

Fans and Fanatics of Jane Austen

Marissa Young

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* has swept women off of their feet for literally centuries since its publication in 1813. As the *New Yorker* article *Happy two-hundredth birthday, Pride and Prejudice* points out, Austen "gives us everything we want: the wittiest lines, the silliest fools, the most lovable heroine, the handsomest estate."¹ Austen's novel, complete with manners, culture, and class, satisfies our romantic, if happily-ever-unrealistic culture. Her work has been celebrated in myriad ways by devoted fans, from the annual convention of the Jane Austen Society of North America, to the contemporary spin-offs such as the television mini-series *Lost in Austen* (2008) and the movie *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001). Although Jane Austen purists, such as the attendees of the Jane Austen Society of North America Convention, appreciate Austen's work in a scholarly sense, many modern women readers turn to spin-offs in order to place Austen's work into a modern twenty-first century context. Throughout its two hundred years of existence, the fandom of *Pride and Prejudice* has evolved into two different followings- the scholarly Janenites and the modern Janenites who typify the evolution of the book's changing place in society.

JASNA, or the Jane Austen Society of North America, attracts devoted Jane Austen scholars from all across the country. During its annual conference, hundreds of Jane Austen fans lace up their corsets and pull up their breeches to attend a century-accurate recreation of Austen's time. As the JASNA website states: "Members at a local JASNA meeting may discuss an Austen novel, hear a lecture about Austen or the

¹ "Happy Two-hundredth birthday, 'Pride and Prejudice.'" *The New Yorker*. N.p., 28 Jan. 2013. Web. 20 Feb. 2013.

Regency era, enjoy a tea or Box Hill picnic, or learn English country dancing.”² It is, as one fan put it, “a place where people can let their Jane Austen freak flag fly.”³

JASNA is essentially the Janenite scholar’s Disney World, a place where one can fully immerse in the academic discussion of Jane Austen.

It is arguable that in studying Jane Austen in the context of the 19th century, these scholars are keeping the true Jane Austen alive, untarnished by modern interpretations. JASNA Janenites see Jane Austen as a refreshing academic and social, however temporary, mini-break from mundane, twenty-first century life. Perhaps ‘academic’ is the key word here – first and foremost, JASNA is a literary celebration that has a very scholarly edge to it. The conference is oriented around Jane Austen’s actual text - for example, some of the discussion topics in the 1999 JASNA Conference included the comparison of Austen’s characters to characters in Shakespeare’s plays, as well as the use of rhetorical questions in Austen’s novels. It is clear that these Janenites are passionate about keeping academic discourse of Austen alive and thriving. These scholars work towards sustaining discussion of the authentic Austen, untarnished by modern interpretations. Although the Regency clothing and faux nineteenth-century culture of the Conference indicates that these Austen fans enjoy some element of artifice by immersing themselves in Austen’s nineteenth-century world, unlike other fans discussed later in this paper, these Janenites are able to keep their personal lives and their obsession of Jane Austen separate.

² "JASNA: Mission Statement." *Jane Austen Society of North America* n.pag. Web. 30 Apr 2013. <<http://www.jasna.org/info/about.html>>.

³ Schuessler, Jennifer. "Lots of Pride, a Little Prejudice." *New York Times*. (2012): n. page. Print.

JASNA's mission statement says that the group is a collection of "like-minded readers," indicating that the conference only attracts a certain type of people, namely scholars. The conference also was founded by people similar to one another in terms of lifestyle—all three founders are academic experts on the life and works of Jane Austen. Although the conference goal is important – to celebrate Austen in academic authenticity and ensure the continuation of the conversation about Jane Austen in the literary world, it places certain limitation on the Jane Austen subject. Namely, that Jane Austen is only approached from a historical or academic side, and all discussion relates back to the text. In a society where Jane Austen has grown into a cultural phenomenon – in fanfiction and film, among other fields- the strictly academic subject is in some ways outdated. , in the face of the *ersatz* Jane Austen spin-offs that circulate the globe, many feel that it is important that the conference determinedly ensures that the academic discussion of Jane Austen continues. However, as *Pride and Prejudice* reaches its two-hundredth birthday, modern readers struggle with relating to the outdated aspects of the book.

Pride and Prejudice has been adapted into many films-eight to be exact, including six American or British films as well as Italian and German film adaptations. Most of these films follow the culture and manners of the *Pride and Prejudice* world, and all follow the story line as written by Austen herself. However, even though all of the film adaptations seem to follow the same general format, most people seem to associate *Pride and Prejudice* with actor Colin Firth, who played Mr. Darcy in the 1995 BBC mini series adaption. In 2013, sixty-six percent of the participants in a *Pride and Prejudice* bi-centennial RadioTimes.com poll voted Colin Firth as their ideal Mr. Darcy. Most of the Mr. Darcys - Matthew MacFadyen and David Rintoul of the 2005 and 1980 versions,

respectively – are appropriately dark haired and brooding. However, as many women who have seen the 1995 film can attest, the Colin Firth “wet-white-shirt” scene is the main reason that the BBC mini-series spiked a major increase in interest in Jane Austen, including almost doubling the membership of JASNA in the next year. The “wet-white-shirt” scene – a scene that is not in Austen’s actual text- sexualizes Mr. Darcy in a way that would shock Austen but brought the *Pride and Prejudice* storyline to life for many modern women. As *Jane Austen in Hollywood* states: “...while the scene is an obvious addition, it maintains the thematic thrust of Austen’s plot, translating her ideas concerning character transformation into a visual vocabulary.”⁴ (22) Mr. Darcy’s brooding character and the sexual tension between Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth is clearly written in the book; however, in today’s over-sexualized culture, the dusty text may be dismissed as irrelevant if not explicitly shown on a TV screen. As the same author explains regarding the transformation of Austen’s characters on screen: “the ‘one-dimensional,’ ‘boring’ [character] had been transformed into a more ‘more alive’ and ‘more active’ version of Austen’s hero that resonates with today’s moviegoers..” (23)⁵ Colin Firth’s wet-white-shirt scene has become an emblem in the *Pride and Prejudice* culture, and has arguably re-promoted the book in popular culture.

Another side of Jane Austen fans fall under the category of those desiring fanfiction – those who are not only interested in the original *Pride and Prejudice*; but also its spin-offs. Usually fanfiction plays upon the storyline of an original book,

⁴ Troost, Linda, and Sayre Greenfield. *Jane Austen in Hollywood*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1998. Print.

⁵ Ibid

reimagining it in a different viewpoint or setting. In general, however, as the founder of Austen.com states, “fanfic writers make no claims to be able to reach the literary heights of Miss Austen, but we feel the need to expand on the world, the characters and stories that she created.” Usually, fanfiction authors take the love story of *Pride and Prejudice* and put it into a modern context, such as Helen Fielding does in *Bridget Jones’s Diary*. However, others will place modern characters into Austen’s time period, as screenwriter Guy Andrews does in *Lost in Austen*. Although Jane Austen scholars find these exercises slightly bizarre, inserting modern context into Jane Austen’s original text exemplifies the modern woman reader’s attempt to apply Jane Austen’s nineteenth-century words to twenty-first century life.

The television mini series *Lost in Austen*, written by British television writer Guy Andrews, features *Pride and Prejudice* enthusiast Amanda Pierce. Amanda is a hopelessly romantic and devoted Austen fan who has the misfortune of being in the possession of a hopelessly unromantic boyfriend and boring job. She wastes away her time wishing that people still acted with nineteenth-century manners, especially when it came to men and romance. Then, one day, she is suddenly transported into the *Pride and Prejudice* world, where she essentially takes on the role of a modern substitute for Elizabeth Bennet in nineteenth century *Pride and Prejudice* world. *Lost in Austen* deviates from the text in an almost absurd manner; as Laurie Kaplan, a member of JASNA states, the movie is “enough to make huge swatches of Janeites grumpy.”⁶ However, many critics argue that the mini-series actually does have some worth. In her

⁶ Kaplan, Laurie. “Completely without Sense: *Lost in Austen*.”

<http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/printed/number30/kaplan.pdf>

academic paper, *Lost in Austen and Generation Y Janenites*, Laurie Kaplan provides a counter argument in defense of *Lost in Austen*-that it has the power to move *Pride and Prejudice* spin-offs into a “provocatively witty direction;” it just takes a certain audience to appreciate it.⁷ This audience, she states, consists of younger people, mostly women, who identify with Amanda Price, women “tired...of surliness and rudeness, and who, like Amanda, are nostalgic for ‘Austenian’ manners, clothes, language, codes of behavior, and courtesy.”⁸ Kaplan argues that *Lost in Austen* is an important marker in Jane Austen survival – mainly because it appeals to the younger generation, defined by Kaplan as “Generation Y,” who may or may not have been introduced to *Pride and Prejudice*. *Pride and Prejudice* is, after all, a novel that was published in 1813, and the modern touches the adaptation puts on the book indicates to the younger generation that the book is still applicable to modern life. Kaplan indicates that *Lost in Austen*, if nothing else, has the value to bring this type of fan back to the book.

Lost in Austen may have something for the older academic Janenites as well-as Kaplan points out, “If Janenites are too fussy about textual fidelity...they risk missing something they will actually end up appreciating more than the other demographics.”⁹ *Lost in Austen* contains certain plot and character twists that fit in with the plot but are more risqué than what Jane Austen would have written. English Professor Deborah Cartmell points out that these twists are uncovered in part because of Amanda’s curious and slightly dysfunctional personality; “...Amanda’s passion for the past is a fabricated

⁷ Kaplan, Laurie. “Completely without Sense: *Lost in Austen*.”

<http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/printed/number30/kaplan.pdf>

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

one, based on modern re-readings, which as the series points out, carefully excise the darker sides of Austen's world..." (106)¹⁰ Even though modern Janenites enjoy reading the book, as Professor Cartmell states, there are still "darker sides" to Austen's world that any modern reader may uncover as they read the book. Laurie Kaplan agrees, stating, "The cross-cultural juxtapositions in *Lost In Austen* have the effect of moving the story of *Pride and Prejudice* into a new absurdist and provocatively witty direction that veers radically away from the film adaptations that are purportedly 'true' to Austen's text."

One example of the "darker sides" of Austen's world is exemplified in the scene in which Mr. Collins proposes to Elizabeth. When Elizabeth refuses him, Mr. Collins pigishly assumes that her fervent "no" is really a demure "yes." Readers today, many of whom would be well aware of the ongoing feminist movement, would be extremely offended at Mr. Collins's epitomizing of rape culture. Amanda carries out what most modern women readers wish Elizabeth could have done in this situation - kneeling Mr. Collins in a particularly sensitive area. Amanda also delves further into the perplexingly rude character of Miss Bingley. Screenwriter Guy Andrews dusts off the unclear text to find that Miss Bingley is a self-identified lesbian who is fated to always conceal her identity in order to marry a man in the proper social class. As Amanda states, "Bet Jane Austen didn't know she was writing *that* two hundred years ago."¹¹ These plot twists indicate the depth of Austen's characters, exemplified by the fact that it is entirely

¹⁰ Cartmell, Deborah. *SCREEN ADAPTATIONS: Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice; The Relationship between Text and Film*. London: Methuen Drama, 2010. Print.

¹¹ *Lost in Austen*. 2008. Film.

possible that one of her characters could potentially have a secret identity, one that is unknown until a modern Janenite excises it from the text.

Even the ending of *Lost in Austen* has an interesting twist. By the end of the mini-series, Amanda Price has madly fallen in love with her life-long love, Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy, and Mr. Darcy has in turn fallen in love with her. Amanda at this point has become so obsessed with the story (her obsession personified as Mr. Darcy), that she believes she can never find love as fulfilling if she returns home to the modern world. Meanwhile, Elizabeth is perfectly comfortable in her twenty-first century skin, complete with cropped hair and a newly acquired cell phone. It is an interesting plot-twist that Elizabeth, when separated from the possibility of being with Mr. Darcy, is able to come into her own as a “modern” woman, fending for herself in every way. This could be a purposeful irony, a reflection on how Elizabeth compromised herself in marrying Darcy. As De Montfort University English Professor Deborah Cartmell points out, “loose screen adaptations of Austen’s novels...are often witty and knowing, self-consciously reflecting their status as adaptations; far from positing inferiority complexes, these adaptations often challenge Austen’s representation from contemporary perspectives.”¹² (96) Even though these sort of plot twists seem superficial at first, they have the potential to bring new light to the text.

¹² Cartmell, Deborah. *SCREEN ADAPTATIONS: Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice; The Relationship between Text and Film*. London: Methuen Drama, 2010. Print.

Amanda Price not only provides modern insight into Austen's world, but also exemplifies a specific fandom that Kaplan calls "Generation Y."¹³ Generation Y is made up of modern women, exemplified in this case by Amanda, who are smitten with the general romance of the book, from Mr. Darcy to the mannered culture. They cling to Austen as the last vestige of romantic culture, and bemoan the lack of it in their own lives. As Laurie Kaplan explains: "In *Lost in Austen*, Andrews explores why Amanda might want to jettison twenty-first-century rudeness for "Austenian" manners, language, codes of behavior, and courtesy." Amanda says that *Pride and Prejudice* has become part of who she is: "I love a love story. I love Elizabeth Bennet."¹⁴ These romantic Janenites are the ones looking for love, looking for romance, and, like so many people who have fallen for Mr. Darcy, they find it in Jane Austen's book.

Lost in Austen also exemplifies the Austen fans desire to enter Jane Austen's world, but also touches upon some of the struggles that a modern reader has with Jane Austen's book. Screenwriter Guy Andrews's creation of the character of Amanda personifies the modern woman's struggle to see Austen's novel on her own terms. Fans like Amanda Pierce struggle between loving *Pride and Prejudice* and being able to apply it to their own lives. *Lost in Austen* allow these Janenites to modernize certain outdated aspects of Austen's book in order to fit it into the context of their own lives.

¹³ Kaplan, Laurie. "Lost in Austen and Generation Y Janenites." *Jane Austen Society of North America*. 30.2 (2010): n. page. Web. 29 Apr. 2013. <<http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/online/vol30no2/kaplan.html>>.

¹⁴ Ibid

Many critics, citing *Bridget Jones's Diary* state that modern women only watch fanfiction movies for the love story; however, *Lost in Austen* further shows a self-awareness by subtly tipping its hat to its predecessors. Not only does it offer a character, who makes a point to appreciate the culture and class of Jane Austen, but the Mr. Darcy character, as Laurie Kaplan says, is “part Matthew Macfadyen (2005), part Colin Firth (1995), and part David Rintoul (1980).”¹⁵ This Mr. Darcy, played by Eliot Cowan, is ironically even more sexualized than Colin Firth’s Mr. Darcy. There is a specifically funny scene in which Amanda asks Mr. Darcy to reenact the famous “wet-white-shirt” scene. As he is coming out of the water, she clasps her hands, telling him that she is having “a bit of a post-modern moment.” This scene shows mockingly self-aware spirit of *Lost in Austen*, with an ironic tone that mimics the satiric tone of Jane Austen’s books keeping the movie from becoming soggily romantic.

While *Lost in Austen* incorporates some of the *Pride and Prejudice* culture, the *Diary of Bridget Jones* only exemplifies the skeleton of the love story in *Pride and Prejudice*. Bridget Jones, the protagonist, only seeks physical partners, and the culture that she lives by is almost the opposite of Elizabeth’s sought-after self-confidence and perfect manners. Some argue that Helen Fielding only used Austen’s story as a hub from which to create a modern romantic story. As author Hilary Mantel states: “Her fans have given her [Austen] a bad name: her fans with their faint praise settling like dust on fine china... Her work has bred, as writing of genius does, whole libraries of imitation: puppets instead of people, *pro forma* plots without ingenuity, dogged narratives of wish-

¹⁵ Ibid

fulfillment without the spice of her malice and wit. There is the *ersatz* Jane and there is Jane on the page, acid, crisp, and smart.”¹⁶ (77) As Mantel states, one of Austen’s fortes is creating timeless characters and genuine plots with a healthy dose of irony. Much to Austenian fans’ disgust, *Bridget Jones’s Diary* exemplifies almost the opposite of this.

Although there are arguable parallels between Elizabeth Bennet and Bridget Jones, critics react violently against Jones. Kelly A. Marsh, author of *Contextualizing Bridget Jones* complains that Bridget is “presented as an archetype of single womanhood even though she is little more than a composite of frivolous neuroses.”¹⁷ In this statement, she has highlighted exactly why young, single women tend to hate Bridget so much – because Bridget Jones is seen as the stereotype of that group. To make things worse, Bridget is compared to Elizabeth Bennet – who is often the single, successful role model for many young women. Ms. Marsh goes on to state “not everyone was willing to accept the hapless comic heroine [Jones] as the typical thirty-something single woman of the 1990s, and more demanding critics noted the ways in which Bridget’s character and her story are problematic, particularly from a feminist point of view.”¹⁸ Just as women see Elizabeth Bennet as a timeless woman hero, they see Bridget dragging the idea of a self-respecting, single woman in the dirt. In truth, there are only superficial similarities between Bridget and Elizabeth, more important are their differences: most importantly,

¹⁶ Clare, Hanson. *Uses of Austen: Jane's Afterlives*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. Print.

¹⁷ Marsh, Kelly A. "Contextualizing Bridget Jones." *College Literature*. 31.1 (2004): 52-72. Web. 29 Apr. 2013. <<http://search.proquest.com/docview/229565748>>.

¹⁸ Ibid

that Elizabeth is strong with or without marriage, but Bridget depends constantly on other people to help her, single or not. Even though Bridget Jones's love story is loosely based on Elizabeth Bennet's tale in *Pride and Prejudice*, women who love self-respecting Elizabeth cannot draw any substantial parallels between Jones's and Elizabeth's characters.

Another reason that critics react so violently to Bridget Jones is the fact that bad spin-offs of Jane Austen can reflect poorly on society's perception of Austen. As the academic journal states, "the marketing of Austen films as "chick flicks" seems only to have reinforced the notion that her novels are feminine." (281). Because *Bridget Jones' Diary* is a spin-off of *Pride and Prejudice*, it is associated with Jane Austen, even though the crudeness of *Bridget Jones's Diary* almost desecrates the carefully constructed culture in Austen's books. As the author of *Searching for Jane Austen* states, "This attitude must end. In some ways, we have moved backwards from the time when W.H. Auden [in 1937] could write with utter confidence of Jane Austen's readership, 'But tell Jane Austen, that is, if you dare,/How much her novels are beloved down here./She wrote them for posterity, she said;/'Twas rash, but by posterity she's read.'"¹⁹ As novelist Margaret Drabble said, "Her [Austen's] legacy is much of fiction as we know it today. She created a kind of fiction, a kind of concentration on character, on the importance of the inner life, on the significance of domestic detail, the importance of human relationships, which really hadn't been perceived before she perceived it."²⁰

¹⁹ Auerbach, Emily. *Searching for Jane Austen*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004. eBook.

²⁰Ibid

It is arguable that *Bridget Jones's Diary* is a valid modern-day interpretation of *Pride and Prejudice*. Instead of placing modern context on a historical story, as does *Lost in Austen*, *Bridget Jones's Diary* places the *Pride and Prejudice* love story in a modern day setting. Superficially, the tension between Bridget and Mark Darcy is similar to the tension between Elizabeth and Darcy. Bridget's ditzy drunkenness and inability to make decisions for herself is the polar opposite of Elizabeth's pride and tendency to rush to conclusions without any doubts. However, although there are many parallels between the general storyline of *The Diary of Bridget Jones* and *Pride and Prejudice*, the other half of *Pride and Prejudice* – the culture – is largely lost in *The Diary of Bridget Jones*. The producers also overcompensate in drawing parallels from the text to the film; for example, Bridget's eventual love interest is named Mark Darcy, and Colin Firth was cast in that part. The connection between the two storylines is only too painfully obvious. Any vestige of irony, as exhibited in *Lost in Austen*, is missing. Spin-offs are supposed to shed fresh light on classics; however, *Bridget Jones's Diary* is about as similar to *Pride and Prejudice* as much as Disney's *The Little Mermaid* is to the original Brothers Grimm version. Like *Lost in Austen*, *Bridget Jones's Diary* attempts to place the *Pride and Prejudice* story into modern context – but many see this copy of *Pride and Prejudice* as a desecration rather than a celebration of Austen's work. However, as much as *Bridget Jones's Diary* has been rejected as a desecration to Jane Austen's work, it still can arguably appeal to some of the "Generation Y" culture. Modern feminists may reject Bridget Jones as a ersatz Elizabeth Bennet – but many of the aspects with which Bridget struggles – images of alcoholism, cigarettes, sex – are problems that the modern woman personally or indirectly struggle with today.

Many Austen purists cannot bring themselves to watch *Bridget Jones's Diary* or *Lost in Austen* when their well-read copy of *Pride and Prejudice* lies next to them on the bedside table. As the chapter of Professor Cartmell's book titled *Honour, Decorum, Providence: the novel and its reputation* states: "...for many purists the alliance of Jane Austen's novels with cinema is, like Lady Catherine's view of the marriage of Elizabeth and Darcy, grossly incompatible given their different social positions."²¹ (25) Many people look down on the so-called "spin-offs" and modern adaptations of the novel, focusing only on the historical and academic value found in the text.

Author Justine Alsop asks the question "can works by Helen Fielding stand on the shelf beside Jane Austen?"²² For that matter, can Colin Firth, who is arguably remembered as more of a sex symbol than as a character, look stern Jane Austen in the eyes? I am inclined to say yes. Academic conferences such as JASNA will always exist; however, it only attracts a certain audience of scholars. Universal characters such as Mr. Darcy, and modern, relatable interpretations such as Amanda Price and Bridget Jones continue to spread Jane Austen's name to Kaplan's "Generation Y" - in order to keep Jane Austen's writing alive.

²¹ Cartmell, Deborah. *SCREEN ADAPTATIONS: Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice; The Relationship between Text and Film*. London: Methuen Drama, 2010. Print.

²² Alsop, Justine. "Bridget Jones Meets Mr. Darcy: Challenges of Contemporary Fiction." *Journal of Academic Librarianship*. 33.5 (2007): 581-585. Web. 30 Apr. 2013.

<<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0099133307001267>>.

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"BBC cashes in as 'Darcy phenomenon' has nation in a swoon." *The Independent*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Feb. 2013. <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/bbc-cashes-in-as-darcy-phenomenon-has-nation-in-a-swoon-1579778.html>>.

This source was valuable in that it allowed me to examine the "Darcy Phenomenon" that is to say, the love affair that millions of women have with Colin Firth as Mr. Darcy. As I am looking at the reasons why Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice" has such a following, this is a point that needs to be addressed - that arguably, the story was revived as soon as Colin Firth walked slowly up from a lake in a clingy white shirt. The article addresses the questions - where would the play be if not for Colin Firth, and how much of the following of Jane Austen is in it for the book, or for the movie?

"Happy Two-hundredth birthday, 'Pride and Prejudice.'" *The New Yorker*. N.p., 28 Jan. 2013. Web. 20 Feb. 2013.
<<http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/books/2013/01/happy-two-hundredth-birthday-pride-and-prejudice.html>>.

This source was valuable in helping me determine the overall history of "Pride and Prejudice". It was written in a "New Yorker" blog, so obviously the point of the article was entertainment, so there was not very much factual information. Still, it helped me look more at the general picture of the popularity and the reasons for the timelessness of the book.

Lost in Austen. 2008. Film.

Lost in Austen addresses the idea that the storyline of Pride and Prejudice - is not substantial, in itself to propel it to a legacy modern. In the movie, Amanda Price travels back into the story of Pride and Prejudice, but does not simply live out the story as Krya Nightly or Jennifer Ehle - she changes the storyline, from Jane's love story to Georgiana's sexuality, giving Pride and Prejudice perhaps not a new meeting, but a contemporary breath of fresh air. I will use this source to explore the future of Pride and Prejudice's popularity - to see if the 19th century leather and lace can survive its three or even four hundredth anniversary.

Bridget Jones's Diary. 2001. Film.

I used this example to highlight the drastic difference between some of the academic Janenites and spin-offs that deviate largely from the text.

Raphael, Lev. "Who Says Jane Austen Was a Popular Novelist?" *The Huffington Post*. N.p., 7 Sept. 2010. Web. 20 Feb. 2013. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lev-raphael/was-jane-austen-a-popular_b_705583.html>.

This author has a refreshing view on the whole Jane Austen escapade-he goes directly to the question - why is Jane Austen so popular? He takes a skeptical view to the whole Jane Austen phenomenon, and introduces the idea that Jane Austen's popularity only blossomed after her death, which encouraged me to ask the question - why?

Walker, Linda Robinson. "Was 'Pride and Prejudice' Inspired by Jane Austen's First Love?" *The Wall Street Journal*. N.p., 15 Feb. 2013. Web. 20 Feb. 2013.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/speakeasy/2013/02/15/was-pride-and-prejudice-inspired-by-jane-austens-first-love/?mod=google_news_blog>.

This source helped introduce me to the idea of "spin-offs" of Jane Austen's book. It was a valuable source because it helped me with one of the key parts of my essay: the examination of the spin-offs and parodies of Jane Austen's book to see if "Pride and Prejudice" has such a following because of the prose or because of the storyline.

Schuessler, Jennifer. "Lots of Pride, a Little Prejudice." *New York Times*. (2012): n. page. Print.

This New York Times article provided reporting and information on the phenomenon of the annual JASNA conference. It also provided visual resources of the conference.

Wells, Juliette. *Everybody's Jane: Austen in the Popular Imagination*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011. Print.

This book talked about the general phenomenon of Jane Austen in modern culture, and the phenomenon of Mr. Darcy that plays a part in so many modern women's obsession of Jane Austen.

Cartmell, Deborah. *SCREEN ADAPTATIONS: Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice; The Relationship between Text and Film*. London: Methuen Drama, 2010. Print.

This book, written by English Professor Deborah Cartmell, goes into detail about the screen adaptations of Pride and Prejudice, speaking about the different approaches that each screenwriter takes to each film, and the subsequent fan followings of those films.

Xu, Jun. *Austen's fans and fans' Austen*. Diss. *Journal of Literary Semantics*, 2011. Web.

This was a good source because it helped me not only gain an overview of the general Jane Austen fandom, but it also provided some historical background and some really good quotes from some obscure sources of which I probably would not have been aware otherwise. I have actually used some of these mentioned sources as other references.

Kaplan, Laurie. "Lost in Austen and Generation Y Janenites." *Jane Austen Society of North America*. 30.2 (2010): n. page. Web. 29 Apr. 2013.

<<http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol30no2/kaplan.html>>.

This source was helpful in that it provided the term and description "Generation Y," the targeted audience of modern spin-offs.

Kaplan, Laurie. "Completely without Sense: *Lost in Austen*." <http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/printed/number30/kaplan.pdf>

Similar to Above

Alsop, Justine. "Bridget Jones Meets Mr. Darcy: Challenges of Contemporary Fiction." *Journal of Academic Librarianship*. 33.5 (2007): 581–585. Web. 30 Apr. 2013. <<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0099133307001267>>.

This source discussed the cross-cultural clashes of modern spin-offs versus traditional text.

Auerbach, Emily. *Searching for Jane Austen*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004. eBook.

This provided background information about Jane Austen, and the place of Jane Austen and her works in modern society.

"JASNA: Mission Statement." *Jane Austen Society of North America* n.pag. Web. 30 Apr 2013. <<http://www.jasna.org/info/about.html>>.

This source provided background information about JASNA.

Wilson, Cheryl. "Chick Lit in the Undergraduate Classroom." *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*. 33.1 (2012): n. page. Web. 30 Apr. 2013. <<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/frontiers/v033/33.1.wilson.html>>.

This source discussed the reaction of “Generation Y” to learning Jane Austen – essentially, Laurie Kaplan’s theory, applied.

Troost, Linda, and Sayre Greenfield. *Jane Austen in Hollywood*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1998. Print.

This source discussed Jane Austen film adaptations throughout the centuries.

Clare, Hanson. *Uses of Austen: Jane's Afterlives*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. Print.

This source was instrumental in highlighting the overall use of Austen in popular culture in the twentieth century.

Marsh, Kelly A. "Contextualizing Bridget Jones." *College Literature*. 31.1 (2004): 52-72. Web. 29 Apr. 2013. <<http://search.proquest.com/docview/229565748>>.

This was a key source for academic discussion of Bridget Jones’s Diary.