever been, but he saw them no longer.” (re: MC)

Mary Crawford:

Ch 4, p36: “They were young people of fortune. […] She [had] twenty thousand pounds.”

Ch 4, p37: “Mary Crawford was remarkably pretty. […] The manners of both were lively and pleasant.”

Ch 4, p37: “Matrimony was her object, provided she could marry well.”

Ch 4, p37: “… everybody should marry as soon as they can do it to advantage.”

Ch 5, p39: “… she was most allowably a sweet pretty girl, while they were the finest young women in the country.” (re: Miss Bertrams)

Ch 5, p41: “… [marriage] is, of all transactions, the one in which people expect most from others, and are least honest themselves.”

Ch 5, p42: “She had felt an early presentiment that she *should* like the eldest best. She knew it was her way.”

Ch 7, p59: “Active and fearless, and, though rather small, strongly made, she seemed formed for a horsewoman.”

Ch 7, p61: “I have nothing in the world to say for myself—I knew it was very late, and that I was behaving extremely ill! and, therefore, if you please, you must forgive me. Selfishness must always be forgiven, you know, because there is no hope of a cure.”

Ch 7, p61: “I am very strong. Nothing ever fatigues me but doing what I do not like.”

Ch 8, p72: “She had none of Fanny’s delicacy of taste, of mind, of feeling; she saw nature, inanimate nature, with little observation; her attention was all for men and women, her talents for the light and lively.”

Ch 15, p130: compassion for Fanny when Aunt Norris insults her

Ch 17, p141: making fun of Mr. Rushworth

Ch 18, p148: making light of Maria and Henry's indiscretions during rehearsal

Ch 21, p172: "She has great discernment. I know nobody who distinguishes characters better." (E)

Ch 23, p196: "'Nothing amuses me more than the easy manner with which everybody settles the abundance of those who have a great deal less than themselves.'" (to Henry)

Ch 25, p215: Mary's wish for life w/ Edmund v. what the reality would be

Ch 26, p225: actual lying about Henry's involvement in necklace gift

Ch 26, p226: "… for Miss Crawford, complaisant as a sister, was careless as a woman and a friend."

Ch 27, p234: " 'I know her disposition to be as sweet and faultless as your own, but the influence of her former companions makes her seem, gives to her conversation, to her professed opinions, sometimes a tinge of wrong. She does not *think* evil, but she speaks it—speaks it in playfulness…' " (E to F about MC)

Ch 28, p249: Mary's inner turmoil post-ball, during Edmund's absence

Ch 30, p257: Mary about the Admiral, not wishing Henry to be exposed to him anymore

Henry Crawford:

Ch 4, p36: "They were young people of fortune. He had a good estate in Norfolk."

Ch 4, p37: "Henry, though not handsome, had air and countenance; the manners of both were lively and pleasant."

Ch 4, p38: “He is the most horrible flirt that can be imagined. If your Miss Bertrams do not like to have their hearts broke, let them avoid Henry.” (MC)

Ch 4, p38: “I am of a cautious temper, and unwilling to risk my happiness in a hurry.”

Ch 5, p40: “… he began with no object but of making them like him. He did not want them to die of love; but with sense and temper which ought to have made him judge and feel better, he allowed himself great latitude on such points.”

Ch 7, p60: “Mr. Crawford, for all his boasted good-nature, and all his coachmanship, probably knew nothing of the matter, and had no active kindness in comparison of Edmund.”

Ch 12, p105: Henry Crawford has 4000 a year

Ch 13, p109: “… Henry Crawford, to whom in all the riot of his gratifications [participating in a theatrical] was yet an untasted pleasure, was quite alive at the idea.”

Ch 17, p140: “For a day or two after the affront was given, Henry Crawford has endeavoured to do it away by the usual attack of gallantry and compliment, but he had not cared enough about it to persevere against a few repulses; and becoming soon too busy with his play to have the time for more than one flirtation, he grew indifferent to the quarrel, or rather thought it a lucky occurrence, as quietly putting an end to what might ere long have raised expectations in more than Mrs. Grant.” (regarding Julia and her not being Agatha)

Ch 23, p194: “‘I am much mistaken if his lovely Maria will ever want him to make two-and-forty speeches to her.’” (re: Mr. R)

Ch 24, p199: “‘… if you do set about a flirtation with [Fanny], you never will persuade me that it is in compliment to her beauty, or that it proceeds from anything but your own idleness and folly.” (MC)

Ch 24, p199: "'I never was so long in company with a girl in my life—trying to entertain her—and succeed so ill!'"

Ch 24, p205: "The glory of heroism, of usefulness, of exertion, of endurance, made his own habits of selfish indulgence appear in shameful contrast; and he wished he had been a William Price, distinguishing himself and working his way to fortune and consequence with so much self-respect and happy ardour, instead of what he was! / The wish was rather eager than lasting."

Ch 25, p217-18: insincerity about remembering Fanny's dancing

Ch 30, p257: Mary about the Admiral, not wishing Henry to be exposed to him anymore

Ch 30, p257: "I know that a wife you *loved* would be the happiest of women, and that even when you ceased to love, she would yet find in you the liberality and good-breeding of a gentleman." (MC)

Ch 30, p258: "… for I am not such a coxcomb as to suppose her feelings more lasting than other women's, though *I* was the object of them."

Ch 31, p266: "But she still tried to believe it no more than what he might often have expressed towards her cousins and fifty other women." (F's thought)

Ch 32, p272: "Here is a young man wishing to pay his addresses to you, with everything to recommend him: not merely situation in life, fortune, and character, but with more than common agreeableness, with address and conversation pleasing to everyone." (Sir T)

Ch 34, p291: Henry as exceptionally good reader

Ch 48, p406: "Curiosity and vanity were both engaged, and the temptation of immediate pleasure was too strong for a mind unused to make any sacrifice to right."

Sir Thomas:

Ch. 1, p10: distinction to be observed between Fanny and his daughters

Ch 2, p18: "Sir Thomas did not know what was wanting, because, though a truly anxious father, he was not outwardly affectionate, and the reserve of his manner repressed all the flow of their spirits before him."

Ch 2, p19: "Sir Thomas did not forget to do what he could for the children of Mrs. Price: he assisted her liberally in the education and disposal of her sons as they became old enough for a determinate pursuit."

Ch 3, p29: having Fanny invite William to Mansfield again

Ch 13, p112: "I am convinced that my father would totally disapprove it." (E re: theatrical)

Ch 13, p112: "His sense of decorum is strict."

Ch 20, p162: "… [Sir Thomas] meant to try to lose the disagreeable impression, and forget how much he had been forgotten himself as soon as he could […] He did not enter into any remonstrance with his other children: he was more willing to believe they felt their error, than to run the risk of investigation."

Ch 20, p166: "[Mr. Yates] had known many disagreeable fathers before, and often been struck with the inconveniences they occasioned, but never, in the whole course of his life, had he seen one of that class so intelligibly moral, so infamously tyrannical, as Sir Thomas."

Ch 21, p169: "… drawing back from intimacies in general…"

Ch 21, p170-171: Sir Thomas noticing Fanny's physical beauty (via E's speech)

Ch 23, p192: " 'My niece walk to a dinner engagement at this time of year!' "

Ch 25, p215: "… that involuntary forbearance which his character and manner commanded."

Ch 32, p269: " 'Here is some great misapprehension which must be rectified. It is highly unfit for you to sit, be it only half an hour a day, without a fire. You are not strong. You are chilly. Your aunt cannot be aware of this.' "

Ch 33, p287: "… on Fanny's account, he almost dreaded the effect of the communication to Mrs. Norris as much as Fanny herself. He deprecated her mistaken but well-meaning zeal."

Ch 37, p320: "It was a medicinal project upon his niece's understanding, which he must consider as at present diseased." (sending F to Portsmouth)

Lady Bertram:

Ch 2, p11: "… and Lady Bertram, without taking half so much trouble, or speaking one word where he spoke ten, by the mere aid of a good-humoured smile became immediately the less awful character of the two."

Ch 2, p18: "To the education of her daughters, Lady Bertram paid not the smallest attention. She had not time for such cares. She was a woman who spent her days in sitting nicely dressed on a sofa, doing some long piece of needlework, of little use and no beauty, thinking more of her pug than her children, but very indulgent to the latter, when it did not put herself to inconvenience, guided in everything important by Sir Thomas, and in smaller concerns by her sister. Had she possessed greater leisure for the service of her girls, she would probably have supposed it unnecessary, for they were under the care of a governess, with proper masters, and could want nothing more."

Ch 3, p28: "… she felt all the injuries of beauty in Mrs. Grant's being so well settled in life without being handsome."

Ch 4, p31: "She was too indolent even to accept a mother's gratification in witnessing [her daughters'] success and enjoyment at the expense of any personal trouble."

Ch 23, p188: "Her tone of calm languor, for she never took the trouble of raising her voice, was always heard and attended to."

Ch 26, p219: "Lady Bertram would of course be spared all thought and exertion."

Ch 29, p246: feeling "stupid" the day after the ball; wants Fanny to keep her awake

Ch 33, p287: "She had been a beauty, and a prosperous beauty, all her life; and beauty and wealth were all that excited her respect."

Ch 44, p371: "Her aunt did not neglect her; she wrote again and again." (LB to F)

Aunt Norris:

Ch 3, p22: "[Fanny] had never received any kindness from her aunt Norris, and could not love her."

Ch 3, p23: "I am glad her love of money does not interfere." (E on AN taking in F)

Ch 3, p23: "She never knew how to be pleasant to children" (E)

Ch 3, p25: "Mrs. Norris had not the smallest intention of taking [Fanny]. It had never occurred to her, on the present occasion, but as a thing to be carefully avoided."

Ch 3, p26: all the reasons not to take in Fanny

Ch 3, p27: "[Sir Thomas] could not but wonder at her refusing to do anything for a niece whom she had been so forward to adopt."

Ch 4, p30: "… Mrs. Norris had been indulging in very dreadful fears… as she depended on being the first person made acquainted with any fatal catastrophe, she had already arranged the manner of breaking it to all the others, when Sir Thomas's assurances of their both being alive and well made it necessary to lay by her agitation and affectionate preparatory speeches for later."

Ch 4, p31: "… very thoroughly relished the means it afforded her of mixing in society without having horses to hire." (going to events with Maria and Julia)

Ch 5, p47: "If I were you, I should not think of the expense, I would have everything done in the best style, and made as nice as possible."

Ch 13, p113: "… she has no influence with either Tom or my sisters that could be of any use."

Ch 13, p114: "She started no difficulties that were not talked down in five minutes by her eldest nephew and niece, who were all-powerful with her; and, as the whole arrangement was to bring very little expense to anybody, and none at all to herself, as she foresaw in it all the comforts of hurry, bustle, and importance, and derived the immediate advantage of fancying herself obliged to leave her own house, where she had been living a month at her own cost, and take up her abode in theirs, that every hour might be spent in their service, she was, in fact, exceedingly delighted with the project."

Ch 15, p125: AN thwarting a servant boy's attempts to get some extra food by arriving with a message (two bits of board) for his father at supper time

Ch 15, p129: "… I shall think her a very obstinate, ungrateful girl, if she does not do what her aunt and cousins wish her—very ungrateful, indeed, considering who and what she is."

Ch 15, p133: "… Mrs. Norris, having stipulated for their never being a fire in it on Fanny's account."

Ch 20, p163: "Mrs. Norris was a little confounded, and as nearly being silenced as ever she had been in her life."

Ch 22, p190: being a jerk to Fanny, saying the only reason she's invited to dinner is to pay a compliment to Sir T and Lady B

Ch 22, p191: Mrs. N & the dining table…

Ch 24, p204: distracting while William tells his stories

Ch 25, p206-7: Mrs. Norris and the table at the Parsonage

Ch 32, p270: " 'Your aunt Norris has always been an advocate, and very judiciously, for young people's being brought up without unnecessary indulgences; but there should be moderation in everything. She is also very hardy herself, which of course will influence her in her opinion of the wants of others.' " (Sir T)

Ch 33, p287: "… on Fanny's account, he almost dreaded the effect of the communication to Mrs. Norris as much as Fanny herself. He deprecated her mistaken but well-meaning zeal."

Ch 47, p389: "She was an altered creature, quieted, stupefied, indifferent to everything that passed." (AN after Maria's running away)

Maria Bertram:

Ch 2, p16: "… as her cousins found her ignorant of many things with which they had been long familiar, they thought her prodigiously stupid."

Ch 2, p17-18: "… it is not wonderful that, with all their promising talents and early information, they should be entirely deficient in the less common acquirements of self-knowledge, generosity, and humility. In everything but disposition, they were admirably taught."

Ch 2, p18: "There was no positive ill-nature in Maria or Julia."

Ch 3, p29: "The Miss Bertrams were much to be pitied on the occasion; not for their sorrow, but for their want of it. Their father was no object of love to them; he had never seemed the friend of their pleasures, and his absence was unhappily most welcome. They were relieved by it from all restraint; and without aiming at one gratification that would probably have been forbidden by Sir Thomas, they felt themselves immediately at their own disposal, and to have every indulgence within their reach."

Ch 4, p30-31: "The Miss Bertrams were now fully established among the belles of the neighbourhood; and as they joined to beauty and brilliant acquirements a manner naturally easy, and carefully formed to general civility and obligingness, they possessed its favour as well as its admiration. Their vanity was in such good order that they seemed to be quite free from it, and gave themselves no airs; while the praises attending such behaviour, secured and brought round by their aunt, served to strengthen them in believing they had no faults."

Ch 4, p31: "…the Miss Bertrams regularly wanted their horses every fine day, and had no idea of carrying their obliging manners to the sacrifice of any real pleasure."

Ch 4, p34: "… as a marriage with Mr. Rushworth would give her the enjoyment of a larger income than her father's, as well as ensure her the house in town, which was now a prime

object, it become, by the same rule of moral obligation, her evident duty to marry Mr. Rushworth if she could."

Ch 4, p35: "… he was not pleased that her happiness should centre in a large income." (E)

Ch 5, p39: "… she was most allowably a sweet pretty girl, while they were the finest young women in the country." (MC vs. Miss Bertrams)

Ch 5, p40: "She has the advantage in every feature." (Henry; over Julia)

Ch 11, p94-95: hoping for something to happen before her father's arrival to change wedding plans

Ch 14, p117: "… Mr. Rushworth, who was always answered for by Maria as willing to do anything."

Ch 14, p118: "… Maria was preferred; the smile of triumph which Maria was trying to suppress shoed how well it was understood."

Ch 14, p120: "She looked suspiciously at her sister. Maria's countenance was to decide it; if she were vexed and alarmed—but Maria looked all serenity and satisfaction, and Julia well knew that on this ground Maria could not be happy but at her expense."

Ch 15, p123-4: " '… in this matter it is *you* who are to lead. *You* must set the example. If others have blundered, it is your place to put them right, and show them what true delicacy is. In all points of decorum, *your* conduct must be law to the rest of the party.' " (E)

Ch 19, p152: "Maria joined them with the same intent [of greeting Sir Thomas in the drawing room], just then the stoutest of the three; for the very circumstance which had driven Julia away was to her the sweetest support. Henry Crawford's retaining her hand at such a moment, a moment of such peculiar proof and importance, was worth ages of doubt and

anxiety. She hailed it as an earnest of the most serious determination, and was equal even to encounter her father."

Ch 20, p167-8: Maria finds out Henry is leaving and that they are "self-imposed" engagements

Ch 21, p174: "She was in a state of mind to be glad that she had secured her fate beyond recall—that she had pledged herself anew to Sotherton—that she was safe from the possibility of giving Crawford the triumph of governing her actions, and destroying her prospects."

Ch 21, p175: "…her mind became cool enough to seek all the comfort that pride and self-revenge could give." (after not hearing from Henry)

Ch 21, p175: "The liberty which [her father's] absence had given was now become absolutely necessary. She must escape from him and Mansfield as soon as possible, and find consolation in fortune and consequence, bustle and the world, for a wounded spirit. Her mind was quite determined, and varied not."

Ch 21, p175: "… being prepared for matrimony by a hatred of home, restraint, and tranquillity; by the misery of disappointed affection, and contempt of the man she was to marry."

Julia Bertram:

Ch 2, p16: "… as her cousins found her ignorant of many things with which they had been long familiar, they thought her prodigiously stupid."

Ch 2, p17-18: "… it is not wonderful that, with all their promising talents and early information, they should be entirely deficient in the less common acquirements of self-knowledge, generosity, and humility. In everything but disposition, they were admirably taught."

Ch 2, p18: "There was no positive ill-nature in Maria or Julia."

Ch 3, p29: “The Miss Bertrams were much to be pitied on the occasion; not for their sorrow, but for their want of it. Their father was no object of love to them; he had never seemed the friend of their pleasures, and his absence was unhappily most welcome. They were relieved by it from all restraint; and without aiming at one gratification that would probably have been forbidden by Sir Thomas, they felt themselves immediately at their own disposal, and to have every indulgence within their reach.”

Ch 4, p30-31: “The Miss Bertrams were now fully established among the belles of the neighbourhood; and as they joined to beauty and brilliant acquirements a manner naturally easy, and carefully formed to general civility and obligingness, they possessed its favour as well as its admiration. Their vanity was in such good order that they seemed to be quite free from it, and gave themselves no airs; while the praises attending such behaviour, secured and brought round by their aunt, served to strengthen them in believing they had no faults.”

Ch 4, p31: “…the Miss Bertrams regularly wanted their horses every fine day, and had no idea of carrying their obliging manners to the sacrifice of any real pleasure.”

Ch 5, p39: “… she was most allowably a sweet pretty girl, while they were the finest young women in the country.” (MC vs. Miss Bertrams)

Ch 5, p39: “… before [Henry Crawford] had been at Mansfield a week she was quite ready to be fallen in love with.”

Ch 8, p68: “‘What!’ Go boxed up three in a postchaise in this weather when we may have seats in a barouche! No, my dear Edmund, that will not quite do.’”

Ch 8, p70: "… hastily leaving the room as she spoke, from a consciousness that she ought to offer to stay at home herself."

Ch 14, p120: "She looked suspiciously at her sister. Maria's countenance was to decide it; if she were vexed and alarmed—but Maria looked all serenity and satisfaction, and Julia well knew that on this ground Maria could not be happy but at her expense."

Ch 17, p142: reference to flirting with Mr. Yates

Ch 17. p142: "She had loved, she did love still, and she had all the suffering which a warm temper and a high spirit were likely to endure under the disappointment of a dear, though irrational hope, with a strong sense of ill-usage. Her heart was sore and angry, and she was capable only of angry consolations. […] Julia was not superior to the hope of some distressing end to the attentions which were still carrying on there, some punishment to Maria for conduct so shameful towards herself as well as towards Mr. Rushworth."

Ch 48, p405: "That Julia escaped better than Maria was owing, in some measure, to a favourable difference of disposition and circumstance, but in a greater to her having been less the darling of that very aunt, less flattered and less spoilt."

Ch 48, p406: "She had not eloped with any worse feelings than those of selfish alarm. It had appeared to her the only thing to be done. Maria's guilt had induced Julia's folly."

Mr. Rushworth:

Ch 4, p34: "… a young man who had recently succeeded to one of the largest estates and finest places in the country."

Ch 4, p34: “Mr. Rushworth was from the first struck with the beauty of Miss Bertram, and, being inclined to marry, soon fancied himself in love. He was a heavy young man, with not more than common sense.”

Ch 4, p35: “If this man had not twelve thousand a year, he would be a very stupid fellow.” (E)

Ch 6, p46: “Mr. Rushworth was returned with his head full of the subject [of improvement], and very eager to be improving his own place in the same way; and though not saying much to the purpose, could talk of nothing else.”

Ch 10, p86: “… whose principal business seemed to be to hear the others, and who scarcely risked an original thought of his own beyond a wish they had seen his friend Smith’s place.”

Ch 12, p102: “Maria, with only Mr. Rushworth to attend to her, and doomed to the repeated details of his day’s sport, good or bad, his boast of his dogs, his jealousy of his neighbours, his doubts of their qualification, and his zeal after poachers,—subjects which will not find their way to female feelings without some talent on one side or some attachment on the other,—had missed Mr. Crawford grievously…”

Ch 14, p117: “… Mr. Rushworth, who was always answered for by Maria as willing to do anything.”

Ch 15, p122: “Mr. Rushworth liked the idea of his finery very well, though affecting to despise it; and was too much engaged with what his own appearance would be to think of the others, or draw any of those conclusions or feel any of that displeasure which Maria had been half prepared for.” (on playing Count Cassel in *Lovers’ Vows*)

Ch 19, p161: “Mr. Rushworth hardly knew what to do with so much meaning; but by looking, as he really felt, most exceedingly pleased by Sir Thomas’s good opinion, and saying scarcely anything, he did his best towards preserving that good opinion a little longer.”

Ch 21, p173: “Mr. Rushworth was an inferior young man, as ignorant in business as in books, with opinions in general unfixed, and without seeming much aware of it himself.” (Sir T)

General Traits, Specific Events, or Etiquette-Related Passages—

Ch 2, p13: “Nobody meant to be unkind, but nobody put themselves out of their way to secure her comfort.” (Bertrams when Fanny first arrives at Mansfield)

Ch 2, p13: “She was disheartened by Lady Bertram’s silence, awed by Sir Thomas’s grave looks, and quite overcome by Mrs. Norris’s admonitions. Her elder cousins mortified her by reflections on her size, and abashed her by noticing her shyness…” (+Miss Lee, maids)

Ch 5, p45: “It is much worse to have girls *not out* give themselves the same airs and take the same liberties as if they were. […] *That* is worse than anything—quite disgusting!” (MC)

Ch 8, p71: barouche seating arrangement

Ch 9, p81-82: clergyman discussion (MC & E)

Ch 9, p82: “The *manners* I speak of might rather be called *conduct*, perhaps, the result of good principles; the effect, in short, of those doctrines which it is their duty to teach and recommend; and it will, I believe, be everywhere found, that as the clergy are or are not what they ought to be, so are the rest of the nation.” (E)

Ch 13, p107: “Happily for [Mr. Yates], a love of the theatre is so general, an itch for acting so strong among young people, that he could hardly out-talk the interest of his hearers.”

Ch 13, 110: "… to see real acting, good hardened real acting; but I would hardly walk from this room to the next to look at the raw efforts of those who have not been bred to the trade,—a set of gentlemen and ladies, who have all the disadvantages of education and decorum to struggle through."

Ch 13, 111: "I think it would be very wrong. In a *general* light, private theatricals are open to some objections, but as *we* are circumstanced, I must think it would be highly injudicious, and more than injudicious, to attempt anything of the kind. It would show great want of feeling on my father's account, absent as he is, and in some degree of constant danger; and it would be imprudent, I think, with regard to Maria, whose situation is a very delicate one, considering everything, extremely delicate." (E to T)

Ch 14, p121: "… she ran through it with an eagerness which was only suspended by intervals of astonishment, that it could be chosen in the present instance—that it could be proposed and accepted in a private theatre! Agatha and Amelia appeared to her in their different ways so totally improper for home representation—the situation of one, and the language of the other, so unfit to be expressed by any woman of modesty."

Ch 15, p132: description of Fanny's rooms (little white attic, schoolroom turned east room)

Ch 20, p165: example of Sir Thomas's duties around Mansfield

Ch 21, p170-171: references to West Indies and slave-trade

Ch 23, p197: "Miss Crawford was too much vexed by what had passed to be in a humour for anything but music. With that she soothed herself and amused her friend." [music as outlet]

Ch 24, p203: idea of family ties & shared early experiences and the connection that endures

Ch 34, p292: reference to Shakespeare in education

Ch 40, p346: reference to the circulating library, education through reading

Ch 42, p354: “The family were now seen to advantage. Nature had given them no inconsiderable share of beauty, and every Sunday dressed them in their cleanest skins and best attire.”

Ch 46, p384: “Sir Thomas’s parental solicitude and high sense of honour and decorum, Edmund’s upright principles, unsuspicious temper, and genuine strength of feeling, made her think it scarcely possible for them to support life and reason under such disgrace; and it appeared to her, that as far as this world alone was concerned, the greatest blessing to every one of kindred with Mrs. Rushworth would be instant annihilation.”

Ch 48, p404: contrasting outcomes post-scandal for a man and a woman

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