

THE IDEA OF THE HERO IN JANE AUSTEN'S *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*

Name: Lindsay Juanita van Rensburg

Student number: 2405219

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Artium in the Department of English, University of the Western Cape.

Submission date: 2 December 2015

Supervisor: Cheryl-Ann Michael



KEYWORDS:

Hero

Characterisation

Heroine

Novel

Narration

Masculinity

Free indirect discourse

Epistolary

Austen

Romance



ABSTRACT:

The Idea Of The Hero In Jane Austen's *Pride And Prejudice*

LJ van Rensburg

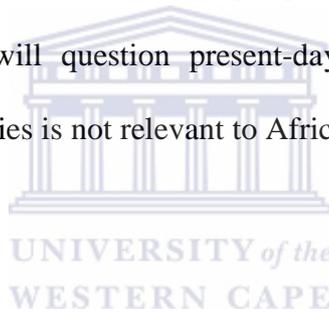
MA Thesis, Department of English, University of the Western Cape

In this thesis I focus on the ways I believe Jane Austen re-imagines the idea of the hero. In popular fiction of her time, such as Samuel Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753), what we had as a hero figure served as a male monitor, to guide and instruct the female heroine. The hero begins the novel fully formed, and therefore does not go through significant development through the course of the novel. In addition to *Sir Charles Grandison*, I read two popular novels of Austen's time, Fanny Burney's *Cecilia* and Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*. An examination of Burney's construction of Delville and Edgeworth's construction of Clarence Hervey allows me to engage with popular conceptions of the ideal hero of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Burney and Edgeworth deviate from these ideals in order to accommodate conventions of the new Realist novel. I argue that Austen re-imagines her male protagonist so that hero and heroine are well-matched and discuss, similarly, how Burney and Edgeworth create heroes as a complement to their heroines. Austen's re-imagining of her male protagonist forms part of her contribution to the genre of the Realist novel. Austen suggests the complexity of her hero through metaphors of setting. I discuss the ways in which the descriptions of Pemberley act as a metaphor for Darcy's character, and explore Austen's adaptations of the picturesque as metaphors to further plot and character development. I offer a comparative reading of Darcy and Pemberley with Mr Bennet and Longbourn as suggestive in understanding the significance of setting for the

heroine's changing perceptions of the character of the hero. I explore Austen's use of free indirect discourse and the epistolary mode in conveying "psychological or moral conflict" in relation to Captain Wentworth in *Persuasion* and Mr Knightley in *Emma*, offering some comparison to Darcy. This lends itself to a discussion on the ways in which Austen's heroes may be read as a critique of the teachings of Lord Chesterfield's *Letters to His Son* (1774). I conclude the thesis with a discussion of the ways in which Darcy has influenced the stereotype of the modern romance hero. Using two South African romance novels I suggest the ways in which the writers adapt conventions of writing heroes to cater for the new black South African middle class at which the novels are aimed.

My reading of Jane Austen's novels will highlight the significance of Austen's work in contemporary writing, and will question present-day views that the writing of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries is not relevant to African literature.

1 December 2015



DECLARATION:

I declare that *The Idea Of The Hero In Jane Austen's Pride And Prejudice* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Lindsay van Rensburg

1 December 2015

Signed:



CONTENTS:

PRELIMINARY SECTIONS

Title page	i
Keywords	ii
Abstract	iii
Declaration	v
CHAPTER ONE: THE IDEA OF THE HERO: JANE AUSTEN’S PREDECESSORS	1
CHAPTER TWO: MR DARCY: THE HERO AND SETTING	45
CHAPTER THREE: MR DARCY, MR KNIGHTLEY, AND CAPTAIN WENTWORTH: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS	76
CHAPTER FOUR: DARCY AS INFLUENCE ON THE MODERN ROMANCE HERO	130
CONCLUSION	170
WORKS CITED	175
APPENDICES	184

CHAPTER ONE: THE IDEA OF THE HERO: JANE AUSTEN'S PREDECESSORS

In this thesis I explore the idea of the hero, focusing on Jane Austen's conception of the hero in Fitzwilliam Darcy. I have chosen to focus on Fitzwilliam Darcy because he is the most enduring of Austen's heroes. *Pride and Prejudice* has a very large popular cultural presence and has been adapted in various artistic forms, including film, television and theatre. Austen's story and her characters are being constantly reproduced for a modern audience and therefore have continuing relevance. Austen's construction of her hero has much to do with the story's enduring popularity. Darcy's transformation from arrogant aristocrat to thoughtful lover is very carefully constructed so that each surprising new layer of Darcy's personality is believable to the reader. Austen's attention to the complex interiority of the character is an innovative contribution to the genre of the realist novel. In this chapter I will discuss the writing of Samuel Richardson, Frances Burney and Maria Edgeworth, authors that influenced Jane Austen's rethinking of the figure of the hero. I discuss what elements of their writing Austen builds upon, what she retains and what she discards. A detailed discussion of the development of Mr Darcy as hero will be provided in chapters two and three. I begin my discussion with Samuel Richardson's Sir Charles Grandison, and move on to discuss Burney's Lord Orville and Lord Delvile and Edgeworth's Clarence Hervey.

Samuel Johnson defines the word "hero" as "1. A man eminent for bravery", and "2. A man of the highest class in any respect" (240). More recently, Joseph Campbell links the hero with a quest:

A quest means a literal journey from home to a new world and then back.

Literally, the journey is outward, from one place to another. Symbolically, the

journey is inward, from one part of the mind (ordinary consciousness) to another part (the unconscious) and then back. (quoted in Schweizer and Segal 1-2)

Richardson's hero it seems aspires to Johnson's definition, for the reader is often given an opportunity to hear of his bravery; he is literally a member of the highest class of society, and many of the characters in the novel speak of his excellence in all respects, thus he is figuratively "of the highest class" in all he undertakes. Burney's and Edgeworth's heroes are more convincing portrayals for the genre of the realist novel. For them the idea of the quest seems more relevant, although the quests are symbolic rather than literal. Burney's Delvile, while his insight remains limited, does to a certain extent break free of his parents' expectations to follow his own happiness. His symbolic journey inward leads him to greater independence from his parents. For Edgeworth's Hervey, his symbolic journey inward does lead to wisdom. He realises he has misjudged Belinda, and that his experiment with Virginia is selfish and ill-advised. All of the heroes that I will discuss in this thesis undergo a symbolic journey inward, to discover more about themselves, and, in some cases, also to transform as a result of their newfound wisdom. It is this journey inward, and the resulting change in the hero that most interests me in this thesis.

In my discussions of the historical novels I will examine to what extent these heroes draw on conventions of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century heroes. The three conventions I will explore as yardsticks are the Enlightenment hero, the Sentimental hero, and the Romantic hero. A short summary of each concept is necessary here. The Enlightenment period, according to Anthony Pagden, "has been identified with an exalted view of human rationality and of human benevolence, and with a belief . . . in progress and in the general human capacity for self-improvement" (vii). The Enlightenment hero, then, embodies these qualities of rationality and striving for self-improvement and knowledge. Edgeworth's Clarence Hervey begins the novel espousing some Romantic ideas, but in the end he lets go

of the idea of taking naïve Virginia as his wife and prefers instead the rational Belinda. He also recognises a need for, and seeks self-improvement. Edgeworth therefore treats the concept of Romanticism critically. She explores the dangers of espousing fashionable Romantic ideas about education based on gendered stereotypes. On the other hand, Edgeworth draws upon Romantic ideas about the understanding of self-hood in exploring Hervey's changing self-understanding. Edgeworth, while critical of some aspects of Romantic thought, is more open than Burney and Richardson to drawing upon aspects of Romantic ideas.

While 'sentiment' and 'sensibility' are often used interchangeably in literary criticism, Todd distinguishes between sentimentality and sensibility, "[a] 'sentiment' is a moral reflection, a rational opinion usually about the rights and wrongs of human conduct" while 'sensibility' "suggest[s] delicate emotional feeling, the capacity for extremely refined emotion and a quickness to display compassion for suffering" (7). Sentimentality, says Todd, "frequently takes the meaning of refined and tender emotion, although the denotation of moral reflection also continues" (7). These outward responses, importantly, are linked to genuine and sincere emotion. Sir Charles Grandison seems to embody these elements of the sentimental hero, particularly in his insistence on moralising. The focus for Richardson is not in analysing his hero's responses to events around him, but in allowing his hero to moralise on the right course of action to take in a given situation. This becomes problematic in a realist novel as even the most villainous characters are brought to repentance by Sir Charles' actions in order to demonstrate his ability to reform those around him. Because of the lack of attention given to a complex inner life for any of the characters in the novel, these reformations are not always convincing. While Richardson does attempt to show us his hero in conflict, thus shifting to a focus on the "refined and tender emotion" of the hero of

sensibility, or perhaps even the emotional Romantic hero, this is not sustained, as Sir Charles is characterised as a man of action rather than emotion.

I discuss how Austen draws upon, and responds to, Romantic ideas in the shaping of her heroes. Romanticism “rebelled against the established canons of neoclassic aesthetics and against both aristocratic and bourgeoisie social and political norms in favour of values more individual, inward, and emotional” (Ferber 4). Abrams says the protagonist in the Romantic plot is often “the isolated rebel . . . the Satanic hero-villain, or the great outlaw” (179). Burney’s Delvile seems to question the role of a Romantic hero. When Delvile takes the decision to go against his parents’ wishes and marry Cecilia; he seems to disregard propriety in following Cecilia to London and in challenging Mr Monckton to a duel. He becomes so emotional that Cecilia no longer trusts his rationality and keeps information from him in order to rely on her own for guidance. He becomes, in effect, a ‘villain-hero’, as his actions do more to hamper their eventual union than to bring them together. Burney, like Edgeworth, also treats the Romantic hero critically in showing the bad effects of his actions. In doing this Burney seems to be foregrounding a dangerous impulsiveness in the Romantic hero which needs correcting in the interests of both the individual and society. Austen’s response to Romanticism is also sceptical in parts, yet she goes further than her predecessors in bringing together aspects of Enlightenment ideas of self-improvement and Romantic ideas of the self in creating her heroes. Austen also, to some extent, incorporates elements of the hero of sensibility in her heroes in their ability to offer sincere compassion and understanding to other characters.

In *The Rise of the Novel* Ian Watt traces the influence of Defoe, Richardson and Fielding on the development of the realist novel. It is important to briefly summarise Watt’s arguments as I will return to them later in my discussions on the writings of Burney, Edgeworth and Austen. According to Watt, the eighteenth century saw the rise of

individualist thought. Defoe and Richardson pioneered the tradition of creating original plots with original characters rather than taking historical subjects as the focus of their writing. This shift to the preoccupation with individual experience led the authors to create carefully constructed settings in which to place their characters, using minute details to describe the background. In this new realistic setting “linguistic ornateness” is set aside for authentic and contemporary language and dialogue (Watt 28). The intended effect is to bring the reader as close as possible to events inside the novel, to create a recognisable world that would draw the reader in and invite them to become emotionally invested in the characters. According to Habermas:

The public sphere was initially constituted in the world of letters, which paved the way for that oriented to politics . . . early novels helped to circulate a vision of intimate sentimentality, communicating to the members of the literary public sphere just how they should understand the heart of private life.

The intimate sphere figures importantly in Habermas’ account: ‘the public’s understanding of the public use of reason was guided specifically by such private experiences as grew out of the audience-oriented subjectivity of the conjugal family’s intimate domain.’ (quoted in Calhoun 10)

As Habermas suggests, representations of more complex characters in novels of the period take on a significance beyond entertainment. The question of the relationship between the individual and broader society explored in novels takes on a central importance.

Although authors such as Richardson retain a very strong moralistic or didactic function in the new realist novel form, this was eventually refined to represent “complex characters with mixed motives”, a practice which came under attack from authors such as Samuel Johnson and Maria Edgeworth and was famously defended by Jane Austen in *Northanger Abbey* (Abrams 192). Samuel Johnson believed that, “books are written chiefly

to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life (19-20).” Johnson consequently believed that nothing “indecent” should reach these readers’ eyes and ears which would influence them into bad behaviour such as a novelist creating an admirable character who is engaged in a vice (20). For Johnson, the genre of realist fiction is that much more useful because it is a more effective teacher than philosophy or history because it draws the reader in, and the genre should therefore be used for didactic purposes.

The genre of realism itself is not an unproblematic one, and much criticism has been directed at the question of the subjectivity both of the reality that the realist novel aims to portray, as well as the creative process of writing. Morris states that:

literary realism is a representational form and a representational form can never be identical with that which it represents . . . Writing has to select and order, something has to come first, and that selection and ordering will always, in some way, entail the values and perspectives of the describer. (4)

While the realist novel, then, describes characters and settings that are true to life, the act of writing itself is unavoidably subjective, and the text cannot but carry the subjective opinions of its author. While Burney, Edgeworth and Austen create complex characters, they are also able to imbue their writing with critique of dominant ideas of the time such as Romanticism and the Enlightenment. Richardson often stretches this characteristic of realist writing too far in his desire to create didactic texts without giving sufficient attention to the motivation of characters, or the plausibility of actions. The critical discussions around the realist novel are complex, and beyond the scope of this thesis. I will confine myself in this chapter to a discussion of the realist novel in England, which “defines itself against the excesses, both stylistic and narrative, of various kinds of romantic, exotic, or sensational literatures” (Levine 614).

The use of the epistolary mode was very important in creating an individualist experience in the realist novel in England, as it allowed the reader insight into the character's conscious mind and was sometimes, as is the case in *Pamela*, written in the present tense to create a heightened sense of drama and tension. The shortcomings of the epistolary mode were, as I discuss later, felt by Richardson and Austen. Austen adopted the use of third-person narration and free indirect discourse, although the epistolary mode was still extensively used by her. This new individualism also led to greater freedom for women. This freedom of choice ultimately led to the idea of romantic love which gave rise to the courtship plot and which, in turn, has spawned the very successful contemporary genre of romance novels. The choice of a marriage partner became the frequent subject of writing in the eighteenth century which emphasised the need to choose a sensible marriage partner. Richardson himself believed that "friendship . . . is the perfection of love" and that perfect friendship is needed for a marriage to be successful, a theme which Jane Austen carries throughout most of her novels (Watt 160). More than a friend, Sir Charles Grandison's chosen mate would need to be a match for his perfect morality.

For Richardson, Burney and Edgeworth, I am particularly interested in tracing the character development of their heroes throughout the course of their novels, and in noting the narrative techniques that are used to guide the reader in how to read the hero. I also, to a lesser extent, discuss the heroines of these novels as a means to compare the difference in character development between hero and heroine, a point which I develop more extensively in chapter four when I discuss the conventions of romance novel writing.

Samuel Richardson: *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*

Published in 1754, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* is an epic tale which was greatly respected by both critics and readers alike. Jane Austen's admiration of Samuel Richardson

and *Sir Charles Grandison* was not uncritical, as her sardonic play of the same name attests. Written in about 1800, the five-act comedy satirises Richardson's characters' hyperbolically emotional behaviour. Miss B, for example, after fainting for the second time in a scene in which Sir Hargrave is trying to force their marriage, says, "So, I hope you have killed me at last" (2.1.71). Also satirised is Sir Charles' moralistic perfection as a model of the early sentimental hero. In act three Miss G says to Miss B, "My brother is a charming man. I always catch him doing some good action" (3. 1. 27). Austen's admiration was nevertheless so great that, according to James Edward Austen-Leigh in his biography of his aunt, *Memoir of Jane Austen*, "Her knowledge of Richardson's works was such as no one is likely again to acquire . . . Every circumstance narrated to Sir Charles Grandison, all that was ever said or done in the cedar parlour, was familiar to her . . ." (71).

The History of Sir Charles Grandison chronicles the life of the inimitable Sir Charles, and of the women whom he loves and who love him. Interestingly, while Sir Charles is at the centre of the narrative, the action of the novel focuses on, and is predominantly focalised through Harriet Byron, a virtuous young woman who, abducted by her cruel jilted suitor, Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, is saved by Sir Charles from a forced marriage. Sir Charles leaves Harriet in the capable hands of his sister when he leaves on a beneficent errand and she is welcomed as an intimate friend and 'sister' into the Grandison family. Swayed by gratitude and by Sir Charles' dashing figure and sterling character, Harriet soon finds herself in love. She loses hope of winning Sir Charles' love when she finds out that he has already pledged himself to the virtuous, tortured Lady Clementina of Italy. Lady Clementina goes mad over the anguish of being in love with a Protestant as it goes against her Roman Catholic faith. Sir Charles is at length released from his obligation to Lady Clementina, and is free to marry Harriet. Sir Charles seems intended to encapsulate both of Johnson's definitions of the hero as "eminent for bravery" and "of the highest class". Several scenes seem deliberately created

to display his bravery, most notably his rescue of Harriet. Sir Charles is literally and figuratively “of the highest class”; he is an aristocrat, and he is in character and behaviour designed to be exemplary to those around him. Through the letters of Harriet and her friends, and to a lesser extent, Sir Charles himself, the reader is able to follow the many events which seem contrived to show Sir Charles’ beneficence, morality, and tireless expertise in all that he undertakes. His valour stuns even his bitterest enemies into admiration. Mark Kinkead-Weekes suggests in *Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist* that Sir Charles moves through the novel, performing various actions “designed not to expose his inner being but to give him opportunities to display what the behaviour of a good man should be” (287). Charles Ball suggests that Richardson’s technique of presenting Sir Charles only through the eyes of other characters is designed to “[hold] him off at a respectful distance so that all of his good qualities are evident” (174). Contrastingly, Austen tries to show with Darcy the disjuncture that can exist between a person’s character, their ‘inner being’, and their behaviour, that is, what they show the world. Darcy’s manners at the beginning of the novel seem, on the surface of it, to paint him in a bad light, yet time and closer examination shows us the ‘real’ Darcy, an exemplary landowner, affectionate brother, and loyal friend with a capacity for self-reflection, and for change. This is an argument that I develop further in chapters two and three. For Richardson, then, his didactic intention as a writer and a reader of conduct texts are made clear in Sir Charles’ characterisation. It is a trend that he carries through in *Pamela* and *Clarissa*, as Janet Todd notes, “Richardson went to extraordinary lengths to make his instructive aim manifest within all three novels” (72).

Sir Charles is introduced to the narrative quite late in the telling of the story. In the first volume of the novel Cousin Reeves writes to Harriet’s Uncle, Mr Selby to let the family know that Harriet has been rescued from Sir Hargrave. He has received a letter from Charlotte Grandison letting them know that Harriet is safe and that her brother is the man to

whom they “owe the preservation and safety of the loveliest woman in England” (Richardson 109). The “honest man” who delivers the letter of this news “knew not when to stop in his master’s praise” (109). Sir Charles, Mr Reeves writes to Mr Selby, was wounded only slightly in the execution of his “glorious act” – thus magnifying Sir Charles’ bravery (109). Mr Reeves goes to the “hospitable mansion” where Sir Charles is staying to see Harriet (110). Thanking Charlotte Grandison for their care of his cousin, he is told that her brother “[i]s the best of men, Mr Reeves, his delight is in doing good” (110). While Sir Charles does not speak or physically appear up to this point, the praise heaped upon him so liberally from the perspective of people who admire him greatly allows that Sir Charles is established in the reader’s mind as a kind, generous and heroic figure. This can be compared to reports of Darcy’s immense wealth circulating at the Meryton assembly before he appears to the reader. Yet while the initial favourable reports on Darcy were soon to be overthrown, Sir Charles’ praises seem to do him justice. While the reader’s interpretation of Darcy’s character changes as more of his character is revealed as he changes, Sir Charles stays statically moral and exemplary in all he does.

The first ‘appearance’ of Sir Charles into the narrative occurs while Charlotte Grandison is telling Cousin Reeves how Harriet was brought to her. In her telling, she found Harriet “sitting, dreadfully trembling, and Sir Charles next to her, in a very tender manner” (111). From the moment that he rescues her, Sir Charles treats Harriet as an honourable lady despite her outlandish masquerade dress, and instructs his sister that the care of the distressed and fainting Harriet should be her first priority, thus painting him as a man of compassion. He does not immediately judge her as an immoral woman because of her clothing, but gives her the benefit of the doubt. Soon thereafter, his eligibility is spoken of when Charlotte says, “[m]y brother, Mr Reeves, can never marry but he must break half a score hearts” (114). Sir Charles later arrives, and the reader is given the first physical description of him from Cousin

Reeves when he writes, “Sir Charles Grandison is indeed a fine figure. He is in the bloom of youth. I don’t know that I have ever seen an handsomer or genteeler man” (116). Sir Charles then tells with “coolness” the story of how he saved Harriet from Sir Hargrave (116). All of the descriptions we are given of Sir Charles are given from the perspectives of characters that view him with reverence, and cannot help expressing their admiration of him. The effect of this is that the reader is drawn in by these good opinions of Sir Charles. It also helps to solve one of the problems of writing in the epistolary form – that of having a character narrating his or her own goodness without sounding pompous or arrogant. Sir Charles’ description of his fight with Sir Hargrave is the first ‘first-person’ account the reader gets from his perspective, and even here it is relayed to us through Cousin Reeves’ letter to the Selby family. Sir Charles starts his narration with very little introduction. Throughout his telling he sticks to the facts, using very few adjectives or flowery language. When he realises that someone is in trouble, he merely orders his coachman to stop, he says, “I saw, however, before he drew it up, another person, wrapt up in a man’s scarlet coat. For God’s sake! help! help! cried out the person: For God’s sake help!” I ordered my coachman to stop” (116). He does not describe his emotional reactions to the events, but narrates them coolly in an almost staccato fashion. Comparing this to Darcy’s letter to Elizabeth in which he offers her explanations of the bad deeds she accuses him of, one sees that he attempts to be similarly practical and unemotional in his language, although the reader is invited to read below the surface of Darcy’s words to discover that he is not as unemotional as he presents himself to be (Austen 153). Even Sir Charles’ actual altercation with Sir Hargrave is unemotionally conveyed:

The chariot-door remaining open . . . I seized him by the collar before he could recover himself from the pass he had made at me; and with a jerk, and a kind of twist, laid him under the hind-wheel of his chariot. I wrench’d his sword from him, and snapp’d it, and flung the two pieces over my head. (118)

He describes no fear at being nicked by Sir Hargrave's sword, nor even any confidence in knowing that he can easily best Sir Hargrave, and suggests that the ease with which he pulls Sir Hargrave out of the chariot is due to his being unbalanced. Sir Charles only expresses an opinion about the altercation at the very end of his narrative, when he says, "[y]ou see, Mr Reeves, what an easy conquest this was. You see what a small degree of merit falls to my share. The violator's conscience was against him . . . Vice is the greatest coward in the world, when it knows it will be resolutely opposed" (119). He deflects credit for his good deed by suggesting that a man engaged in wrongdoing is presupposed to fall in the face of righteous opposition, regardless of who opposes him. The lot of praising Sir Charles falls to Mr Reeves, who proclaims, "[w]hat an admirable man is Sir Charles Grandison! Thus thinking! Thus acting!" (119). It is clear from this passage that Richardson carefully tries to avoid inadvertently allowing Sir Charles to come across as pompous, yet he is not entirely successful as Sir Charles sometimes sounds rather smug in his attempts to sound modest.

Samuel Richardson was aware of the difficulty of describing events which flatter the hero from the hero's perspective. When Sir Charles visits Sir Hargrave at his house for breakfast to discuss the possibility of a duel, Richardson creates a very unusual device to solve this problem. Sir Hargrave hides a scribe in the cupboard to take down the events and conversations which pass. A copy of this transcript is given to Harriet, who includes it in a letter she sends to her family. In this way the reader is able to get a word-for-word description of events from an 'impartial' source. The very description of these events, however, seems intended to flatter Sir Charles. The scribe, tasked only with "taking down an exact account of what passed", conveys to the reader his opinion of all the characters involved while seeming to be impartial (201). The scribe describes the scene which he enters, and although not taking down the conversation before the arrival of Sir Charles, he does say that the gentlemen were discussing "the reception that was about to be given to the said Sir

Charles”, and he implies that he is commanded not to take down this conversation by stating, “I had no command to take this down, but the *contrary*” (201). This implies that Sir Hargrave and his companions were planning something dishonourable, which they did not want included in the minutes. Soon after the scribe again notes something which is not in his brief to record, but which he does anyway, saying “this is not improper to note” (201). The scribe in this case acts as narrator, using his own discretion about what to include, and these decisions guide the reader’s opinion of the events and of the characters involved. The reader is told that Sir Hargrave says, “[g]ive me that pair of pistols, and let him follow me into the garden. By G_ he shall take *one*” (201). Mr Merceda objects to Sir Hargrave forcing a duel, but then says, “[l]et us, Sir Hargrave, hear what a man so gallant has to say for himself. *Occasions may arise afterwards*” (201). The scribe himself chooses which words to italicise, imbuing them with a special significance. When Sir Charles enters, he is described as “look[ing] very sedate and chearful” (201). The reader is reminded in this scene of Sir Charles’ words after he told the story of his altercation with Sir Hargrave, “[w]hat have good men, engaged in a right course, to fear?” (119). Sir Charles enters the room seemingly with no fear that this might be a trap, despite the fact that he is outnumbered. He appears courageous while Sir Hargrave and his cronies appear cowardly. What follows is a verbatim account of the conversation between Sir Charles and Sir Hargrave. By the end Sir Charles had won the admiration of everyone, “Mr Merceda and Mr Bagenhall (the writer mentions it to their honour) reproached each other, as if they had no notion of what was great and noble in man till now” (205). The scribe’s aside makes it clear that he favours Sir Charles. When the reader reads this account in Harriet’s letter, it is very difficult not to agree with the scribe’s assessment. Having Sir Charles narrate this would have been very problematic; especially since the scene is set before he appears. This is therefore a clever vehicle to describe the events to Sir Charles’ advantage, without making him seem pompous by having

him narrate the events himself. It also suggests the limits of the epistolary form, which Burney, Edgeworth and Austen avoid by adopting third-person and free indirect discourse, although Austen still uses the epistolary mode extensively to convey “psychological or moral conflict” (Epstein 404). In *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen uses a similar tool of second-hand account to help change the reader’s and Elizabeth’s opinion of Darcy. Journeying with her aunt and uncle in a tour of the Great Lakes region, Elizabeth and her aunt and uncle stop at Darcy’s estate in Derbyshire to take a tour of the house, where Darcy’s housekeeper contradicts universal accounts of Darcy’s pride and proclaims him an excellent and caring master and landlord. It is here that Elizabeth’s bad opinion of Darcy begins to change.

Sir Charles is a very active moral agent. He does not hesitate to get involved in messy situations caused by family or friends to lead them out of their follies. He intercedes when Charlotte conducts an unwise correspondence with a gold-digging officer. He helps to release his uncle from an inconvenient sexual relationship with his controlling housekeeper. One is reminded of Darcy’s intervention in Lydia and Wickham’s marriage. He, too, is guided by his conscience and actively interferes to bring about the right course of action in the lives of the people around him. Sir Charles more than once acts as the executor of some friend’s will. Elaine McGirr calls Sir Charles “an Anglican knight-errant . . . rescuing women, children and the infirm from the prosaic, practical, and legal problems that tie their hands . . .” (279). According to Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Sir Charles always acts just as he should, so much so that it seems this fictional world is a “moral fairyland”, yet it seldom costs Sir Charles anything or requires any real effort – unlike Mortimer Delvile, who is in a sense forced to choose between duty to his parents, and the woman he loves. Sir Charles has the rank and the resources to act without any restraint (289). Both of his parents are deceased and cannot influence his choices, or his decision of who to marry.

He is also established as a man of firm judgement, with an authoritative sense of right and wrong. He quite determinedly states, “[m]asquerades . . . are not creditable places for young ladies . . .” in a manner which brooks no disagreement (120). Sir Charles is decisive and confident in his ability to judge right and wrong. He tells Mr Reeves, “[f]orgive the seeming vanity, Mr Reeves: But I live not to the world: I live to myself; to the monitor within me” (170). He does not need to consult anyone about the right course of action to take, as Mr Reeves does. Sir Charles, in fact, acts as a mentor figure to everyone with whom he comes in contact. The list of characters that Sir Charles shames into repentance is a long one. As is the number of good deeds which he performs throughout the course of the novel. He views it as his Christian obligation to give guidance to those whom he thinks in need of it. His sister Charlotte particularly finds herself often harshly judged. She calls him “[a] father and a brother in one” (115). Sir Charles, in fact, inspires shame in his father as a result of his piety. Sir Thomas Grandison, a man of excess, is said to have publicly declared “that his son’s morals and his own were so different, that he should not be able to bear his own consciousness, if he consented to his return to England” (259). Sir Charles seems a fully formed, perfectly moral character even as a young man, surpassing his parent both in sense and integrity, which leaves very little room for character development.

Darcy is in a similar position to Sir Charles as head of his household and guardian to his sister. He has undeniable authority as a rich member of the gentry and a landowner, yet his role as a mentor figure is less excessively emphasised by Austen in *Pride and Prejudice*. His role as mentor seems most obviously displayed in his relationship with Bingley, and his interventions to stop Bingley from marrying Jane. Interestingly, his role in keeping Jane and Bingley apart is one of the things for which he apologises, admitting to Elizabeth that he was wrong in manipulating the situation. Darcy, comparatively, is not quite as smug as Sir Charles in his authority, and is capable of making mistakes. This, as I will argue in chapter

two, makes him a much more interesting character than Sir Charles. Quite apart from the need to create interesting characters, Jane Austen herself was quite averse to creating perfect characters. She declared to her niece Fanny “pictures of perfection as you know make me sick and wicked” (Austen 208). In her *Plan of the Novel*, taken from her collection of *Juvenilia* titled *Catharine and Other Writings*, she mocks the idea of perfect characters, “[a]ll the Good will be unexceptional in every respect – and there will be no foibles or weaknesses but the Wicked, who will be completely depraved and infamous, hardly a resemblance of Humanity left in them” (Austen 231). Burney and Edgeworth extend the tradition of the realist novel by beginning to create characters that are flawed and lifelike. Jane Austen develops this much further by creating more nuanced and flawed characters that readers can still fall in love with. Through the use of free indirect discourse, Austen allows the reader to experience her characters’ change and development with greater attention to the inward life of the character; a narrative form used only sporadically by Burney and Edgeworth’s writing.

In Harriet Byron, Richardson created a worthy partner for Sir Charles just as Elizabeth is for Darcy. Although the narrative treatment for Lady Clementina’s extreme sensibility seems uncritical, in Harriet, who is eventually to marry Sir Charles, reason and sensibility are combined. Sir Charles never has cause to censure her for her conduct, and often tells Charlotte to follow Harriet’s example. Harriet is in every sense Sir Charles’ equal – honest, moral, straight-forward and compassionate. Harriet’s test of character comes when she realises that she is in love with Sir Charles. The reader is allowed to enter the inner life of Harriet Byron as one is not allowed to do with Sir Charles, and permitted to explore “the difficulty and the cost of moral aspiration” (Kinkead-Weekes 294). She is put in the position of having an intimate relationship with his sisters, and thereby being in constant contact with Sir Charles himself. Harriet must negotiate questions from suitors, concern from family, and the curiosity of Sir Charles’ sisters on the issue, while trying to prevent Sir Charles himself

from finding out about her true feelings and potentially exposing herself to pity or scorn. She exhibits an admirable honesty in her dealings with everyone concerning this. When Sir Charles tells her the history behind his courtship of Lady Clementina, she stops herself from saying that she hopes Lady Clementina consents to be his wife, as at this point, she has not yet been completely convinced of Lady Clementina's merits, "[d]id I not use to be thought generous and benevolent, and to be above all selfishness? But am I so now?" (469). The reader is also allowed to experience her private heroism in wishing Sir Charles well in the marriage negotiations for Lady Clementina. Harriet selflessly recognises that Lady Clementina is a worthy opponent deserving of Sir Charles' love.

As the above discussion makes clear, there is very little room for Sir Charles to grow and develop as a character. He handles every successive conflict put to him with ease, and surpasses even his parent in morality. Is Richardson not afraid that presenting the reader with a consistently perfect character would make him less interesting? I propose the answer to this is yes, as the universal praise and the narrative handling of Sir Charles' actions make it difficult for the reader to view him with anything but praise, as is the intention with Sir Charles in presenting his readers with an exemplary sentimental character. Still, is Richardson concerned that continuing this trend for seven consecutive volumes would be tiring to the reader? I propose that Richardson is sensitive to this, and that he makes an attempt at imbuing Sir Charles' personality with some complexity.

Lady Clementina della Poretta is introduced to the reader in volume three, and described in very flattering terms by Sir Charles with the following words, "[s]he is lovely in her person, gentle in her manners . . . She is pious, charitable, beneficent" (461). This pleasing description coming from Sir Charles carries much weight with the reader. The reader will soon discover that Lady Clementina's piety borders on zealotry. Her religious principles do not allow her to marry Sir Charles. She would prefer rather to renounce the

outside world for the security of a convent. Her religious devotion serves both as a strength and as a weakness, as it is her religious principles which eventually lead to her madness. She is tortured by the idea that Sir Charles' soul is destined for perdition because he is a Protestant. When she realises that Sir Charles will under no circumstances be converted, and that they therefore cannot be married, she is overtaken by madness. Lady Clementina's total immersion in uncontrolled Romantic feeling is praised by Sir Charles and the narrator as to her credit, as demonstrating her "tender nature" (467).

While Sir Charles' actions proclaim him to be in love with Lady Clementina, and he seems tortured by his decision to retain his religion and to give up his claim to her, honour rather than passion seems to dominate his talk of the affair. Narrating the story to Harriet, whom the reader already knows is in love with him, he says, "[a] lover of my native country too – Were not my God and my Country to be the sacrifice, if I complied! But I *laboured*, I *studied*, for a compromise. I must have been unjust to Clementina's merit, and to my own Character, had she not been dear to me" (468). The stress falls on the words "studied", "compromise", "unjust", and "merit". These are words of honour rather than of passion. Sir Charles does not really speak of his feelings for Clementina, rather his respect for her. The use of the word "dear" also seems to indicate a lack of passionate love. Sir Charles wins Harriet's sympathy with this speech. Sir Charles' dilemma with Lady Clementina is the only conflict which he cannot resolve with ease. Torn between his country and religion, and the woman he claims to love, his proclamations seem designed to elicit sympathy in the reader. The result of this plot device is to show the normally decisive Sir Charles as unsure and in conflict, to show his struggles to do what is the most honourable, as he is uncertain what that is. This is an attempt at complicating his character. Yet it fails to give the reader a glimpse of a complex inner life because of Richardson's insistence on using this as another opportunity to "display what the behaviour of a good man should be" (Kinkead-Weekes 287).

Richardson's insistence on retaining the conduct book exemplar role for his hero leads to his ignoring of social realities, and puts some strain on the conventions of the realist novel. The conduct book, as a genre, is therefore inherently anti-realist, even while it seeks to shape behaviour in the 'real' world.

Frances Burney: *Evelina* and *Cecilia*

Frances Burney published her first novel, *Evelina, or, A Young Lady's Entrance into the World*, anonymously in 1778, to much critical acclaim. *Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress* followed in 1782, and established Frances Burney as one of the foremost female novelists of her time. All four of Burney's novels show a fixation with the ideas of decorum and propriety and how these impact on one's place in society. The popularity of female narratives was at its height in the eighteenth century when a number of female authors emerged to write novels in which their plots were largely driven by the difficulties of their female heroines. All four of Burney's novels had female heroines as their main characters. In her novels Burney explores the threat women face of social disgrace, sexual assault or general helplessness to control their own circumstances. Burney's heroines are very often at the mercy of the male figures in their lives. *Evelina*, for example is threatened with a lifetime of being a social nobody if her father, Sir John Belmont does not acknowledge her as his daughter. *Cecilia* must rely on three male guardians to make decisions about her fortune and her choice of a husband. Burney's writing in general, I suggest, shows a preoccupation with the idea of the power that men had over women in the eighteenth century, "the social order that allowed such tyranny", and how this often resulted in injustice (Todd 20). Jane Austen explores this theme to a lesser extent in her fiction, and in *Pride and Prejudice* Mrs Bennet becomes the mouthpiece for the injustice of the entail and how it could result in her and her daughters being left homeless.

As the flood of conduct writing published in the eighteenth century proves, Frances Burney lived in an era obsessed with one's role in society, and with the manners and decorum required for one to be considered a socially accomplished, respected lady or gentleman. In a letter to her sister Esther Burney in 1795, Burney cheekily mocks this torrent of conduct writing by noting down rules of behaviour to follow when in the presence of royalty. She writes, "[i]n the first place, you must not Cough. If you find a cough tickling in your throat, you must arrest it from making any sound: if you find yourself choacking with forbearance, you must choak: But not cough" (Burney 230). This is no doubt a tongue-in-cheek reference to Lord Chesterfield's letters to his son, published in 1774, written to teach him about the social graces. In his letters, which I will discuss in more detail in chapter three, Lord Chesterfield advises, "[h]aving mentioned laughing, I must particularly warn you against it: and I could heartily wish that you may often be seen to smile, but never be heard to laugh while you live . . . Frequent and loud laughter is the characteristic of folly and ill manners . . . in my mind there is nothing so illiberal, and so ill-bred, as audible laughter" (72). Burney's opinion of the letters were that:

they were extremely well written, contained some excellent *hints* for Education – but were written with a tendency to make his son a man wholly unprincipled; inculcating immorality; countenancing all *Gentlemanlike* vices; *advising* deceit; and *exhorting* to Inconstancy. (33)

She gave some thought to the idea of what constitutes a perfect gentleman, both in real life and in fiction. Having been much affected by Samuel Richardson's fictional character Sir Charles Grandison, Burney was quite offended when a family friend, Alexander Seton suggested that Sir Charles was too good to be true. She said in a journal entry in response to Seton's comment, "[i]t quite hurts me to hear anybody declare a really & thoroughly good man never lived. It is so much to the disgrace of mankind" (quoted in Hamilton 416). Frances

Burney, then, was an author very aware both of the literary conventions in which she was writing, and the times in which she lived.

In her article Patricia Hamilton suggests that Lord Orville in *Evelina* was Burney's attempt at creating a paragon of gentlemanly behaviour, in the spirit of Charles Grandison. Yet Burney is writing more than two decades after the publication of Sir Charles Grandison, at a time when ideas around masculinity had changed, and were still changing. There is a shift during this period, suggests Hamilton, from an "early eighteenth-century ideal of masculine politeness" to a "late-century, sentimental model of the man of feeling" (424). Through Lord Orville, Hamilton suggests, "Burney endorses the system of polite behaviour that flourished in the first half of the eighteenth century, but at the same time she reveals that system to be under stress, particularly with regard to the construction of masculinity" (417). Jane Austen on the other hand, seems intent on showing the disjuncture that can exist between a character's polite manners in public and their true character. Both Wickham and Darcy are shown through the course of the novel to be very different from what their manners proclaim them to be.

The first description of Lord Orville when he asks Evelina to dance at a ball is exceedingly flattering, "[h]is conversation was sensible and spirited; his air, and address were open and noble; his manners gentle, attentive, and infinitely engaging his person is all elegance, and his countenance the most animated and expressive I have ever seen" (Burney 23). This is in stark contrast to the description of the other gentlemen at the ball who "sauntered about, in a careless, indolent manner" (22). The reader is predisposed to like Lord Orville, both because of his kind treatment of a naïve young girl at her first ball, and also because the description we read of him is given through the perspective of Evelina, who it is clear, is already half in love with him. This favourable impression of Lord Orville lasts through most of the novel, as he very often seems to be the most sensible and clear-thinking

gentleman in the company. This is particularly obvious during scenes where he is in the company of Captain Mirvan and Sir Clement Willoughby, as when he accompanies the party to Ranelagh. Sir Clement and the Captain spend the evening loudly provoking Madame Du Bois while Lord Orville maintains a dignified silence and does what he can to make the ladies comfortable. Lord Orville maintains his polite demeanour at all times, and invites universal regard. His good manners stem from his ability to please, to make polite conversation, to be civil to those he interacts with, and to avoid causing discomfort or disharmony in social situations. The one time that he disrupts the tone of the company is when he suggests that Mr Coverley and Lord Merton resolve their dispute by choosing a winner in their competition based on which of the gentleman could find the most worthy object of charity. The frivolous air of the conversation immediately subsides into silence, and Lord Orville himself regrets his graveness, as it served no purpose but to make everyone uncomfortable. Certainly Mr Coverley and Lord Merton are not chastised or reformed in their wild scheme. In general, Lord Orville tries to “adapt [his] conversation to the company” (193). He maintains a moral reserve which is Grandisonian in nature. That is, except when he is incited by jealousy to treat Evelina with deliberate “gravity and coldness” (201). This jealous passion saves Orville from being rather too reserved. Hamilton suggests that it reinforces his masculinity and aligns him with the gruff, excessively masculine Captain Mirvan (42). Lord Orville further digresses from the Grandisonian model by allowing Coverley and Merton to race two old women in a foot race without attempting to stop it. Surely such an injustice could not have been allowed to happen in the presence of Charles Grandison? Yet Lord Orville’s attempt to stop the wager previously was unsuccessful, and made everyone in the company uncomfortable. Such a breach of politeness would go against his gentlemanly manners, and based on his failure to stop the wager, would probably not have been successful. In this situation it is impossible for Lord Orville to act on his sense of

honour without causing offence. While he does not explicitly state his disapproval, he makes it clear through his body language, as he “looked grave during the whole transaction” in contrast to the general gaiety and drunkenness around him (205). Lord Orville must negotiate his way through a situation which does not allow him to be both gallant and polite. Burney shows her hero compromising with the realities of life, bringing her novel closer to the realist tradition than Samuel Richardson’s. While Sir Charles Grandison is a paragon of virtue, creating a character that is able to flawlessly navigate social situations in a world which is changing and in flux is nearly impossible. Lord Orville is a man of honour, yet he would lose his credibility as a polite gentleman were he always to act superior to his company. In Orville, one can see how Burney aspires to the Grandisonian model, and how she is not entirely satisfied with how successful a Charles Grandison would be in the late eighteenth century. Burney’s attempt at complicating her hero and adapting him for the new realist tradition is not entirely successful. Lord Orville seems to retain rather too much of the conduct book exemplar figure in relation to the heroine.

In *Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress* Cecilia Beverley is an orphaned heiress sent to live in London with Mr Harrel, one of three guardians that her deceased uncle has chosen for her. Cecilia’s inheritance has the condition attached that the man she marries must change his surname to Beverley, or Cecilia must give up her fortune. In London Cecilia is forced to traverse problematic situations in which she is taken advantage of, severely. Once she meets Mortimer Delvile, the son of her haughty and arrogant guardian Mr Compton Delvile, they fall in love – to Mr Delvile’s extreme disapproval. Cecilia and Mortimer must brave his parents’ displeasure in order to get married. Mortimer, aware of his duty as an only son to honour his family legacy, refuses to give up his family name, and Cecilia must give up her independent fortune in order to marry him.

Mortimer Delvile, I suggest, is a male hero who complicates the Grandisonian ideal even further. Because of the obligations that he has to his parents as an only child, and his dependence on their financial support, he cannot act as independently as Sir Charles does. Delvile also carries the responsibility of being highly esteemed by his parents; he thus does his utmost to not disappoint their expectations of his behaviour. Mrs Delvile “rather idolised than loved him, yet her fondness flowed not from relationship, but from his worth and disposition”, and to Mr Delvile “his son was not only the first object of his affection, but the chief idol of his pride” (462). Under the weight of this regard Delvile must evaluate his reliance on his parents against their initial disapproval of Cecilia, while trying to secure his future happiness and marry the woman he loves. While he begins the novel as “a man of the highest class in any respect” he seems to lose a little of his good sense and dignity to display elements of the dark, brooding and passionate Romantic hero which I discuss below.

Mortimer Delvile is a thoroughly good and kind character. Cecilia and the reader first encounter him in book one, chapter iii, at the lavish masquerade Mr and Mrs Harrel host. He enters as a white domino, rescuing Cecilia from the officious custody of an imperious devil character. Delvile seems to “signal a Grandisonian ideal of heroism and masculinity” (Woodworth 366). This act signals to the reader that a ‘good character’ has now entered the scene. In *Pride and Prejudice* during Mr Darcy’s introduction at the Meryton assembly, his good looks and his money form the focus of the attention that he is given, with little regard for the goodness for his character. Soon, of course, his arrogant manners make his appearance and money count for very little. This is an immediate indication of Darcy’s complexity as a character, and also an ironic comment on society’s preoccupation with the superficial. Mr Darcy’s social manners, while not always pleasing to the company around him, are an inaccurate measure of his character. For although his manners are found to be arrogant, by the end of the novel the reader is satisfied that he has proven himself a good character. The

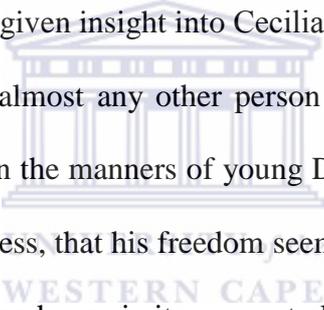
second time Cecilia meets with young Delvile is in book one, chapter iv, when he intercedes between Sir Robert and Mr Belfield to prevent a public brawl. He brings Cecilia calming cordials to settle her nerves with the same unstudied concern and civility which Lord Orville displayed before him in *Evelina*. Later on, in book two chapter v, Cecilia discovers who he is when he brings her news of Mr Belfield's health which she has been anxiously awaiting after Mr Belfield has duelled with Sir Robert. And so, throughout the novel, young Delvile acts in service to Cecilia, and to a certain extent, also as an active moral agent, interrupting Mr Belfield and Sir Robert to remind them of their social obligation to act civilly, much like Sir Charles does.

Throughout Delvile's interference in the matter of Mr Belfield and Sir Robert, Cecilia can sense his disapproval. He insists on alternately thinking that Cecilia is either in love with Sir Robert or with Mr Belfield, although Cecilia herself never gives an indication that she feels affection for either of these men, and is quite forthright about her aversion for Sir Robert, in particular. In book two, chapter ii, Delvile reproaches Cecilia for what he imagines to be her coquettishness about whom she favours. In this scene Cecilia has come to Mr Delvile to request that he intercede on her behalf with Mr Briggs, who has refused to advance her a sum of £600 (182). She finds Delvile on the steps to the entrance of his parents' home. This is the second time that they encounter each other during the course of this particular morning. Earlier that day, on the way to Mr Briggs' house, Cecilia hides at the entrance of a private home while trying to escape a gathering mob, waiting for a taxi to take her away. She encounters Delvile entering the house as she is leaving. Cecilia is unaware that this is actually the house of Mr Belfield, and that Delvile suspects that she has secretly visited Belfield. As she comes across Delvile at his parents' home, she is determined to find out what he meant by the cryptic things that he said to her earlier in the morning. When she mentions the morning's events, Delvile continues his obtuse mutterings and reproaches, good-humouredly

disguised, even though Cecilia asserts that she does not know what he is talking about. This scene is presented from Cecilia's point of view, who seems greatly confused throughout this discourse. Because Delvile is not her guardian, he should have no interest in Cecilia's actions, and it is clear from the way he dances around the subject that he is aware of this and that he fears being thought "impertinent". Darcy, as I will show in chapters two and three, cares very little for the bad opinion of others in stating what he believes is the truth. Delvile goes as far as to admit to her, ". . . the sight of you creates . . . a propensity equally incorrigible to take some interest in your welfare" (184). He tries to discuss the subject without being too direct, which results only in further confusion. Throughout this interchange the narrator makes it clear that Delvile remains good-humoured, and is frequently said to laugh or smile, despite Cecilia's eagerness that he get to the point. He tempers his concern with good humour, and seems reluctant to continue the discussion. His bumbling attempt to make his point is quite a departure from the self-composed Delvile the reader is used to. Cecilia herself is perplexed by him. She forgets her good manners and looks at him "with impatience" (185). Even when Cecilia completely loses her patience and says to him, "[i]ndeed you perplex me intolerably why Sir, will you not be more explicit", he replies to her humorously (185). This scene very much resembles a scene in which Sir Charles questions his sister Charlotte about whom she wishes to favour with her hand, and how unsatisfied he is with Charlotte's glib answers. Yet because Sir Charles carries the office of a guardian, he approaches the subject with gravity, and does not allow his sister to be coy. When he becomes impatient with her deflections he reacts harshly, resulting in Charlotte's tears. Because Delvile does not have the authority of a guardian such as Mr Delvile, or of a family friend such as Mr Monckton, he does not openly censure Cecilia, but neither does he make a secret of his disapproval of what he thinks is her dishonesty. Her avowals to the contrary are viewed by him as the bashful lies of a girl in love, despite evidence proving that

Cecilia is a level-headed woman. The more Cecilia protests her ‘innocence’, the more Delvile insists on believing the worst. In this sense Delvile acts like the rest of Cecilia’s guardians, treating her as if she cannot handle her own affairs properly and needs the intercession of a male figure to manage her life.

Later on in the novel, he does assume the authority of a guardian, much like Sir Charles does with his sisters; with his ward Emily; and to a certain extent with Harriet Byron as well. While Delvile does not harshly reprimand Cecilia, he does not entirely escape coming across as slightly pompous in this scene either. This is partly because he suspects that Cecilia knows what he is trying to say, and is pretending to be obtuse. Once Delvile leaves, it is made clear that Cecilia bears no grudge against him, thereby giving the reader leave to forgive him as well. The reader is given insight into Cecilia’s thoughts:



An attack so earnest from almost any other person could hardly have failed of being offensive to her, but in the manners of young Delvile good breeding was so happily blended with frankness, that his freedom seemed merely to result from the openness of his disposition, and even in its very act pleaded its own excuse. (186)

This makes it clear that Delvile’s caution about giving offence is well-founded, and reminds the reader of his good nature, and his good intentions.

Delvile, however domineering in his insistence to correct Cecilia’s handling of what he thinks to be her engagement to Mr Belfield, does apologise when he realises he is wrong. In book three, chapter ix, he says to Cecilia, “I wish much to apologise to Miss Beverley . . . for the very gross mistake of which I have been guilty . . . I hardly know myself by what perversity and blindness I persisted so long in my error” (242). This humble apology is a sign of his ability to self-reflect and express regret, traits that he shares with Darcy. This is not the ostentatious apologies of Mr Compton Delvile, but a sincere remorse for any wrongdoing.

As the events described above make clear, Mortimer Delvile very often acts in the role of a hero to Cecilia. Cecilia is very relieved to see him at Vauxhall on the night that Mr Harrel commits suicide. Sir Robert and Mr Marriot seem to take advantage of the chaos and Cecilia's own shock and horror, and argue over who gets the honour of taking her home. When Cecilia sees that Delvile has arrived she exclaims, "Mr Delvile – O now we are safe! – this is fortunate indeed!" (421), just as Harriet Byron throws herself into the protection of Sir Charles when he rescues her from Hargrave Pollexfen. Cecilia entrusts her safety to him and entreats him to take them home. Sir Robert and Mr Marriot cannot dispute his claim, for in this case Delvile "appeared as the representative of his father, and his authority seemed the authority of a guardian" (423).

Up to this point the reader, despite Delvile's mistakes, trusts in his judgement, and even to a certain extent, in his claim to Cecilia's affections. Yet, in his behaviour over the course of the novel, one can see a change occurring in Delvile. He begins as a disinterested representative of his father, watching over Cecilia. He disapproves of what he believes to be her lapses in judgement, believing, as his father does, that as a young unmarried woman she is in need of guidance from an authority figure. As at Vauxhall, and in witnessing Mr Harrel's will, Delvile even acts in his father's authority as a guardian. Unlike Sir Grandison and Lord Orville, Delvile cannot rely only on his own counsel in the choices that he makes. He must consult his parents. Thus bound up in his family, Delvile himself is not an independent agent. When Delvile first admits to Cecilia the feelings he has for her, and why he cannot consider a union with her he says, "[m]y honour in the honour of my family is bound" (512). Just as Orville cannot control his jealousy of Macartney, so Delvile finds it difficult to control his feelings for Cecilia. He takes himself away to Bristol rather than be faced daily with what he has to resist. While Orville's jealousy compels him merely to be deliberately cold to Evelina, Delvile's reaction is more extreme. After a torturous separation

Delvile finds out that Cecilia is in love with him. He radically resolves to get married without consulting or informing his parents. Convinced that his parents will never comply, Delvile chooses to act without their knowledge. He does this because he does not believe that he could act in open defiance of their wishes, “if at last I am reduced to appeal to them, by their decision I must abide” (568). When his mother finally realises that Cecilia, despite her indifferent genealogy and her lost fortune, is worthy of marrying her son, Delvile must still disobey his father to go ahead with the marriage. This is a departure from Sir Charles, who states at one point that he is prepared to renounce his sisters if they do not completely obey their father, regardless of Sir Thomas’ loose morals. Darcy is also different from Delvile in this respect in that his reverence for his father extends even after his father’s death; he keeps Wickham’s portrait hanging in his father’s favourite room despite Wickham having revealed himself as a despicable opportunist (Austen 189).

From the moment that he plans a secret marriage to Cecilia, Delvile becomes a man of action, planning the arrangements for the wedding to the tiniest detail. He manages to convince Cecilia of his plan despite her deep-seated objections. Delvile seems to lose his air of polite amiability in order to get what he wants. He becomes overpoweringly masculine – even aggressive, much more so than Lord Orville in his jealousy. He does this because he believes that he is making the right choice in marrying Cecilia. When he writes to her to propose the secret marriage he says, “. . . jealous guardians of our pride, to which our comfort is sacrificed . . . what conviction can be offered by reason, to notions that exist but by prejudice?” (564). He sincerely believes that the decision they are making is the right one; that to forgo a union which would ensure the good of all to prevent offending a deep-seated, bigoted pride is wrong. Fearful of applying to his parents and having their inevitable rejection be the architect of his unhappiness, he is convinced that proceeding without their knowledge is best for everyone, including his parents. The reader therefore understands why Delvile acts

the way he does. He has their empathy and therefore still remains a likeable character. While Delvile's argument supporting his cause of action is convincing, Cecilia's changing opinion, as well as Mr Monckton's passionate (though self-centred) argument puts the reader in doubt as to the correct course of action. Delvile is faced with a difficult situation, one which tests the limits of his goodness.

Why does Burney set up this nearly insurmountable obstacle for her hero? In Lord Orville she created a hero very close to the Grandisonian ideal. Why was she unsatisfied with that model? In her introduction to the Oxford edition of *Cecilia*, Margaret Anne Doody writes that in Delvile Burney presents a hero "ruthlessly presented in his defects" (xxx). Whereas in the beginning of the novel he acts as a peacemaker, trying to prevent acts of violence, and often soothing the sting left by his father's pompous arrogance, he now becomes forceful, and even belligerent, in trying to win Cecilia over. Delvile loses his "softness and elegance" (170) and is more and more often described as acting with "fervour" (535) and "urgency" (570). Delvile seems to lose his sense of level-headedness and acts impetuously. Darcy tries very hard to always present the world with a composed façade. During his first proposal he is visibly shaken and nervous as he talks to Elizabeth, but he soon leaves her to compose a reply to her accusations in privacy, once again taking up his controlled mask. The fact that he is not always as composed as he wants to appear is a subject that I explore in more detail in chapter three.

When Cecilia travels to London to marry Delvile he unwisely follows her on the road even though Cecilia is part of a larger party and fears that they will be discovered, "his impatient and indiscreet watchfulness must have rendered the motives of his disguise but too glaring" (607). Delvile gradually lets go of his self-possession and acts with "emotion far more violent because wholly unrestrained" (671). He casts off the role of polite gentleman and allows aggression to come to the fore in order to get what he wants. This aggression

finally expresses itself in a display of brutality when he duels with Mr Monckton. Rather than providing an opportunity to display his 'bravery' as the topic of a duel or physical altercation does with Sir Charles, Delvile's duel displays only his impetuous temper. Upon relating this incident to Cecilia he says "it was all the result of immediate passion", a passion which he instantly regrets and which gives him "much disturbance" (845). This is not Grandisonian behaviour. Yet it demonstrates that Delvile is capable of being self-reflective, and is regretful of his actions, unlike Grandison. This is further proof that Delvile is not as static a character as Grandison. Cecilia becomes the voice of reason. She advises him on how to proceed, and recommends caution. When Mr Eggleston finds out about her marriage and turns her out of her home, Cecilia is too afraid to write to Delvile and ask his advice about how to proceed because she "dreaded his impetuosity of temper" (858). She is forced to use her own discretion. Here, Delvile becomes a Romantic figure, prone to fits of passion and spontaneous, unthinking action; an undependable slave to his emotions. Cecilia becomes the voice of Enlightenment reason on which Delvile depends to guide them through their troubles. This seems to imply a critique of the Romantic hero, and an espousal of an Enlightenment ideal of Reason, which Burney grants to the heroine rather than the hero. Mortimer Delvile is a character fallible and subject to errors of judgement. He starts off believing that Cecilia needs guidance in her decision-making, and gradually begins to trust her common sense, so much so that he seeks direction from her. Both Burney and Edgeworth seem to create heroines who represent the ideal balance of reason and feeling, rather than presenting their heroes as models of behaviour in this respect. In this, they seem to be responding, like Mary Wollstonecraft, to stereotypes of women as impetuous and in need of restraint. They also seem to be offering a critique of the fashionable convention of the Romantic hero as antisocial and as working against the ideals of the realist novel by the fact that they create characters who are presented as learning to modify their thoughts and

behaviour, both in their own interests, and in the interests of a broader social good. Austen, however, seems to move away from this simple over-turning of stereotype by creating both heroes and heroines who make mistakes and are explored in the process of changing their minds and behaviour.

Maria Edgeworth: *Belinda*

Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* was published in 1801, twelve years before the publication of *Pride and Prejudice*. The novel is didactic, "in the grave public-spirited manner of the Enlightenment" (Butler 96). Maria Edgeworth, like Jane Austen, was an author very aware of the genre in which she was working. In the advertisement to the first edition of *Belinda*, Edgeworth classes it as a "moral tale", "not wishing to acknowledge a novel", because, she said, the novel genre is associated with "vice" (Edgeworth 3). She goes further to say, "were all novels like those of . . . Mrs Inchbald, Miss Burney, or Dr More, she would adopt the name of novel with delight". For Edgeworth, then, only novels with instructional overtones are worthy of being read, and her ambivalence toward novels only extends to those novels which do not have instruction as their purpose. The debate on the dangers of reading is carried on inside the novel. Although Edgeworth seems most intent on criticising novels as disseminating "folly, error and vice", she does not confine her distaste to this genre (Edgeworth 3). Rather, Kathryn Kirkpatrick notes in her introduction to the Oxford edition of *Belinda*:

any work that appeals more to feeling than reason is condemned. Lady Delacour's reading of Methodist works inflames her passions and encourages morbidity. On the other hand, *Belinda*'s reading of satire and moral philosophy strengthens her rationality. (Kirkpatrick xiii)

Belinda “portrays both the dangers and the benefits of reading” (Kirkpatrick xii). In her dislike of novels she was most likely influenced by Samuel Johnson whose objection to elements of the realist novel is noted in the beginning of this thesis.

Jane Austen offers an impassioned defence of the novel form in *Northanger Abbey*: ‘Oh, it is only a novel!’, replies the young lady; while she lays down her book with affected indifference, or momentary shame. ‘It is only *Cecilia*, or *Camilla*, or *Belinda*’; or, in short, only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour, are conveyed to the world in the best chosen language. (25)

Austen’s critique of Edgeworth seems obvious in that she specifically names *Belinda* in the list of novels, even though Edgeworth has expressed a preference for it to be classed a moral tale.

Belinda’s central themes have to do with the education of women, and the need to make rational, informed decisions, thus, as mentioned above, placing it in the tradition of Enlightenment writing. *Belinda*, the young heroine, is an accomplished woman of marriageable age who is sent off to London by her match-making aunt, Selina Stanhope. Under the protection of Lady Delacour, a seemingly dissipated woman of fashion, she must trust her own judgement in navigating a world filled with vice and temptation. Surrounded by bad role models in her aunt and in Lady Delacour, *Belinda* must rely on her own developing sense of prudence in finding a way to preserve her own integrity and reputation. In this sense she is quite similar to Elizabeth Bennet who cannot rely on the advice of her ridiculous mother or her absent father. Even her beloved sister Jane seems too naïve to provide useful guidance for Elizabeth. Clarence Hervey, a long-time admirer of Lady Delacour, flattered by the attention that this fashionable lady pays him, is a regular visitor to

Lady Delacour's house where Belinda is living for the winter season. He mistrusts Belinda because of her association with her match-making aunt, and judges all of her actions as artifice in order to trap a husband. His opinion of Belinda soon changes when he realises that she is mature, level-headed and loyal. Clarence Hervey must undergo a change of attitude in order to become worthy of Belinda. In the end, Belinda, like Elizabeth Bennet, is rewarded for her good judgement with a rich husband.

According to her letters, Jane Austen greatly admired Edgeworth's work, despite her critique of Edgeworth in *Northanger Abbey*. I will explore Jane Austen's departure from Edgeworth's heroes as mentor figures. In Clarence Hervey, one can already see a departure from the Grandisonian mentor figure. In terms of a comparison to Johnson's definition of the hero, while there is very little opportunity for Hervey to display any bravery, and while he is "of the highest class" in the literal sense of the word, in the figurative sense, his introduction in the text implies that he falls short.

Hervey is introduced as a character in need of improvement, "Clarence Hervey might have been more than a pleasant young man, if he had not been smitten with the desire of being thought superior in everything, and of being the most admired person in all companies" (Edgeworth 14). From this introduction the reader can deduce that while being an agreeable man, he is also pompous and arrogant. Hervey's arrogance however, is a different sort of arrogance to what Darcy displays at the beginning of *Pride and Prejudice*. Darcy's arrogance is based on his pride in his lineage, and his knowledge of his own intelligence, and he is clearly unconcerned with being unpopular. Hervey's arrogance, like Darcy's, is not completely unfounded, it is made clear, as he "had considerable literary talents" (14). Thus, Hervey's intelligence is emphasised. But perhaps most importantly, it is made clear that "he had a strong sense of honour", which makes him worthy of being a hero in the eyes of the readers (14). The hero may only possess such flaws as the reader is able to

forgive, and a lack of honour is unforgiveable. Clarence Hervey, like Delvile and Darcy, is a character who makes mistakes, and learns from them. In the first scene that I have chosen from *Belinda*, it is clear that the narrator guides the reader's reaction to Hervey's 'mistake', while the second scene shows how he admits to it, and how he thinks of ways in which to take responsibility. This gives a clue to his development throughout the course of the novel. Hervey's realisation of his own mistakes is perhaps more radical than Burney's Delvile because he starts the novel as an arrogant, overbearing character.

Interestingly, the person that Hervey tries to mentor in *Belinda* is not Belinda herself, but Rachel/Virginia St Pierre, a young, naïve girl whom he attempts to educate to be the perfect wife to him. Hervey has returned from his travels in Europe, just before the French Revolution. He has been appalled by the "luxury" and "dissipation" in Paris (362). After the European visit which left him disgusted with the debauched Parisian ladies, Hervey, enchanted by the idea of Rousseau's *Sofie*, fixes upon the idea of searching for a woman whom he can train to be his perfect partner. After much difficulty in finding a suitable candidate, he comes across Rachel/Virginia in the woods and becomes infatuated with her. In the scene which I have chosen to discuss, taken from chapter xxvi, Clarence Hervey has recently discovered the innocent Rachel in a forest. When her grandmother dies suddenly, he decides to care for Rachel and educate her to be the perfect wife. He sets her up in a house in the country with a companion/governess to be her tutor. Mrs Ormond (the companion) is given strict instructions that Rachel is to be kept in the same seclusion that she lived in in the forest with her grandmother. Sheltered from the world, Clarence Hervey seeks to maintain her innocence of worldly things, as he believes this is the only way to preserve her naïvety and protect her from the influence of debauchery.

In the scene that I would like to focus on, Hervey gives Virginia the choice between a flower and a pair of diamond earrings. Virginia, childlike, chooses the flower, an

indication of her conception as a Romantic character. Hervey is overwhelmingly happy at Virginia's choice as it proves that he has chosen well in selecting Virginia to educate for his wife. Yet, because this is told in the third-person, the narrator intervenes. Virginia's choice is not merely a choice made because she does not value worldly things, "[t]here was more of ignorance and timidity, perhaps, than of sound sense or philosophy in Virginia's indifference to diamonds" (371-72). I suggest that this is a critique of Romantic notions, made fashionable by Rousseau, which proclaim Nature as a form of education. The narrator also does not leave the reader blind to Hervey's flaws, or the flaws in his plan. From the beginning it is clear that Clarence Hervey is not spared judgement of his actions by the narrator. Unlike Sir Charles Grandison, Hervey is shown as a flawed character, subject to making mistakes, and judged as such. The narrator says, "[t]o save our hero from the charge of egotism, we shall relate the principal circumstances in the third person" (362). Edgeworth highlights the significance of third-person narration here to enable critical comment. She acknowledges the challenge that using a first-person or epistolary narrative would pose and prefers third-person narration. This is a form that Austen will later prefer and extend into free indirect discourse. The narrator's knowledge of Hervey's misjudgement is shown throughout this chapter and this passage with phrases such as "as he thought" and "appeared to him" (371). These phrases make it clear that Hervey is misjudging this situation, and that something is blinding him to the truth. However, the narrator also proves with these phrases that Hervey is genuinely blinded by his own enthusiasm for this project, rather than doing it in spite of the fact that he knows his logic in this case is flawed. The narrator rightly points out that what Hervey sees as Virginia's Romantic sentiment is merely caused by ignorance, rather than a reasoned appreciation for nature. Her disregard of worldly things is caused by her isolation. Later on it is stated, "[t]hese reflections could not possibly have escaped a man of Clarence Hervey's abilities; had he not been engaged in defence of a favourite system of

education, or if his pupil had not been quite so handsome” (372). Clarence Hervey, then, is too enchanted with his idea of Rousseau’s Sofie, and with Virginia’s beauty, to realise that what he thinks of as innocence, is actually ignorance. Yet the reference to “Clarence Hervey’s abilities” serves to remind the reader that he is an intelligent, accomplished man, just as Darcy is (372). It is made clear that, “he treated her with the utmost delicacy, that if he had not been bound by any such solemn engagement, no temptation could have made him deceive and betray confiding innocence” (372). We are thereby assured that Hervey is a man of honour.

From the outset, Hervey’s position is clear. He will create in Virginia a companion who satisfies all his criteria. For Clarence Hervey, the perfect wife was simple without being vulgar, ingenious without being cunning, ignorant without prejudice. She must possess uncultivated understanding, yet be easy to teach – thus clever. She must not have been in love before. She must possess sensibility, be capable of enthusiastic passion, delicate sentiment and rational constancy. In Virginia, he finds a blank canvas that he can re-educate to meet most of these requirements. This is made clear by the use of words such as “pupil”, “education”. The use of these words is quite deliberate. While Hervey is in some way a departure from the Grandisonian mentor figure, some vestiges of the male monitor remain in his treatment of Virginia. For a while, Hervey is convinced that Virginia will make him happy, that is, until he meets Belinda.

From the first, Virginia is not viewed as an equal by Clarence Hervey, she is introduced into the narrative as “an object formed expressly for his purpose” (363). This a critique of Romantic ideas of gender. Young and naïve, Virginia grows up with almost no contact with the outside world. Her grandmother has kept her isolated from people, more especially from men, because she thought that this was the only way to preserve her innocence. When Clarence Hervey discovers her, he does the same, but for the purpose of

preserving her innocence so that he could marry her. Virginia is completely innocent, totally uneducated, and utterly ignorant. With no knowledge of the outside world, even from reading books; nor any experience of people, Virginia has no sense of judgement, or even common sense. When her grandmother falls woefully ill, she does not think of searching for a doctor to help. Hervey finds her, helpless and despondent, sitting by her grandmother's bedside after three days. Whatever virtues Virginia possesses then, it is because she does not know anything else, rather than her having chosen her own circumstances, or who to be. She is no match at all for Clarence Hervey. Overwhelmed by his good looks and decisive authority, Virginia allows herself to be completely dominated. Because he feels that her name, Rachel, "stopped the current of [his] imagination", he renames her Virginia St Pierre, as he feels that she resembles the description of Virginia in M de St Pierre's novel, *Paul and Virginia*. The use of the word "imagination" is significant as it calls forth Romantic ideals of the importance of the imagination. Hervey seems to exhibit the behaviour that Mary Wollstonecraft warns against in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*:

men endeavour to sink us still lower, merely to render us alluring objects for a moment; and women, intoxicated by the adoration which men, under the influence of their senses, pay them, do not seek to obtain a durable interest in their hearts, or to become the friends of the fellow creatures who find amusement in their society.

(projectgutenberg.com, n.pag)

The results are just as she warns; Virginia is rendered "alluring . . . for a moment" and quickly loses her charm for Hervey. Virginia, it is clear, has no sense of self and does whatever she thinks will please Hervey best. Virginia St Pierre is no Belinda Portman, as Clarence Hervey will soon realise (369).

Whereas Virginia's virtuousness is due to her childlike ignorance, Belinda's virtue is due entirely to her own prudence. Virginia, it is true, is much younger than Belinda.

Throughout the narrative she is referred to as the 'girl' or the 'pupil'. She is constantly described in terms of her beauty, her simplicity and naivety. Belinda, on the other hand, while also a beauty, is spoken of due to her "accomplishments" (7). On the very first page of the novel, the reader is told, "Mrs Stanhope did not find Belinda such a docile pupil as her other nieces" (7). Belinda, while still a young girl educated by an overbearing aunt, does not give herself over completely to this education. Despite being taught to the contrary, she keeps her unfashionable love for reading and domestic pleasures (7). Virginia, after being discovered by Clarence Hervey, and after her grandmother has died, does not think of the impropriety of putting herself within the power of a young, unmarried man who is of no relation to her. She is content to be cared for and controlled. Belinda herself, while not as 'docile' as her cousins have been to Mrs Stanhope, had, at first, "paid unlimited, habitual, blind obedience" to her aunt (10). Yet once she is under Lady Delacour's roof, she quickly realises the possible danger she is in. She sees through Lady Delacour's gaiety, to the domestic misery which drives most of her actions. Unable to leave Lady Delacour's house once she discovers this, Belinda lets her own discretion guide her actions, and ultimately leads Lady Delacour to domestic happiness. Belinda, who lives in society, surrounded by the gay sophistication which both Clarence Hervey and Virginia's grandmother view as evil, is able, through integrity and strength of mind, to choose for herself what is right or wrong, and even to give guidance to persons much older than her. Belinda is able to rely on her own reasoned opinions, while Virginia trusts herself to the judgement of others, even complete strangers like Clarence Hervey. According to Marilyn Butler, in Maria Edgeworth's works, "her characters act out the people they are by their manner of using words . . . their respective value systems are sufficiently revealed by the way they talk" (143). Virginia speaks in "breathless confusions" while "Belinda's conversational tone is quieter, and consequently more serious and sincere" (143-44). This manner of contrasting characters and

allowing them to reveal themselves in their dialogue is a technique which Jane Austen will develop in her later novels.

Belinda, I would argue, is a worthy counterpart to Clarence Hervey. Rather than viewing her as inferior, he is won over by her common sense and asks for her help in reuniting Lady Delacour with her daughter. Whereas his relationship with Virginia resembles a father-daughter dynamic, Belinda is an equal, just as Elizabeth is to Darcy, a dynamic which Mary Wollstonecraft advocated in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*:

The man who can be contented to live with a pretty useful companion without a mind, has lost in voluptuous gratifications a taste for more refined enjoyments; he has never felt the calm satisfaction that refreshes the parched heart, like the silent dew of heaven—of being beloved by one who could understand him.

(projectgutenberg.com, n pag)

Edgeworth's critique of Romantic ideas around the education of women is her contribution to the realist novel. Edgeworth's characterisation of Hervey's relationship with Rachel/Virginia seems created to show that these Romantic ideas are naïve and unrealistic and that the novel's careful examination of both Hervey's and Rachel/Virginia's motives and behaviour suggest that characters are far more complex than the Romantic model of education suggests. In a second scene from *Belinda*, Hervey has met Belinda, is in love with her, and realises his mistake in keeping Virginia secluded in the country, and in training her to become his wife, leaving neither of them with other options. He finally realises that what he has done may not be completely fair to Virginia either. Only once Hervey has met Belinda does he realise that he might have made a mistake in choosing such a naïve girl as Rachel and keeping her in the utmost seclusion in the woods. Discovering on a visit an alteration in Virginia's behaviour and a noticeable unhappiness in her demeanour, Hervey becomes alarmed that Virginia's unhappiness may be due to the fact that she has fallen in

love with him, and that he may be honour-bound to marry her despite his love for Belinda. Yet even here Hervey's impetuosity is shielded from the reader's judgement, "Mr Hervey could not be insensible to her distress" (391). Rather than stating this as a fact, "Mr Hervey was not insensible to her distress", the narrator uses the phrase "could not", which implies that Clarence Hervey's compassion was so great, that her unhappiness could not escape him. This is a testament to his character. It indicates that he is not the kind of person who could ignore another's distress for his own advantage. The narrator attempts to shape the reader's response to Clarence's actions very carefully. The dawning realisation that he had made a mistake is told from his perspective, ". . . he feared that his own imprudence had been the cause of all this misery" so that the reader's sympathies are engaged towards him (391). One can see things from his perspective and infer that he feels regret for his actions. Contemplating Virginia's unhappiness, Hervey realises that this situation has been one of his own making, and is prepared to do what he must to make things right, "I have won her affections, her happiness depends totally on me; and can I forsake her? . . . Pity, generosity, and honour, made him resolve not to abandon this unfortunate girl" (391). The reader's judgement of him is limited by the empathy one feels for him, and by the fact that Hervey admits to, and feels, the burden of the mistakes that he has made. The language that Hervey uses makes it quite clear that he takes responsibility for his actions, this can be seen by his repeated use of "I" above. The narrator also inserts a reminder of Hervey's true character in the mention of his "pity, generosity and honour". Hervey further makes it clear that he is prepared to bear the consequences, although the magnitude of the sacrifice that he will have to make by giving up Belinda is made clear, "every time he saw her [Virginia], his love for Belinda increased" (391). This statement implies that Hervey would pay for this mistake for the rest of his life; that by marrying Virginia and being constantly reminded of his growing love for Belinda, his misery would increase, rather than lessen. While the scene is written in

the third-person, the narrator carefully attempts to influence the reader's reaction, and we are allowed to hear of this dawning realisation from Hervey's perspective, allowing us to maintain both empathy with him, and critique of his behaviour, for while Hervey does take responsibility for his actions, he also lists the mistakes he has made so that the reader is also reminded of his lapses in judgement.

It is interesting that it is Hervey's "imprudence" which has caused such difficulties for him. He forsook reason for passion and spontaneity, and has great cause to regret it once he regains the light of reason. Drawn in by Belinda's mature level-headedness, Hervey realises that Belinda rather than naïve, emotional Virginia is his equal. This is Edgeworth's critique of abandoning Enlightenment reason for impetuous Romanticism. Having started the novel with an arrogant confidence in his unerring rationality, Hervey is led astray by his passions, until the rational Belinda causes him to repent, to retrieve the Enlightenment belief in self-improvement, to correct and learn from his mistakes.

At this point in the narrative, Clarence Hervey has already been established as the hero, as the man the reader *wants* the heroine to end up with. We know that he is honourable, that, rather than wanting to have an affair with Lady Delacour, he has made it his mission to re-unite her with her family, and to mend the rift with her husband. Hervey has learned the foolhardiness of associating himself with the vacuous Philip Baddeley and instead seeks the company of Dr X and Mr Percival, both of whom are mentor figures themselves. Only once the reader knows this, is the story of Virginia told, thereby limiting the reader's judgement of Hervey's pomposity. Jane Austen uses similar methods of limiting the reader's judgement of Darcy's arrogance. Her narrative techniques will be more fully discussed in chapter three of this thesis.

While the Grandisonian ideal of a morally upright and active hero is carried through to Lord Orville, Mortimer Delvile and Clarence Hervey, both Burney and Edgeworth seem

unsatisfied with the creation of a fully-formed and perfect hero, and his place in a realist novel. Both authors therefore offer us complications of the Grandisonian ideal by creating heroes who are imperfect, and who can learn from their mistakes. Both Burney and Edgeworth, while attempting more complex heroes, also offer critiques of the Romantic ideals of the hero. Stereotypes of the Romantic hero included the ideas of passion and rebellion. French writer Charles Nordier believes that this rebelliousness was a reaction to social crisis (quoted in Butler 3). The results of rebellion seem, in the late eighteenth century, to be most perilously displayed by the French Revolution and the execution of Louis XVI in 1793. The dangers of these Romantic ideals were thus very real. Mortimer Delvile, while a good and kind character seems to buckle under the weight of trying to make the best of a bad situation. He casts off his politeness and adopts an aggressive, overly masculine demeanour near the end of the novel in order to try and retain control of a situation with which he is not entirely comfortable. His new, overly masculine persona sits uncomfortably on his shoulders, and yet his well-bred politeness seem inadequate to get him what he wants most – to marry Cecilia without betraying his family pride.

Clarence Hervey, while pompous and arrogant at the beginning of the novel, is shown to grow into maturity through the course of the novel. He learns to become a better judge of character, and to value the level-headed intelligence of Belinda over the naïve trust of Virginia. He comes to accept the error of his misguided attempt in creating in Virginia what he believes to be the perfect mate. The Romantic ideas of education espoused by Rousseau as revolutionary are shown by Edgeworth to be reactionary, based on stereotypes of gender, rather than a complex understanding of character. Still, Hervey very comfortably bears the label of mentor and is as morally active as Grandison in trying to restore Lady Delacour to her family.

Both Mortimer Delvile and Clarence Hervey are driven into their journeys of self-discovery by their heroines. Both couples can only find happiness once they learn to treat one another as equals, and to trust in each other's friendship and intelligence.

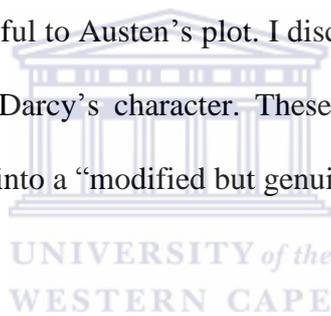
In the following chapters I will examine the hero that Jane Austen has created in Fitzwilliam Darcy. I will examine the way in which she extends the tradition of the realist novel by creating nuanced and complex characters, particularly in the heroes that she creates. I will discuss the narrative handling that Jane Austen, like Burney and Edgeworth gives to her flawed heroes in order not to lose the readers' sympathy. I will also examine the question of the kind of hero that Jane Austen wanted to write about if she did not want a hero that was a "picture of perfection" (Austen 208).



CHAPTER TWO: MR DARCY: THE HERO AND SETTING

Charles McCann postulates that Jane Austen places her characters in a setting which serves as the proper symbol of their economic, social or intellectual condition. This reading of Jane Austen is not unusual. However, Charles McCann's reading of 'setting as character' in his article "Setting and Character in *Pride and Prejudice*" differs from other theories in that McCann suggests that if the process of association between Darcy and Pemberley is straightforwardly applied the reader would see Pemberley as cold and forbidding because we see Darcy mostly through Elizabeth's prejudiced eyes. Instead, in McCann's argument, while Rosings represents Lady Catherine de Bourgh's ostentation and Netherfield stands for the blandness of Bingley, the reading of Pemberley is much more complex (66). In *Evelyn*, a story which forms part of Austen's *Juvenilia*, the heroine writes to her friend, "Matilda and Margaret Lesley are two great, tall, out of the way, over-grown Girls, just of a proper size to inhabit a Castle almost as large in comparison as themselves" (Austen 35). What is clear from this passage is that the link between character and setting is certainly something that Austen herself had thought about. The fact that the first adjective used to describe Pemberley is "delightful", a stark contrast to Elizabeth's (and the reader's) view of Darcy, points to the complexity of Darcy's character (McCann 70). Rather than being a static embodiment of his country house, Darcy influences and is influenced by, his setting and by the characters that surround him. He changes his disposition accordingly. It is at Pemberley that he can be most himself, McCann suggests (72). In this chapter I provide a more detailed examination of how setting and character are linked according to McCann's theory. While McCann proposes this interesting new way of reading Pemberley in relation to Darcy, he does not offer a close reading of the details of the setting of Pemberley in relation to the hero. I extend McCann's argument to include an examination of the grounds around Pemberley House as well as

aspects of the house itself. I link McCann's theory with Peter Knox-Shaw's argument that Jane Austen uses properties of the picturesque as metaphors to further plot and character development. I extend McCann's theory of property as symbolic of character in a comparative reading of Darcy and Pemberley with Mr Bennet and Longbourn. This is significant in tracing Elizabeth's changing perceptions of Darcy. Elizabeth's experience of Longbourn, I will show, influences how she reads Darcy through Pemberley. I link this to Elizabeth's disappointment in her father, and to her later reflections on why Darcy would make an ideal husband. My reading of Mr Bennet through Longbourn invites a further understanding of how Elizabeth's (and the reader's) perception of Darcy is developed through setting. Finally, I also explore Joseph Wiesenfarth's idea that certain significant scenes play out in settings which are meaningful to Austen's plot. I discuss how the importance of setting might invite a re-evaluation of Darcy's character. These arguments will contest Kenneth Moler's theory that Darcy lapses into a "modified but genuine Sir Charles Grandison" (508).



Setting and character

Netherfield Park is mentioned even before any reference is made to Bingley (Austen 5). A few lines further down on the page the reader is told that Bingley had seen Netherfield Park and "was so much delighted with it" that he agreed to take possession immediately. Later, Bingley is described as "good-looking and gentlemanlike; he had a pleasant countenance, and easy, unaffected manners" (8). While the physical descriptions of both Bingley and Netherfield are sadly lacking, the reader is made aware that both are pleasant. Descriptions of Lady Catherine de Bourgh are intrinsically linked with Rosings. Lady Catherine is first mentioned in Mr Collins' letter to Mr Bennet (51). He says that he has been "distinguished by the patronage" of Lady de Bourgh "whose bounty and beneficence has preferred me to the

valuable rectory” of the parish. It is thereby established that Lady Catherine is quite rich, notwithstanding Mr Collins’ self-important, pompous style of telling. Mr Collins’ very manner of description makes the reader associate Lady Catherine with an air of excess which serves as an introduction to the description one gets of Rosings Park. The first description we get is when Mr Collins pays Mrs Philips a compliment by comparing her drawing room to a breakfast parlour at Rosings, reinforcing the compliment by mentioning that the chimney piece at Rosings had cost eight hundred pounds – Rosings is hereby firmly associated with excess and ostentation (61).

In contrast to our early descriptions of Rosings and Netherfield (much of the first few chapters are set at Netherfield), Pemberley is only fully revealed to the reader once Elizabeth is ready to let go of her prejudices. There are, however, intriguing references to Pemberley while Elizabeth is staying at Netherfield to nurse Jane. These references to Pemberley, as well as the sparse descriptions leading up to Elizabeth’s visit to Pemberley are carefully regulated in tone, so that once Elizabeth has cast off her prejudices, the reader is also ready to embrace a new idea of Darcy. The narrator’s treatment of Darcy similarly, is so ambiguous that it “prevents the reader from sharing even Elizabeth’s initial judgement, though we know little more than she does” (Anderson 373).

McCann implies, in the introduction to his argument that the deliberate lack of detailed description of Pemberley points to the complexity of Darcy’s character. Just as the reader is given glimpses of Pemberley through the eyes of various characters until the house is exposed in all of its glory during Elizabeth’s visit to Derbyshire, so too are we given glimpses of Darcy’s personality, which is only fully revealed after we have seen Pemberley. Both the elegance of the estate and the change in Darcy’s manners catch the reader by surprise – a point I return to in my discussion of Peter Knox-Shaw’s article.

We first hear Mr Darcy described in association with Bingley, “his friend Mr Darcy soon drew the attention of the room by his fine, tall person, handsome features, noble mien”, yet soon after his manners give disgust with reports circulating that he is “above being pleased; and not all his large estate in Derbyshire could then save him from having a most forbidding, disagreeable countenance, and being unworthy to be compared with his friend” (10). Further on in the novel, Darcy is described as being “haughty, reserved, and fastidious” (15). The description of Mr Darcy as quite cold and forbidding is an impression which the narrator herself reinforces. Yet it is also made clear that Darcy is a man of great intelligence. It is made clear that he is superior in understanding and judgement – a characteristic which serves him well, for throughout the text the characters that are thought “silly” and lacking in understanding are irredeemably static, shallow and beneath contempt (consider Mrs Bennet, Lydia and Mr Collins). According to McCann, if the simple act of association were enforced on Darcy, our descriptions of Pemberley would be equally forbidding, yet the first direct reference we have to Pemberley is from Miss Bingley, “[w]hat a delightful library you have at Pemberley, Mr Darcy!” (31). Despite its dubious source in Miss Bingley, Pemberley is described as “delightful”, a very different sort of adjective to the ones with which the reader has thus far associated Darcy. The fact that the first reference we have to Pemberley is to its extensive library not only reminds the reader of the old and dignified line that Pemberley represents, but also reinforces the idea of Mr Darcy as a man of thought and intelligence. The fact that Darcy is most often associated with the library at Pemberley is a point I discuss later in this chapter.

We next hear Pemberley mentioned rather enviously by Wickham, who speaks of the “influence of the Pemberley House” while enumerating Darcy’s reprehensible pride to Elizabeth (66). Already prejudiced against Mr Darcy, her conversation with Wickham adds fuel to her dislike and conveniently provides justification for her aversion to Darcy. The

reader is privy only to Wickham's side of the story and to Elizabeth's predisposition to believe him, "Elizabeth allowed that he had given a very rational account of it", cannot reconcile the "delightful" Pemberley with the "abominable" Darcy (66-8). What is clear here is that the narrator, early in the novel, influences the reader against adopting a stereotyped view of Darcy.

During her visit to Hunsford Elizabeth encounters Darcy in a new setting. For the first time, among his family, people of rank and consequence, Darcy "looks a little ashamed of his aunt's *ill-breeding*" (136) (my italics). This is a very interesting choice of word to apply to Lady Catherine, as the source of her pride is her noble heritage. The tables have turned and for once Elizabeth is not the one being embarrassed by ridiculous relatives. Darcy is put into a room with Lady Catherine, a woman who has even more pride than he does, and as his embarrassment at Lady Catherine's speech shows, he is well aware of the pitfalls of brash, abominable pride. This is the first time the reader is allowed to feel sympathy for Darcy, and also to notice his discernment. The reader gets an inkling that there might be hidden depths to Darcy: "Colonel Fitzwilliam's occasionally laughing at his stupidity, proved that he was generally different," a fact which intrigues Elizabeth (141). Also later, the impression of hidden depth is enforced when, during her conversation with Colonel Fitzwilliam, his reaction to Elizabeth's questioning allows her to infer that there might be more to the story about Miss Darcy. He also says outright that Darcy is a very good friend to Bingley, although the turn in the conversation makes it impossible for Elizabeth to see this. Colonel Fitzwilliam here plays the role of Jane. While he does not entirely defend Darcy against Elizabeth's accusations that Darcy "likes to have his own way", he does not allow her to persist blindly in her assumptions (144). Of course, Colonel Fitzwilliam does confirm Elizabeth's suspicion that Darcy was involved in Bingley's sudden disappearance from Netherfield which plays a pivotal role in the central "climax" of the story – Darcy's first proposal (Anderson 368).

Darcy's first proposal is figuratively, and literally, located at the centre of the novel. Here Elizabeth reveals the depth of her prejudice and Darcy the depth of his pride. Both characters expose themselves to one another with an honesty that has only been hinted at before. For the reader this is a revelation; Mr Darcy is for the first time shown to be a vulnerable man with feelings other than arrogance and conceit. This scene, however undignified for both Elizabeth and Darcy, gives the reader more insight into the man than they have had for all of the previous pages that precede it. It gives the reader a view of a man who, after being told, ". . . you were the last man in the world whom I could ever be prevailed on to marry", ends off his reply to Elizabeth with, ". . . accept my best wishes for your health and happiness" (151). This is a very gentlemanlike response after all that Elizabeth has accused him of. This also is the most becoming response he could have offered Elizabeth and the reader. All of this is, of course a necessary precursor to the letter which Darcy writes to Elizabeth, and which is the catalyst for Elizabeth's change in feeling toward Darcy. After having Darcy's claims about Wickham confirmed Elizabeth's aunt and uncle arrive to take her to Derbyshire and to Pemberley.

Until now, as McCann mentions, "[t]wo revelatory ratios are established early, but one quantity in the third ratio remains unknown" (66). The two ratios that have been revealed are Bingley's character and the description of Netherfield; and Lady Catherine's character and the description of Rosings. These ratios up to now have established a pattern which points to setting having a direct correlation with the owner's character. At this stage, the reader feels that Darcy's character has been revealed, but Pemberley is still a mystery. But the "one quantity in the third ratio" finally becomes known when Elizabeth and her aunt and uncle visit Pemberley, and the description of the property we get is quite extensive – more so than any of the properties previously described:

The hill, crowned with wood, from which they had descended, receiving increased abruptness from the distance, was a beautiful object . . . from every window there were beauties to be seen. The rooms were lofty and handsome, and their furniture suitable to the fortune of their proprietor; but Elizabeth saw, with admiration of his taste, that it was neither gaudy nor uselessly fine; with less of splendor, and more real elegance, than the furniture of Rosings. (188)

The mystery surrounding Pemberley is lifted here, and the reader is introduced to a Darcy that they have never seen, or expected to see. A new layer of complexity is thus added to Darcy's character.

As McCann mentions, the description of the house in this passage has more detail than has been used before in the narrative. I further suggest that both the elaborateness of the detail, as well as the complexity of the house and estate themselves, give the reader an added indication of the complexity of Darcy's character. Whereas in her first view of the park at Rosings, she "saw much to be pleased with, though she could not be in such raptures as Mr Collins expected the scene to inspire" (126), Elizabeth looks on the view of Pemberley "with delight", which echoes Miss Bingley's earlier "delightful". At Rosings "they are all sent to one window to admire the view" (128), while at Pemberley "from every window there were beauties to be seen" (188). While the gaudiness of Rosings has an object of interest occasionally, Pemberley Woods and Pemberley House have more of interest and natural beauty. Austen offers us these sharp contrasts in order to highlight the complexity of Pemberley and its owner in comparison with the mere display of Rosings and Lady Catherine. The front windows at Rosings are supposed to inspire delight after it is pointed out by Mr Collins that it originally cost a fortune, thus show rather than substance is important here. According to McCann:

Rosings, the second-ranking house of *Pride and Prejudice*, heretofore only casually mentioned, is appropriately introduced by Mr. Collins' effusions. The actual change of scene to Rosings, however, comes only after modulation: description of Pemberley by Wickham, and reminiscences about Pemberley between Mrs. Gardiner and Wickham. By interrupting the crescendo of praise of Rosings, Jane Austen avoids interfering with the reader's anticipation of Pemberley; by suggesting that Mr. Collins wears rose-colored glasses, she prevents our confusing with Rosings what has been associated with Pemberley.

(70)

I would also point out that the descriptions of Rosings are regularly interrupted by the comic, pompous Mr Collins pointing to items of wonder, thus further tainting the readers association of the property with the foolish Mr Collins. In the quoted description above, Elizabeth is allowed to take Pemberley in – and to convey its beauty to the reader through her perspective uninterruptedly. As McCann mentions, “Elizabeth is of course able to adjust unselfconsciously to the atmospheres of Netherfield and Rosings because she is unimpressed and unmoved by either” (70). McCann suggests that this is because Jane Austen is not concerned with Elizabeth's reactions to these settings, that her purpose is rather “to create through dialogue a picture of a third setting, that of Pemberley, and by this means to point out the disparity between the reader's and Elizabeth's awareness of its importance” (70). While I agree with McCann's reading, I suggest further that Austen is showing the reader that Elizabeth sees more in Pemberley than its material splendour, and is suggesting to the reader that they should too. Whereas Elizabeth might have looked upon Pemberley with the same disinterest that she has shown Rosings before Darcy's proposal and his letter, she has now matured enough emotionally to allow that she had been wrong about Darcy and by extension, she is now open to having her initial opinion about Darcy overturned.

As I have suggested above in my discussion of McCann's argument, the contrast in the degree of detail used to describe Rosings and Pemberley suggests a depth which is lacking in Rosings. So too does the language used to describe Pemberley. Pemberley is described as having "real elegance" rather than the "uselessly fine" furnishings at Rosings (188). Pemberley has a "great variety" of "remarkable spot[s] and point[s] of view", "without any artificial appearance" that are "neither formal nor falsely adorned" (187). It is made clear that Pemberley is described as having natural beauty and real elegance, a sharp contrast to Rosings' false, artificial gaudiness. One is all show, the other has real substance. If one were to apply the argument of setting as metaphorical of character, then this could also be extended to the owners. The language used to describe Pemberley suggests a complexity in Darcy that is entirely absent in Rosings and in Lady Catherine. Pemberley's "great variety" of "remarkable spot[s] and point[s] of view" echoes the many sides of Darcy that the reader sees throughout the narrative, whereas Rosings' one window from which one can admire the view can be used as a metaphor for the single picture that Lady Catherine presents to the world; an arrogant overbearing aristocrat eager to impose her will on everyone around her (187).

While McCann states that the descriptions of the house and grounds suggest the complexity of Darcy's character, he does not analyse how specific details invite such a reading. In the following paragraphs I would like to extend McCann's argument further by offering a reading of the winding and unexpected paths at Pemberley in ways not considered by McCann.

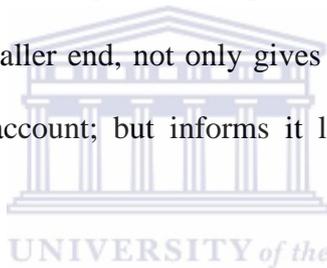
After their tour through Pemberley House, Elizabeth and the Gardiners take a walk through the park with the gardener:

They entered the woods, and bidding adieu to the river for a while. Ascended some of the higher grounds, whence, in spots where the opening of the trees gave the eye power to wander, were many charming views of the valley, the opposite hills, with the long range of woods overspreading many, and occasionally part of the stream. (194)

Here, the vastness of the grounds (the gardener proudly proclaims it to be ten miles) cannot be seen from just one viewpoint. To explore and discover it requires perseverance and time to traverse all the grounds. This is required to learn all the different perspectives of Darcy's character as well. Just as the "opening of the trees" occasionally gives the eye the opportunity to discover a new vista on the grounds at Pemberley, so too is Elizabeth (and the reader), offered new glimpses into Darcy's personality as the opportunity arises. Seeing these intriguing glimpses, Elizabeth "longed to explore its windings". These glimpses of Darcy's character, offered occasionally, have the effect of an invitation to explore and an indication that there is more yet to discover. The winding paths which seem to invite discovery and exploration are a distinctly Romantic concept. In his *Glossary of Literary Terms* M.H. Abrams, in a discussion on the tenets of Romanticism notes how romantic poets write about nature and the landscape "as a stimulus . . . to engage in the most characteristic human activity, that of careful thinking" (178). Contemplation and discovery are inextricably linked in Romantic ideology with nature. Rosemarie Bodenheimer suggests that "as Elizabeth and the Gardiners walk in the grounds, the descriptions suggest an immense expansion of feeling and possibility, 'Every step was bringing forward a nobler fall of ground, or a finer reach of the woods'" (611). Elizabeth soon becomes aware of Darcy's approach through the trees. Astonished that he would seek them out again, she watches "while a turning in the walk concealed him from their view; the turning past, he was immediately before them" (194-195). Many thoughts seem to flit through Elizabeth's mind as she follows his approach through the

trees and she seems sure at one point that he would turn off the path completely, until he appears before them, still as pleasant as he had been at their initial meeting at the house. This can be likened to Elizabeth and Darcy's acquaintance with one another, where Elizabeth is given glimpses of Darcy's character, is at one point convinced that the acquaintance is over, only, in the end, to be confronted with a Darcy kinder and more pleasant than she had expected. Darcy's walk through the turning path can be compared, interestingly, to Hogarth's theory of the line of beauty, which, giving the example of a dotted line drawn through the centre of a horn, proposes:

the twisting as well as the bending of the horn, is changed from the waving into the serpentine-line; which, as it dips out of sight behind the horn in the middle, and returns again at the smaller end, not only gives play to the imagination, and delights the eye, on that account; but informs it likewise of the quantity and variety of the contents. (60)



Glimpsing Darcy through the “bending” in the path, Elizabeth's imagination is surely at play, as various thoughts flit in and out of her mind. The use of the word “imagination” calls forth Romantic ideals in which the imagination is central to human experience. Darcy's winding walk then, is a metaphor for the “quantity and variety” of Darcy's character, another indication of the complexity and hidden layers that are available for discovery. One could also consider the idea that Elizabeth's thoughts shift from a single, prejudiced view of Darcy, to a more varied, thoughtful perspective. Austen is drawing here on Romantic ideals about Nature as a moral tutor. The idea of variety is very important in picturesque principles, which I will discuss shortly.

The beautiful, inviting property that is Pemberley hardly coincides with the proud, cold and forbidding man the reader has initially been led to believe Darcy is. Yet, this

incongruence in itself is a signal that our previous impressions are about to be overturned. The meeting at Pemberley is unexpected for both parties, and it is the first time they meet after their argument at Hunsford Parsonage. While Darcy is not entirely composed, he converses with Elizabeth with “perfect civility” (192) – uncharacteristic in a man who at the beginning of the story said that he was “in no humour . . . to give consequence” to her (11). Elizabeth herself had not expected it and had “instinctively turned away” before his approach stopped her (192). She is “amazed at the alteration of his manner” and is continually confused and surprised during their visit by his “civility”, “gentleness” and by his attentiveness (192-5). Caught unaware by the change in Darcy’s behaviour, Elizabeth becomes unsure of how her feelings have changed towards him. Has he been misjudged, or has he changed? According to McCann, the answer is both. Once he hears the news from Elizabeth that Lydia has run off with Mr Wickham, he once again turns into the Darcy of old: “earnest”, “gloomy” and “serious” (212-3). Austen seems to be drawing on Romantic ideas of the hero as an “isolated rebel” in displaying this anti-social behaviour. These ideals are used ambivalently here, to suggest both an intriguing distance, and a concern that Darcy might be retreating into his old incivility. No other character in *Pride and Prejudice* offers the reader such a complex range of reactions. When they meet again at Longbourn Elizabeth does not know what to expect. Upon hearing that he is on his way to Longbourn Elizabeth thinks, “[l]et me first see how he behaves, it will then be early enough for expectation” (257). When he arrives, he looks serious, “more as he had been at Hertfordshire, than as she had seen him at Pemberley” (257). Elizabeth correctly guesses the reason for this, that, “he could not in her mother’s presence be what he was before her uncle and aunt” (257). At Longbourn Darcy is once again in a strange place, surrounded by people who are not his friends and in the company of one who actively dislikes him. Mrs Bennet greets him with a “cold and ceremonious politeness” which distresses Jane and Elizabeth (257). In such discomforting

surroundings, he once again becomes the Darcy who has “a most forbidding, disagreeable countenance” (10). Once Darcy and Elizabeth finally become engaged and they are able to spend more time together at Longbourn, Darcy loses his reticence and dire expression, and enters into long, comfortable conversations with Elizabeth, more at ease in his surroundings.

Kenneth Moler suggests that the disparity between the arrogant Darcy of the Meryton assembly and the kind and thoughtful Darcy at the end of *Pride and Prejudice* is due entirely to the fact that Jane Austen began the novel attempting to create a “purely parodic figure” in Darcy. Moler further suggests that Darcy’s behaviour at the beginning of the novel, his “exaggerated displays of rudeness” parodies what he calls the “patrician heroes” in Samuel Richardson and Frances Burney’s novels, more specifically Sir Charles Grandison and Lord Orville (492). Moler describes the patrician hero as “a picture of perfection, a paragon among men . . . He is handsome, well-born, rich; yet he is wise and good” (496). Once Austen begins a refining process on her novel, according to Moler, she cannot “manage with complete success” to rescue Darcy from being the “caricature of the patrician hero” he was intended to be (504), and he lapses into a “modified but genuine Sir Charles Grandison” (508). As my arguments above suggest, Darcy’s initial rudeness and arrogance are a result of discomfort with his surroundings rather than an attempt at parody. The narrative guidance that the reader receives hints at a complexity of character in the hero that is not yet fully revealed at the beginning of the novel. Therefore, rather than Darcy’s transformation being “too great and too abrupt to be completely credible” (491), the complexity of Darcy’s character is subtly handled and carefully revealed by the narrator throughout the course of the novel. Darcy’s humble admission in chapter 58 of the lessons he has learned therefore seems entirely plausible given the complexity of his character, very unlike a static Sir Charles who consistently teaches rather than learns in Richardson’s novel.

In the next section of this chapter, I will discuss Jane Austen's use of picturesque terms to describe setting, and how these terms can also be applied to reading character.

The picturesque and character development

The picturesque is an aesthetic ideal which arose in the late eighteenth century and which had many proponents, most notably William Gilpin and Uvedale Price. In its basic sense, picturesque means "being suitable for painting" (Townsend 365). It spawned picturesque travel (and travel writing) and picturesque landscape design. There were mainly two schools of thought on the picturesque in the eighteenth century, namely, "the improvers and the theoreticians of the picturesque" (Marshall 417). The theoreticians focused on the idea of natural beauty as it occurs in nature, while the improvers focused on designing landscape to appear picturesque, a practice which was soon driven to excess, with gardens containing "artificial ruins, temples, and even hermitages inhabited by hired and costumed hermits" (431). According to David Marshall, the "picturesque represents a point of view that frames the world and turns nature into a series of *living tableaux* . . . it assumes an attitude that seems to depend on distance and separation" (414). Todd also identifies this as a problem with the writing of sensibility that Austen eschews, "poets of sensibility explored not what it felt like to be another person or object, but what it felt like to be looking at another person or object and how such looking affirmed their sensibility" (143). Austen avoids this artificial and affected trend within the picturesque, and instead embraces the form which Gilpin intended. Gilpin himself defines the picturesque thus, "[p]icturesque beauty is . . . that kind of beauty which *would look well in a picture*. Neither grounds laid out by art, nor improved by agriculture, are of this kind" (Gilpin, quoted in Bradbrook 53). A natural beauty is thus for Gilpin essential to the picturesque. The fact that Austen prefers this idea of natural beauty can

be seen from the fact that Pemberley is elevated for its natural beauty above the contrived beauty of Rosings. Despite the different schools of thought, one effect of the picturesque, according to Peter Knox-Shaw, was “redeeming more of the natural and everyday world for aesthetic recognition” (76). What Frank Bradbrook calls “the cult of the picturesque” was, he says, “a part of the new religion of nature” (64). It arose as a reaction to Romantic ideas of the appreciation of “the minutiae of Nature” (Batey 132).

Rosemarie Bodenheimer proposes that while Austen was seen as:

a satirist of the picturesque cult of landscape viewing . . . her criticisms are never really levelled against the aesthetic pleasures of the picturesque practice itself. Rather, the picturesque figures as a kind of language, even a fiction, which may be either understood, or abused by its speakers. (605-607)

This idea is reinforced by A. Walton Litz, who claims that while Austen was “deeply attracted to the picturesque . . . she was endlessly delighted by its pedantic absurdities” (13). However, Austen’s use of the picturesque is not merely in displaying how “the language of response to nature . . . reflects a condition of character” (Bodenheimer 603). Austen also uses the picturesque more deeply, and more subtly. According to Austen’s nephew, “She was a warm and judicious admirer of the landscape, both in nature and on canvas. At a very early age she was enamored of Gilpin on the Picturesque” (Austen-Leigh 141).

William Gilpin’s language of the picturesque, says Knox-Shaw, is driven by “roughness”; “the irregular against the geometric, the abrupt against the rounded, the bold and free against the carefully finished; above all perhaps by a contrast between the dynamic and the static” (76-77). In “the picturesque distinction between the rough and the smooth surface” suggests Frank Bradbrook, “the rough is more important [in] providing the necessary element of variety” (53). I will, later in this chapter, demonstrate how this contrast

between the dynamic and the static can be applied in a comparative analysis between the characters of Mr Bennet and Mr Darcy. According to Peter Knox-Shaw the descriptions of Pemberley show a preoccupation with the picturesque which is not only confined to the landscape and to Pemberley House, but which extends to characters and character descriptions as well (73). Knox-Shaw suggests that Austen uses elements of the picturesque as metaphors for a more complex understanding of character. He also suggests that features of the picturesque are used as plot devices in *Pride and Prejudice*.

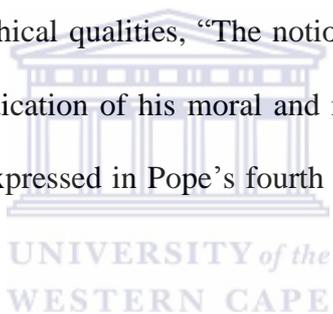
While the picturesque is satirized by Elizabeth Bennet, it is a concept which preoccupies Jane Austen in *Pride and Prejudice*, “[n]o, no; stay where you are. You are charmingly group’d, and appear to uncommon advantage. The picturesque would be spoilt by admitting a fourth,” Elizabeth Bennet laughingly quips early on in the novel in order to escape a walk with the Bingley sisters and Mr Darcy (44). This satire about the picturesque is not followed through in the rest of the novel, as the description of Pemberley demonstrates:

They gradually ascended for half-a-mile, and then found themselves at the top of a considerable eminence, where the wood ceased, and the eye was instantly caught by Pemberley House, situated on the opposite side of a valley into which the road with some abruptness wound. (187)

The use of “considerable”, “ceased”, “instantly”, “opposite” and “abruptness” echoes the extremes and contrasts that Knox-Shaw mentions as significant to picturesque ideals. The “handsome stone building” is backed by “a ridge of high woody hills,” and in front of it a “stream of some natural importance was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance” (187).

The description implies a harmony between the man-made house and the natural elements which surround it. This seems a reflection of the Enlightenment idea that nature

“was seen as an expression of God’s ordering hand and was, therefore, largely represented . . . as ordered . . . and as providing a natural habitat for man” (Outram 102). This is in contrast to Romantic ideas of “the unbounded chaos, where nature is supposed to lie in total confusion” (Hume, quoted in Tanner 405). The careful shaping of the land to bring about harmony between nature and man-made structures is done in order to perfect the scene, and emphasise natural beauty. This seems to indicate Austen’s approval of the shaping of nature not being intrusive or ridiculously Gothic, as some lovers of the Picturesque preferred. It indicates a preference for the Enlightenment mode, rather than for the Romantic Gothic influence. These descriptions are important for our understanding of Darcy as a hero. In his introduction to the Penguin Classics edition of *Pride and Prejudice* Tony Tanner discusses the link between aesthetic and ethical qualities, “The notion that the way a man landscaped his grounds might give some indication of his moral and mental qualities is not original to Jane Austen. It is perhaps best expressed in Pope’s fourth Moral Essay” (Tanner, footnotes, 398-9). Tanner then quotes Pope:



To build, to plant, whatever you intend,

To rear the Column, or the Arch to bend,

To swell the Terras, or to sink the Grot:

In all, let Nature never be forgot.

But treat the Goddess like a modest fair,

Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare;

...

Consult the Genius of the Place in all;

That tells the Waters to rise, or to fall,
...Still follow Sense, of ev'ry Art the Soul,

Parts answering parts shall slide into a whole . . . (398-9)

Tanner concludes by stating, “Pemberley is conceived of as being just such a work to wonder at, and in responding to aesthetic qualities as being symptomatic of, and related to, ethical qualities, Elizabeth is following a main line of eighteenth-century thought” (398-9).

Picturesque ideals are plentiful in the descriptions of Pemberley and are meant to inspire delight and appreciation in the reader. Elizabeth is completely charmed by the house and its surroundings, and the reader is thus influenced by her perspective, “she looked on the whole scene, the river, the trees scattered on its banks, and the winding of the valley, as far as the eye could trace it, with delight” (188). The vastness of the scene and the beauty of the landscape seem to call forth Romantic ideas of the magnificence of nature. In combining elements of the Enlightenment and the Romantic in the descriptions of Pemberley, it seems that Austen has attempted to combine elements of these intellectual movements in Darcy through the metaphor of Pemberley. Austen carefully selects some elements of the Romantic and rejects others, indicating that her response to Romanticism is more complex, and ambivalent, than Marilyn Butler proposes: “Jane Austen’s novels decisively belong to one class of partisan novels, the conservative. Intellectually she is orthodox . . .” (3).

The following passage describing the grounds at Pemberley highlights different elements of the picturesque:

They crossed it by a simple bridge, in character with the general air of the scene; it was a spot less adorned than any they had yet visited; and the valley, here

contracted into a glen, allowed room only for the stream, and a narrow walk amidst the rough coppice-wood which bordered it. (194)

The use of “simple”, “less adorned” and “rough coppice-wood” echo the everyday beauty important to Gilpin’s picturesque conventions. This non-traditional beauty, Knox-Shaw suggests, is not confined to the landscape at Pemberley.

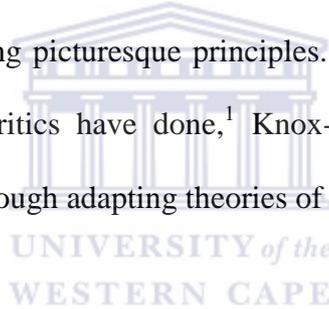
Elizabeth herself, proposes Knox-Shaw, is an emblem of Austen’s preoccupation with the picturesque. Jane’s beauty is a point of discussion throughout the novel. Even the impossible to please Mr Darcy acknowledges it when he comments to Bingley, “[y]ou are dancing with the only handsome girl in the room” (11). Mr Bingley thinks her “the most beautiful creature [he has] ever beheld” (11). Elizabeth however, is unconventional in her beauty. At the start of the novel Darcy thinks her looks are merely “tolerable” (11). Later he finds himself thinking:

though he had detected with a critical eye more than one failure of perfect symmetry in her form, he was forced to acknowledge her figure to be light and pleasing; and in spite of his asserting that her manners were not those of the fashionable world, he was caught by her easy playfulness. (20)

Still later he is caught by Miss Bingley “meditating on the very great pleasure which a pair of fine eyes in the face of a pretty woman can bestow” while staring at Elizabeth. Elizabeth’s beauty draws Darcy in by degrees (23). He seems to discover new points of interest in her looks whenever he looks at her (much like Elizabeth later does with Pemberley, and by extension also with Darcy). These points of interest are not merely superficial. His attraction to her also has to do with her “intelligent” eyes and her “easy playfulness” (20). There is an irregularity in Elizabeth’s beauty and an intricacy in the attraction that Mr Darcy feels for her

that is Gilpinesque (Knox-Shaw 83). This is similar to the description of Marianne in *Sense and Sensibility*, who is explicitly linked to Romantic ideals.

It is not only setting and character that are rooted in the picturesque, Knox-Shaw postulates, but plot devices as well, “the plotting of *Pride and Prejudice* is in keeping with this aesthetic too. Unexpected disclosures and ironic reversals abound” (90). Many first impressions are overturned during the course of the novel and some characters change their way of thinking. Darcy changes from an arrogant, selfish man to a true gentleman while Wickham is revealed as the ruthless spendthrift he has always been. Elizabeth changes her mind, and her feelings, toward both Darcy and Wickham. The Gardiners, whom Elizabeth thought Darcy would despise, end up bringing them together. These changes in the plot are often drastic and abrupt, mirroring picturesque principles. Rather than finding these sudden changes problematic as some critics have done,¹ Knox-Shaw suggests that Jane Austen explores these abrupt changes through adapting theories of the picturesque.



Setting and character: Longbourn and Mr Bennet

Mr Bennet is a far less complex character than Mr Darcy. Yet if one were to attempt to extend even the simple theory of setting as metaphor for character to Mr Bennet, one would find it difficult because of the significant lack of description of Longbourn, which symbolises his retreat and evasiveness.

Longbourn is the place where Mr Bennet is most prominently reminded of his failures – in choosing a wife, in securing a male heir, and in raising his daughters. It is a place of

¹ See, for example, Mary Lascelles, *Jane Austen and her Art*, London: Oxford University Press, 1979 (162); Kenneth Moler, “*Pride and Prejudice*: Jane Austen’s “Patrician Hero””, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*. 7.3 Restoration and Century (Summer, 1967), (502); Henrietta Ten Harmsel, “The Villain-Hero in *Pamela* and *Pride and Prejudice*” *College English*, 23.2 (November, 1961), (107)

stasis, where Mr Bennet is caught in a trap of his own making; much like Charlotte Lucas will be later at Hunsford. Longbourn is so fully occupied by the superficial absurdity of Mrs Bennet, that Mr Bennet chooses voluntary alienation from his family rather than be constantly faced with his mistakes. Therefore while both Longbourn and Mr Bennet are there, in the background, one can also feel their absence from the changing society. Longbourn is stuck in an ancient entail with very little of active change and improvement occurring. If one were then, to draw a direct link between Mr Bennet and Longbourn in taking setting as a metaphor for character, Longbourn would stand for Mr Bennet's static alienation. This offers a contrast to the productivity and the continuing changes at Pemberley. Having gone to visit Pemberley, Elizabeth (and the reader) has seen the improvements that Darcy makes to his estate. Mrs Reynolds proudly boasts about the renovations that Darcy has made to his sister's favourite room in an effort to please her. Mrs Reynolds is also able to tell the Gardiners about the prices of some of the furniture, so it seems likely that they would have been bought relatively recently. Elizabeth's visit is cut short by a tragedy at home – one partially created by her father's inability to change or to create change.

In contrast to Pemberley, for which details are initially sparse and which is later extensively described, Longbourn is never fully described to the reader. The most significant encounters and events happen outside, in the shrubbery or the copse of trees a small distance from the house and also in the library. In a scene after Lydia has run away with Mr Wickham, Elizabeth and Jane are taking a walk in the shrubbery behind the house when they are alerted to the fact that their father has received a letter from Mr Gardiner, who is in pursuit of the couple. Rather than reading his correspondence in his library, as is his habit, the girls find their father "deliberately pursuing his way towards a small wood on one side of the paddock" (230). According to the letter, Mr Gardiner has finally tracked down his niece, and has confirmed that the couple are neither married, nor have any intention of being so. Mr

Gardiner is convinced that he can bring about the nuptials by settling some money on Lydia. Here Mr Bennet is faced with his ultimate failure as a father; his stupid daughter's reputation is in tatters, he has been unable to find Wickham and Lydia in London, and he is certain that Mr Gardiner has not been completely truthful in conveying the true cost of Wickham's compliance and that Mr Gardiner himself is using his own money in addition to Mr Bennet's to convince Wickham to marry Lydia (although it is later revealed that Mr Darcy has in fact been the benefactor). Whereas the changing vistas and winding walks at Pemberley invite exploration and discovery, the grounds at Longbourn are used by Mr Bennet to cut himself off from his family; to avoid discovery and questioning. While the grounds at Pemberley suggest a complexity of character in Darcy, the grounds at Longbourn signify Mr Bennet's tendency to seek refuge and hide, as he does in his library. Rather than escaping to his study to read the letter and to hide from his problems as is Mr Bennet's usual habit, this scene describes a more active, physical escape which sees him "deliberately pursuing" distance from the house and his family (230). The act of fleeing is a conscious process of self-alienation by Mr Bennet. This is also the most physically active that Mr Bennet is described as being during the course of the novel. Throughout the novel Mr Bennet is associated with inactivity. He succeeds through most of the novel, in acting with what Mary Burgan calls "cynical inertia" (541). He rarely speaks or participates in conversation unless it is to make fun of his family or friends, he is generally known as a "negligent and dilatory correspondent" even when his family desperately await word from him about his progress in finding Lydia (225). His total retreat from "familial responsibility" is partially responsible for the family's lack of connections to which Lady Catherine will so vehemently object (Burgan 540). Elizabeth, his favourite daughter, is not blind to her father's flaws, especially after he ignores her warning about allowing Lydia to go to Brighton:

Elizabeth . . . had never felt so strongly as now the disadvantages which must attend the children of so unsuitable a marriage, nor ever been so fully aware of the evils arising from so ill-judged a direction of talents; talents which, rightly used, might at least have preserved the respectability of his daughters, even if incapable of enlarging the mind of his wife. (183)

Elizabeth's reflections on the unsuitability of her parents' marriage offers a contrast to her thoughts of Darcy's suitability as a partner for herself – just at the time in which she thinks she has lost him forever, “[s]he began now to comprehend that he was exactly the man who, in disposition and talents, would most suit her” (239). She forms these thoughts after having been to Pemberley and seeing how different things are at Pemberley compared to Longbourn. In Mr Bennet's search for objects of ridicule, Mr Bennet cares very little about the “moral and social implications” that this foolishness holds for his family (Anderson 375). He cares not a whit, except where it provides him with entertainment, about Mr Collins' long, public, pompous speeches; about Mary's love of social exhibitionism, and perhaps most detrimentally; about Lydia's immature obsession with the militia.

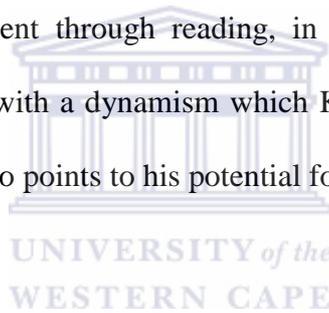
Upon discovering Lydia's scheme to elope Mr Bennet rouses himself enough to go to London in search of them, and is even reluctant to leave when Mr Gardiner joins the search, but this soon ends as “rendered spiritless by the ill-success of all their endeavours, he had yielded to his brother-in-law's entreaty the he would return to his family” (228). At home he communicates with his family as little as possible and once Mr Gardiner settles the matter in London he is grateful for it causing “so little inconvenience to himself” “for his wish . . . was to have as little trouble in the business as possible” (236-7). Mr Bennet thus generally returns to his “former indolence”, seemingly undisturbed by the detrimental effect the scandal might have on his other daughters' marriageability (237).

Mr Bennet does not really “inhabit” the house at Longbourn, but rather confines himself to his library – a sanctuary where not even (or rather, especially not) his wife is allowed to intrude. He has very little interest in what happens at Longbourn; he ventures into the breakfast room occasionally to ridicule his wife and daughters, and retreats back to his library, where he is always sure of “leisure and tranquillity” (59). Mr Bennet is clearly an intelligent man, as signalled by his love of reading. He is sadly intelligent enough to know that he has made an irreversible mistake in choosing his wife, that at least three of his daughters are as ridiculous as their mother, and that he has failed to provide properly for his family. While Mr Bennet is described as an avid reader (and thus more sensible than many of the “non-readers” in the novel), for him reading is an escape from the disappointments of his life, rather than a gateway to enlightenment.

In contrast, Pemberley’s library, as has been previously discussed, is extensive. In the scene in which the library at Pemberley becomes a topic of discussion, Bingley apologises to Elizabeth for not being able to offer her an extensive range of books, “I wish my collection were larger for your benefit and for my own credit; but I am an idle fellow, and though I have not many, I have more than I ever look into” (31). This serves as the introduction to the topic, and Bingley’s idleness in building up his library serves as a contrast to what we learn of the library at Pemberley, it “has been the work of many generations” and is constantly growing as Mr Darcy is “always buying books” and “cannot comprehend the neglect of a *family* library in days such as these” (31-2) (my italics). It is therefore to Darcy’s “credit” that he is constantly adding to his collection of books, and it is clear that he is not “idle”. Darcy’s use of the phrase “in days such as these” suggests that Darcy reads contemporary literature. Walter Anderson suggests that Darcy’s vocabulary and diction point to an interest in philosophical texts (378). He suggests further that Darcy’s diction could be compared to that used by Samuel Johnson and that “the style of his sentences reflects his peculiar turn of mind

in its balance, parallelism, and antithesis of phrase, clause, and idea” (378) The idea of balance is a significant one as it seems to call forth Enlightenment ideas of the balance between reason and feeling. From libraries and Pemberley the discussion moves to female accomplishment in the Netherfield drawing room. It is commonly agreed that to be considered “accomplished” a woman would need to be able to “paint tables, cover screens, and net purses” (32). Darcy takes this further, “[a]ll this she must possess, and to all this she must yet add something more substantial, in the improvement of her mind by extensive reading” (33). Elizabeth objects to Darcy’s opinion, “I am no longer surprised at your knowing *only* six accomplished women. I rather wonder at your knowing *any*” (33). Elizabeth assumes here that Darcy holds traditional and unrealistic views on women’s education. Elizabeth’s illuminating visit to Pemberley, and the greater knowledge it reveals of Darcy’s character might invite a new reading of this exchange – that of Darcy regarding women as more than ornamental in requiring that women read widely, and expecting more than “the idleness thrust on English women, whose business was little more than coquetry in youth and motherhood or fashion in later years” (Todd 17). At the Netherfield ball, for example, Elizabeth and Darcy try stiltedly to keep some conversation going as they dance. Darcy clumsily introduces the subject of books, being aware, since Elizabeth’s recent visit to Netherfield that she reads. For Darcy, this is a topic on which they can meet as intellectual equals. Considering Darcy’s large library and the fact that he is “always buying books”, this is quite a compliment to Elizabeth – one that she misses. The topic of books and reading also seems to represent for Darcy an opportunity for deeper acquaintance and building common connection, “[w]e can compare our different opinions” he says to her (75). Here, once again, Darcy demonstrates that for him books offer a means of engagement, this time with Elizabeth’s opinions. The fact that Darcy reads extensively, and constantly adds contemporary literature to his library is an indication that he is a character in search of

enlightenment, and is therefore capable of change. In contrast, Mr Bennet's breach of familial obligations has been previously discussed, and accordingly, Mr Bennet's library is his sanctuary which he often refers to as "my room" (90). Darcy looks upon reading as a means of engagement and enlightenment, which Johnson espouses in *Rambler* no 4 (19). This stasis in Mr Bennet's library acts as a metaphor for his idleness as a husband and father. Darcy, on the other hand, is actively involved and interested in his sister's education and well-being. As a result, he was able to save his sister from Mr Wickham's machinations, a danger which Mr Bennet did not anticipate, despite Lydia's obvious immaturity, selfishness and flair for drama. Mr Bennet, in being associated with adjectives such as "negligent" (225) and "indolent" (237) is firmly established as static, with very little potential for change. Darcy, however, in seeking enlightenment through reading, in protecting and providing for his friends and family is associated with a dynamism which Knox-Shaw mentions as important to picturesque principles. This also points to his potential for change and growth.



The significance of setting

Jane Austen closely aligns setting and environment with plot and character development. According to Joseph Wiesenfarth, the setting where certain events occur can be equally meaningful in giving depth to an encounter.

Chapters 1 to 26 play out predominantly at Longbourn and Netherfield. Chapter 27 finds Elizabeth preparing for a visit to Charlotte at Hunsford parsonage. The plot up to now has been somewhat dominated by Jane and Bingley's courtship plot. For the first time since the beginning of the narrative, Elizabeth is away from home and from her family. According to Wiesenfarth, Darcy cannot propose to Elizabeth while she is among her family, and therefore seeks her out at Hunsford "where she is a free agent" (69). Although the proposal is

a catastrophic failure, “they are able to speak directly and unambiguously to each other” and their relationship changes dramatically (69). Hunsford, Wiesenfarth suggests, is a “neutral ground” (82), and it is therefore possible for Elizabeth and Darcy to give “their confused and ironic relationship . . . an orderly perspective (69). It is only from this that “meaningful reflection and action become possible” and Elizabeth and Darcy can mature emotionally (69).

I suggest however, that the setting of Hunsford for Darcy’s first proposal has a deeper significance than the fact that it is neutral ground. In welcoming the visiting party to Hunsford parsonage, Mr Collins “addressed himself particularly to [Elizabeth], as if wishing to make her feel what she had lost in refusing him” (123). But Elizabeth is unfazed, seeing how often her friend has reason to blush at her husband’s embarrassing speeches. Charlotte had encouraged Mr Collins’ suit and accepted his proposal merely for practical reasons; because she wanted “a comfortable home” and was assured that Mr Collins’ “character, connections and situation in life” would provide that (101). Charlotte has got what she wanted, for Hunsford has “a great air of comfort throughout”, but only when “Mr Collins could be forgotten” (127). Between the egregiousness of Mr Collins and Lady Catherine, Charlotte finds herself continually silenced. She finds ways of getting rid of her husband by encouraging his gardening, and appropriating a room less “lively” to talk to Elizabeth and her sister to avoid her husband’s spending too much time with them (132). However comfortable Hunsford is, Charlotte is trapped in a marriage with a man who is not her intellectual equal, and it is only by designing to keep him away from her as much as possible that she finds any peace, much like Mr Bennet. This is the setting in which Darcy first proposes to Elizabeth. Seeing the truth of Charlotte’s circumstance lends truth to Elizabeth’s view that affection and mutual respect are essential for a successful marriage, a point which has already been proven in her parents’ marriage. It is significant that it is at Hunsford that Elizabeth should disregard her ‘duty’ as an unmarried female to secure a well-respected, rich husband in favour of her

future happiness. It is a point on which her father warns her when she eventually accepts Mr Darcy's proposal, "I know that you could be neither happy nor respectable unless you truly esteemed your husband" (290). He speaks, of course, from personal experience, a point which I discussed previously. This conversation significantly takes place in the library, the place where Mr Bennet most often tries to escape from a reminder of his own folly in choosing a spouse.

When Darcy and Elizabeth next meet, both have had time to grow emotionally. Elizabeth has spent some time at home and seen the truth of Darcy's objections to her family; she has realised the mistake she made in her first impression of Wickham. "At the moment when nature and art have conspired to dispose her to see Darcy in a new way, he appears, and he is a new man" (Wiesenfarth 71). Darcy is alone, with no friends or family in attendance and Elizabeth is with her most sensible family members, the Gardiners. Elizabeth and Darcy are unencumbered by a ridiculous Mrs Bennet, a snobbish Lady Catherine or a snide Miss Bingley. Pemberley is presented to the reader in a spectacular manner, in all its natural beauty, untainted by any unpleasant truths. Surrounded by "a house and park that bespeak the taste of true gentility", Elizabeth and Darcy reach a new understanding in their relationship (71). In his natural setting, as McCann suggests, Darcy can be his true self and it is fitting that it should be at Pemberley that she realises that she is in love with him.

The significance of the setting in the above scenes suggests that Austen invites the reader to read the importance of where action takes place. One more incident which I would like to examine in this light and which is not discussed by Wiesenfarth occurs when Elizabeth and her aunt and uncle are taking a tour of Pemberley house. Walking through the picture gallery Elizabeth comes across a painting of Darcy, "she beheld a striking resemblance of Mr Darcy, with such a smile over the face as she remembered to have sometimes seen when he looked at her. She stood several minutes before the picture, in earnest contemplation" (191).

There is an air of poignancy and nostalgia in this passage. It seems as if the chatter of the Gardiners and Mrs Reynolds fade into the background and nothing exists for Elizabeth but Darcy's face. She is able to look at it and contemplate it in a way that would be impossible while looking at the real person. Having just heard Mrs Reynolds' excessive praise of Darcy, Elizabeth now looks at his face with new perspective. Elizabeth must now reconcile her old and new visions of Darcy. To do this she first looks at the painting "in earnest contemplation" for "several minutes" and then she "returned to it again". This gives the reader a clue as to the complexity of thoughts and emotions that Elizabeth is working through while looking at a portrait of a person she once proclaimed to detest. The portrait also gives Elizabeth the opportunity to examine closely in a way she would not be able to with Darcy himself. She looks at it and sees "a smile over the face as she remembered to have sometimes seen when he looked at her" (191). This suggests that Elizabeth has now realised that she has previously missed noting some aspects of Darcy through her prejudice. The moment seems to conjure Darcy's words to Elizabeth at the Netherfield ball, "I could wish, Miss Bennet, that you were not to sketch my character at the present moment, as there is reason to fear that the performance would reflect no credit on either" (73). The shift in Elizabeth's perspective is clear when the narrator announces, "[t]here was certainly at this moment, in Elizabeth's mind, a more gentle sensation towards the original than she had ever felt in the height of their acquaintance" (191). Elizabeth thinks back on everything that Mrs Reynolds has told them and reconceives her ideas of his character, "as she stood before the canvas on which he was represented, fixed his eyes upon herself, she thought of his regard with a deeper sentiment of gratitude that it had raised before; she remembered its warmth, and softened its impropriety of expression" (192). It is significant that it is here, at the estate that gives evidence of Darcy's wealth, surrounded by the family portraits which represent his lineage; in short faced with all the things that gave Darcy the pride she so detested, that Elizabeth (and the reader)

are called to re-evaluate their opinion of Darcy. Significantly Elizabeth, who was so offended by Darcy's speech in proclaiming his love for her, thinks of it now with more fondness, and "softened its impropriety of expression".

Soon after Lady Catherine leaves Longbourn Darcy himself arrives. He had recently visited Longbourn for the first time and comes this time to propose to Elizabeth. According to Wiesenfarth, "Darcy's visit shows how resilient to change are the good manners . . . Elizabeth met at Pemberley" (79). He comes (a changed man) to a family that is as ridiculous as they always have been, but he perseveres and accepts Elizabeth's family before they marry. Proposing to Elizabeth for the second time while she is at Longbourn, surrounded by the "family obstacles" which he "dwelt on with . . . warmth" during his first proposal is a sign that he accepts her completely, and sees past the obstacle of her family to her own merits as an intelligent woman of playful disposition – the perfect complement to his shy reticence (148).

Evidence suggests that the link between character and setting is something that Austen thought about. Although the narrator's treatment of Darcy is ambiguous at first, a clear pattern of setting as linked to character emerges in comparing descriptions of Netherfield with Bingley and descriptions of Rosings with Lady Catherine. The reader is influenced by the narrator against adopting a stereotyped view of Darcy. It therefore becomes clear that Pemberley, and by extension its owner, offer greater complexity to the reader than Netherfield or Rosings. The language used to describe Pemberley, when a description is finally offered late in the novel, suggests a preoccupation with picturesque landscape design. However, Austen uses the picturesque not only to describe the landscape, but also to offer the reader some insight into Darcy's character. The idea of a varied, contrasting landscape is then applied to Darcy himself, suggesting a complexity in his character that is absent in the other landowners in the novel. In extending a pattern of setting as linked to character to include

Longbourn and Mr Bennet, one finds descriptions of Longbourn which contrast with descriptions of Pemberley, and by extension, their owners. For example, while the grounds at Pemberley suggest a complexity of character in Darcy, the grounds at Longbourn signify Mr Bennet's tendency to seek refuge and hide. Mr Bennet, it is shown through descriptions of Longbourn, is a much more static character than Darcy, and is incapable of change. From my arguments in this chapter it becomes clear that Austen uses setting to influence the reader's view of a character's personality to some extent. However, Austen also uses setting to imbue certain scenes with added meaning. It is significant, for example, that it is at Longbourn that Darcy chooses to propose to Elizabeth for the second time, surrounded by the family that he once seemed to view with contempt. The setting signals to the reader that Darcy truly has changed, and can see past the family he once viewed as an obstacle to his marriage to Elizabeth, to see her merits and the benefits of having her as his wife. Setting, in the hands of Austen, therefore seems to provide much more than a backdrop for the action of the novel to take place. Read carefully, it helps to offer the reader a deeper understanding of each character's personality and motivations, providing a much richer reading experience, while giving us insight into the deeply complex character that has been created in Austen's most enduring hero.

CHAPTER THREE: MR DARCY, MR KNIGHTLEY, AND CAPTAIN WENTWORTH: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Virginia Woolf felt that one of the weaknesses of Austen's writing was that she knew too little about men and that her "conservative spirit" had "tied her hands together when she dealt with men" (quoted in Littlewood 440). Woolf goes on to say that "it is where the power of the man has to be conveyed that her novels are always at their weakest; and the heroines themselves lose something of their life because in moments of crisis they have for partners men who are inferior to them in vitality and character" (440). I disagree with Woolf's assessment that Austen's heroes are lacking "in vitality and character" and I hope the following chapter will suggest arguments to the contrary. Austen's engagement with dominant ideas of her time is more complex and ambivalent than most critics suggest, as I discuss in chapter two, and it is therefore problematic to consider her as simply conservative. The variety among her heroes (she never repeats similar heroes across her novels), seems to offer evidence against the idea that Austen knew too little about men. G.K. Chesterton also disagrees with Woolf, "[w]hen Darcy, in finally confessing his faults, says, 'I have been a selfish being all my life, *in practice though not in theory*,' he gets nearer to a complete confession of the intelligent male than ever was hinted at by the Byronic lapses of the Brontë's heroes, or the elaborate exculpations of George Eliot's" (quoted in Littlewood 438). Austen's heroes are intelligent, complex, and capable of change – not lacking in vitality at all.

Fredric Jameson's focus on the centrality of narrative for questions of representation, for what is explicit and what is implied or "unconscious", is of significance for my reading of Austen's heroes. He refers to the:

specific critical and interpretative task . . . to restructure the problematics of ideology, of the unconscious and of desire, of representation, of history, and of cultural production, around the all-informing process of *narrative* which I take to be (here using the shorthand of philosophical idealism) the central function or *instance* of the human mind. (xiii)

In this chapter I focus on the narrative techniques which Jane Austen uses to shape the development of the hero, in particular, free indirect discourse and the use of first-person through the epistolary mode. Both of these forms are useful in shaping complex representations of the hero as he responds to a changing world. Jane Austen's experimentation with, and use of, different narrative forms has been the subject of much academic research. In its original form as *First Impressions*, *Pride and Prejudice* was conceived as an epistolary novel. Jane Austen experimented extensively with the epistolary form in her *Juvenilia*. While Jane Austen redrafted the novel using both the third-person omniscient narrator and free indirect discourse to accommodate the complexity of character she wanted to convey, the novel retains "extensive references and allusions to letters" (Epstein 403). For Jane Austen, Julia L. Epstein suggests, "letters continue to serve her as revelations of characters, as concentrations of psychological or moral conflict, as signs of evasion or confrontation" (404). The use of letters allows Austen to present a character's "psychological or moral conflict" in first-person narrative. Austen usually uses this form of narration in times of conflict, which dramatises the situation by allowing a sense of immediacy and connection with the character.

According to Epstein, Austen's experimentation with narrative forms "first led her to see the need for a new narrative expression of internal, psychological conflict" which allowed for the expression of a complex interiority in characters in a way that the epistolary form could not convey (416). I disagree with Epstein's statement that Austen abandons the

epistolary form “when she required, and achieved, a more versatile voice” in the use of free indirect discourse because the epistolary mode fails to provide a vehicle for expressing a character’s complex interiority (416). While Austen adapts other modes of narration for her purposes, she does not abandon the epistolary altogether. Jane Austen uses the epistolary in versatile ways to express complexity in the characters she creates. Austen employs both the epistolary mode as well as free indirect discourse rather than choosing one in preference to the other. I will discuss this in the section on the use of epistolary form later in this chapter.

Free indirect discourse is a form of narration which Dorrit Cohn defines as “the technique for rendering a character’s thought in his own idiom while maintaining the third-person reference and the basic tense of narration” although she prefers the term “narrated monologue” (quoted in Hawthorn 131). John Mullan defines this form of narration thus, “[a] third person narrative takes on the habits of thought or even speech of a particular character” (309). In her article Margaret Anne Doody discusses the rise of this new narrative technique which was developed in the eighteenth century by female novelists such as Burney and Austen.² Free indirect discourse allowed female novelists to move away from the epistolary form of writing and to convey narrative judgement while giving inner life to the characters. The benefits of free indirect discourse are succinctly put by Doody:

The use of indirect quotation means that the characters are now taking a hand in the telling of the story. This technique gives rise to another which goes even further, creating an altogether new relationship between characters and authorial voice. The character’s thoughts can be echoed without ‘he said’ and without reference to any particular speech. (286)

² While some academics trace the development of free indirect discourse to Austen, Doody’s article discusses its uses earlier in the eighteenth century, particularly in the work of Frances Burney and also later, in the works of George Eliot during the Victorian era.

This combination of aspects of first- and third-person narration allows the narrator to move in and out of a character's thoughts, establishing them in their proper place in the world, making judgements on them, but also representing their perspective, so that the judgement is not entirely without empathy. The benefit of free indirect discourse, says Michael McKeon, is that an "effect of greater interiority is achieved by the oscillation or differential *between* the perspectives of narrator and character, by the process of moving back and forth between "outside" and "inside"" (485). The use of free indirect discourse allows Austen to move away from the representation of the hero as an exemplar of outward conduct and manners, to a more consistently developed attention to the inward life of the hero, and in particular, to the representations of the hero as a character in conflict, with keen attention to the process of the hero beginning to change his ideas and behaviour.

In addition to discussing narrative techniques, I will also offer a comparative reading of three of Austen's heroes to discuss Austen's engagement, through her heroes, with Lord Chesterfield's ideas on the ideals of manhood. Relatively little critical attention has been given to Jane Austen's response to Lord Chesterfield.³ Her response to Chesterfield is a significant element in Austen's shaping of her heroes and offers itself to a more detailed study than I can offer here.

Lord Chesterfield's Letters, published posthumously in 1774 was written by Philip Dormer Stanhope, Lord Chesterfield. I refer to Burney's critique of Chesterfield's advice briefly in the first chapter to this thesis. The letters, which were not meant for publication, consisted of a long correspondence between Lord Chesterfield and his illegitimate son. In it, he offers his son advice on etiquette and the worldly arts. His aim was to create in his son a

³ Only three articles that I have come across in my research examine Jane Austen's response to Lord Chesterfield, and I think a lot more research could be done to examine Austen's heroes with Chesterfield's teachings in mind. See, for example, Mary Waldron, "Men of Sense and Silly Wives"; U.C. Knoeflmacher, "The Importance of Being Frank: Character and Letter-Writing in *Emma*"; Jennifer Preston Wilson, "'One has got all the goodness, and the other all the appearance of it': The Development of Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*"

perfect gentleman who would rise in the world through flattery and connections. Samuel Johnson is famously quoted as saying that the letters “teach the morals of a whore, and the manners of a dancing-master” (quoted in Hamilton 416). Lord Chesterfield’s advice included injunctions to, “[h]ave a real reserve with almost anybody; and have a seeming reserve with almost nobody; for it is very disagreeable to seem reserved, and very dangerous not to be” (55), and also, “[s]peak the language of the company you are in; speak it purely, and unlarded with any other. Never seem wiser, or more learned, than the people you are with” (67). These characteristics, to present a false face to the world, to practise insincerity in order to flatter and ingratiate oneself with others, are qualities that Jane Austen gives to the ‘villainous’ Wickham, the false Mr Elliot, and the spineless fop Frank Churchill. All of these characters are set up as foils for the heroes in order to bring into sharp focus what Austen truly thinks the ideal gentleman should be. Using manoeuvres of misdirection, these characters are set up as displaying exemplary manners and, using both free indirect discourse and the epistolary form, Austen guides the reader to the “moral position” that she wants us to accept by providing us “with the standards necessary” (in the heroes) “to judge” these characters (Knoepflmacher 640). In this way the heroes that I have chosen to discuss speak back in some way against this Chesterfieldian ideal of masculinity. Austen develops this critique further than Burney, and in some cases seems to speak directly against his writings.

Chesterfield’s teachings stand opposed to the ideals of sensibility, which constitute “a code of sincere and true expression” (Todd 77). The writing of sensibility has as its purpose the moral improvements of its readers and provided examples in sentimental characters of correct thought, feeling and action. While Chesterfield might be advocating actions that are pleasing, the thoughts and feelings behind them are insincere and calculated. These are

qualities that Austen gives only to her “villains”⁴ and scheming characters such as Mrs Clay in *Persuasion*. In my discussion I add to a long list of contemporary studies on masculinity in Austen. Peter W. Graham, for example examines Austen’s construction of Henry Tilney as a “beta male”, in which the term means both “the second most prestigious member of a group” and one who “stands in opposition to alpha”. In “Henry Tilney: Queer Hero of *Northanger Abbey*” Sarah Eason reads Tilney as a character whose “gender performance resists categorisation” and therefore be labelled queer in the sense that it “points out the tensions between normative and non-normative sexualities” (*Persuasions Online*, n. pag.). This is because, Eason notes, Tilney both “strives to conform to normative expectations” and “struggles to break free from these expectations” (*Persuasions Online*, n. pag.). A third interesting study which I have come across is by Stephanie Eddleman who counters the reading of Henry Tilney as a “feminised hero” and reads him instead as a character who is “both manly and virtuous”, and who has merely had his masculinity complicated by the fact that he is the light-hearted hero of a gothic parody who is “feminised by Austen’s wit, not in essential character” (70). Tilney receives such contemporary critical attention because he is seen as different to the three heroes I discuss in this chapter partly because, Eddleman suggests, he is the light-hearted hero of a gothic parody. Darcy, Knightley and Wentworth complicate the simplistic reading of alpha males implicit in these arguments as such readings ignore Austen’s blending of elements of sensibility in her heroes. While these critics offer interesting arguments, it is beyond the scope of this study to engage fully with their opinions. Margaret Madrigal Wilson asks interestingly, why Austen’s “untrustworthy men are presented as such personable characters” (182). This is a question I will touch on later in this chapter.

⁴ I am including the word villains in quotation marks since Austen’s characters are not simplistic enough to fit the mould of a single stereotype. I briefly discuss Austen’s “villains” later in this chapter.

The two heroes that I have chosen to discuss comparatively with Darcy are Captain Wentworth and Mr Knightley. I have chosen *Emma* to discuss the idea that some critics suggest, that Austen repeats the Grandisonian hero, particularly with Mr Knightley. *Persuasion* lends itself well, I think, to a discussion of the epistolary mode and the way in which Austen uses it to convey complexity of character.

Mr Knightley

Emma's Mr Knightley approaches closer to gentlemanly 'perfection' in the Grandisonian sense than any of Jane's Austen's other heroes. Lauren Mooneyham suggests "Austen's model for wisdom – and Emma's – is Mr Knightley" (quoted in Waldron 107). Charles A. Knight notes that even some critics who have read Mr Knightley as less than impeccable concede that he is "the perfect eighteenth-century gentleman" (185). His personal views on manhood and manly responsibility are vocally anti-Chesterfieldian and reflect his more traditional role, "[t]here is one thing, Emma, which a man can always do, if he chuses, and that is, his duty, not by manoeuvring and finessing, but by vigour and resolution" (112). U. C. Knoeflmacher describes Mr Knightley as "bound to his fields and orchards. His personal supervision of his lands, his patient dealing with stewards and tenant farmers, his patriarchal concern for the welfare of Highbury's villagers, convert him into a figure out of a feudal past" (655). Although older than Darcy, he is, like Darcy, a propertied man and landlord, representative of traditional values. Mr Knightley seems to wear this cloak of responsibility more visibly and actively than any of Austen's other heroes. While we must learn from Darcy's housekeeper how actively involved he is in the management of his estate and the lives of his tenants, Mr Knightley seems always in motion, walking through Highbury, offering advice, paying visits to prominent citizens, and bringing gifts of food to the Bateses. He is the local magistrate and is always performing some duty or other. He finds out, for

example, about the engagement of Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax in a letter from Mr Weston “on parish business” (321). Throughout the novel, it becomes clear that Mr Knightley is the yardstick against which all other men are measured – and against whom they come up short. Despite all of these facts there are a few ways in which Austen’s narrative handling of Knightley save him from the pomposity of a Grandison mentor-hero. My aim in the next few paragraphs will be to show how Austen does this.

Charles Knight’s discussion is particularly interesting to me in the first part of this argument. According to Knight, “Knightley is in some respects an ironic character without being any less effective as a moral index” (185). The irony which Knight refers to has to do firstly, with the fact that Knightley is unknowingly embroiled in a situation of “mystery” and “finesse” which he denounces in Frank Churchill’s dealing with Emma and Jane (186). Secondly, Knight notes that Knightley’s attempts at mentoring Emma have the opposite effect of their intention. I discuss this unusual twist to that traditional mentor-mentee relationship in more detail below.

Mr Knightley is introduced into the text in chapter 1 with the following words, “Mr Knightley, a sensible man about seven or eight-and-thirty, was not only a very old and intimate friend of the family, but particularly connected with it as the elder brother of Isabella’s husband. (8)” This introduction makes it very clear that Mr Knightley is a “man of sense”, that he carries with him the wisdom of age, and an intimacy with the family which makes his criticism of the heroine (which follows soon after this passage) acceptable (249). He is the oldest of Austen’s heroes, and his age is particularly emphasised in the above passage as both the words “oldest” and “elder” are used to describe him. He is not “in the bloom of youth”, as Sir Charles Grandison is described to be (Richardson 116). This focus on age and wisdom sets him up in the traditional “mentor” role toward the heroine, but this is soon subverted. Mr Knightley’s direct opposition to Emma gives him some of his sensibly

authoritative manner because, as the reader will soon learn, Emma does need to be curbed in her foolish ventures at times, “Mr Knightley, in fact, was one of the few people who could see the faults in Emma Woodhouse, and the only one who ever told her of them” (9). Although in some aspects of their relationship Mr Knightley does act as Emma’s guide and conscience, their relationship is more complex than a static mentor-mentee exchange, mostly because, as I mention above, Knightley’s “attempts to correct her might have had a negative effect by making her rebellious” (Knight 190). Although I do not disagree with the fact that Emma is rebellious, I disagree with Knight’s implication that Emma’s rebelliousness is merely in reaction to Knightley’s opinion, rather than a conviction that her own view is correct. Emma, for example, disregards Knightley’s advice about the follies of matchmaking and continues anyway. She ignores his proclamations about the suitability of Harriet and Robert Martin, and she continues her flirtation with Frank Churchill despite Mr Knightley’s opinion of him. While this does demonstrate the irony of Austen’s handling of Knightley’s character, I would further suggest that it adds complexity to what on the surface might seem as a mentor-mentee relationship, and complicates critics’ claims that Knightley should hold a place in the hall of early sentimental heroes along with Grandison. Rather than Emma’s development toward maturity and self-awakening occurring through the prudent example of Mr Knightley, it is the consequences of her own actions which lead Emma to self-reflection and repentance – unlike a traditional mentor-mentee relationship.

Despite the fact that Emma is at times misguided in her endeavours and would genuinely benefit from listening to Knightley’s advice, I suggest that Austen’s choice of heroine for Mr Knightley is calculated to deflate his pretensions to being a mentor figure. Emma is equal to the challenge of Mr Knightley’s criticism, as even he will admit to her intelligence. At times when Mr Knightley offers a criticism, Emma counters with her own opinion, as she does in chapter 1 when he denies that Emma was the main cause in bringing

Mr and Mrs Weston together and Emma continues to insist that she had a hand to play in the match. Mr Knightley's manner as he confronts Emma is teasing and good-natured. This is therefore not a traditional mentor-mentee relationship in which Mr Knightley gives advice and Emma accepts it meekly. It is soon established that his advice to her is honest, yet good-natured, rather than the overbearing, self-satisfied advice of a Grandison. In chapter 19, for example, Emma goes to visit the Bateses and thinks that she "had had many a hint from Mr Knightley and some from her own heart" about her lack of attention to Mrs and Miss Bates (116). While Mr Knightley points out the deficiency, the reader is carefully made aware of the fact that Emma also realises the truth in what he says because she has herself thought about it before. Emma listens to, and takes note of, Mr Knightley's opinion because he is a sensible, trusted advisor with a "downright, decided, commanding sort of manner", not merely because it is his role to mentor and hers to obey (27).

In chapter 15, during a Christmas supper party at the Weston's Mr John Knightley causes great perturbation by announcing gleefully in triumph to Mr Woodhouse that it had begun to snow, implying that their journey home would be difficult. John Knightley had been upset at the beginning of the evening at Mr Woodhouse's proceeding with the supper plans regardless of the fact that snow was predicted. While everyone is in confusion about the best course of action to take, Mr Knightley goes outside to assess the situation and comes back to "answer for there not being the smallest difficulty in their going home" (98). As everyone else is debating what is to be done, he and Emma "settled it in a few brief sentences" and the carriages are called for (99). Mr Knightley's decisive action here makes everyone else look slightly ridiculous. Emma and Mr Knightley have an innate understanding of one another and reach an agreement before all the rest of the company can decide what to do,

'Your father will not be easy; why do not you go?'

'I am ready, if the others are.'

‘Shall I ring the bell?’

‘Yes, do.’ (99)

While they are very often locked on the opposing side of arguments, this is not the only occasion in the course of the novel when they are of the same mind and can communicate with the ease which comes from knowing one another intimately, and for so long. Austen shows us the tone of the interaction that can occur between Knightley and Emma when not locked on opposite sides of an opinion. In harmony of purpose Emma and Knightley communicate on an equal footing, as Elizabeth and Darcy do.

Mr Knightley’s demeanour throughout the novel is generally cheerful and dignified and he is described as such. There are a few points in the novel during which we are shown a different side of Mr Knightley. These scenes too, act to subvert the reading of Mr Knightley as a traditional Grandsonian hero. In “Men of Sense and Silly Wives” Mary Waldron discusses Mr Knightley’s confusions during his disagreement with Emma of the suitability of Harriet and Robert Martin. While the reader knows that Mr Knightley has a point, and that Emma is wrong in encouraging Harriet, whose origins are unknown, to aspire to marry a member of the gentry such as Mr Elton, “the scene exposes not her [Emma’s] irrationality, but Mr. Knightley’s” (147). While Mr Knightley has some reservations about the friendship between Emma and Harriet as he feels Harriet is impressionable, he begins the conversation somewhat smugly by “speaking of Harriet, and speaking of her with more voluntary praise that Emma had ever heard before” (45). Waldron notes that while Emma is sure of herself, Mr Knightley contradicts himself and “shows him to be a mass of ill-thought-out notions that he is quite prepared to reverse in the interests of getting his own way” (148). For while Emma maintains that Harriet is gently born and too good for Robert Martin, Mr Knightley begins by saying “I had no hesitation in advising him to marry . . . I was convinced he could not do better” (47). Knightley does not mention his reservations about Harriet to Robert

Martin, or to Emma in relating the story thus far. In fact, he does the opposite by praising Harriet. He becomes so infuriated by hearing that Emma's interference has led to Harriet rejecting Robert Martin's proposal of marriage that he quickly seems to contradict himself, "[m]y only scruple in advising the match was on his account, as beneath his deserts, and a bad connection for him" (48). Overtaken by emotion Mr Knightley has no scruple now in stating his reservations to Emma in order to gain a victory over her. Mr Knightley does eventually change his mind about Harriet, and admits to Emma that he may have misjudged Harriet, "I am changed also; for I am now willing to grant you all Harriet's good qualities" (359). This is much like Mr Darcy admitting to Elizabeth that he might have misjudged Jane's affections for Bingley in advising Bingley to forget the match.

Because of the intimate nature of their relationship Mr Knightley never really has cause to hide his feelings from Emma by displaying a stoic demeanour as both Darcy and Wentworth do, but rather uses his self-imposed role as mentor to do this. Yet his ultimate confession to Emma of his feelings for her are more loaded with his emotional reactions than any previous piece of narrative in the novel, like Darcy's first proposal to Elizabeth. James R. Bennett reads this proposal scene as Austen's "ironic deflation of her otherwise inhuman hero" (153). When he approaches her, "he neither looked nor spoke cheerfully" (Austen 321). The depth of his emotion in the moment can be seen from the description that Emma "found her arm drawn within his, and pressed against his heart, and heard him thus saying, in a tone of great sensibility, speaking low" (321). The term "sensibility" is used in describing Knightley's tone, implying that elements of the hero of sensibility are invoked to reflect Knightley's emotional state. Mr Knightley then expresses himself in broken, nearly incoherent phrases which the reader infers is meant to comfort Emma for what he believes is the 'loss' of Frank Churchill to Jane Fairfax. This is very different to Knightley's usual "downright, decided, commanding" manner (27). This is the most intimate physical contact

that Emma and Mr Knightley have throughout the novel. The action of drawing her arm within his and pressing it against his heart speaks both of the suppressed sexual energy between these two characters, and also of the longing on Mr Knightley's part that Emma should be his. This action, before having had it confirmed by Emma that she returns his feelings, is out of character for a gentleman such as Mr Knightley, and seems more suited to the impertinence of Mr Elton who, after the Christmas party at Randalls, jumps into Emma's carriage where Emma finds "her hand seized – her attention demanded, and Mr Elton actually making violent love to her" (100). It is stated that Mr Knightley's confession is spontaneous, and the result of "the momentary conquest of eagerness over judgement" (327), reflecting Jameson's interest in literary representations of the "unconscious and of desire". Mr Elton's impertinence is done without "scruple – without apology – without . . . diffidence" (100), Mr Knightley actions are decidedly unsure, and are (at first) motivated by a need to comfort Emma in what he thinks is a time of distress for her. Mr Knightley continues "in a more broken and subdued accent" with his murmurings of comfort (322). Mr Knightley's sentences here are broken and unsure; this is not his normal confident manner of speech. Emma, instead of being offended, feels "the flutter of pleasure" of having interpreted his actions correctly (322). Mr Knightley, it is clear, is overcome with emotion, and struggling to stay in control, as he looks at Emma "eagerly" when she denies having feelings for Frank Churchill but, "checking himself," continues in a more subdued manner (322). Mr Knightley tries, as Darcy does, to be measured and deliberate in his actions, although neither is always successful. Descriptions of Mr Knightley's emotions are conveyed to us through his manner of speaking as he continues to "[speak] tolerably in his usual tone" (323) and thanks Emma "in an accent of deep mortification" (324) after which he speaks in a "depressed manner" (324) and finally declares his love "in a tone of . . . sincere, decided,

intelligible tenderness” (325). The significance of the voice and speech is carried through in Mr Knightley’s declaration of love to Emma:

If I loved you less, I might be able to talk about it more Bear with the truths I would tell you now, dearest Emma, as well as you have borne with them. The manner, perhaps, may have as little to recommend them. God knows, I have been a very indifferent lover. – But you understand me. – Yes, you see, you understand my feelings – and will return them if you can. At present, I ask only to hear, once to hear your voice. (325)

Truth and communication have been at the centre of Emma and Mr Knightley’s relationship. It has forged an understanding so deep that he counts on it to influence and inform Emma’s feelings for him. Just as his voice and his manner of speaking have helped to communicate Mr Knightley’s feelings, he asks at the end only to hear the sound of Emma’s voice to rid him of his uncertainty.

This is significant in light of the fact that, despite Mr Knightley being set up as old-fashioned, he does not seek to stifle Emma’s voice, even after their engagement, and conversation remains an interactive process at the centre of their relationship, “[n]ow Emma could, indeed, enjoy Mr Knightley’s visits; now she could talk, and she could listen with true happiness” (341). Knightley’s confession of love signals a change in their relationship. Once engaged Knightley and Emma speak with more intimacy, and more indulgence on Knightley’s side for Emma’s idiosyncrasies.

Austen’s ironical handling of Mr Knightley, the failure of his attempts to act the mentor to wilful Emma, as well as his sometimes overly emotional reactions to Emma imbue his character with a complexity that the label of ‘Grandisonian hero’ cannot contain.

Knightley stands opposed to Chesterfield’s ideals of masculine behaviour. This is starkly shown through Knightley’s disapproval of Frank Churchill. Churchill “knew how to

make himself agreeable”, and in his first conversation with Emma praises Mrs Weston because “[he] understood what would be welcome” in topics of conversation (144–45). The reader, through Emma, suspects his insincerity in trying to make himself likeable. While Emma brushes it off as flattering that he would make the effort to be liked by her, the reader, unencumbered by Emma’s ego, is left uneasy. Interestingly, the two characters known for their letter-writing are the ones exposed for keeping a secret. Frank Churchill’s “handsome letters” form the topic of much conversation, as do those of Jane Fairfax (14). U.C. Knoepfelmacher notes:

It is Frank’s letter-writing which most provokes the squire’s wrath: ‘He can sit down and write a fine flourishing letter, full of professions and falsehoods, and persuade himself that he has hit upon the very best method in the world of preserving peace at home and preventing his father’s having the right to complain. His letters disgust me.’ (641)

While Emma tries to defend Frank, her usual vigour is absent, she said “a good deal more than she felt” and rather than stating her true opinion of the matter, was “making use of Mrs Weston’s arguments against herself” (111). This seems a clear signal to the reader that the true Frank has not yet been revealed, and that his true character will differ greatly from what he presents the world. Mr Knightley declares, “[t]here is one thing, Emma, which a man can always do, if he chuses, and that is, his duty; not by manoeuvring and finessing, but by vigour and resolution” (112). The use of “manoeuvring and finessing” seems particularly directed at Chesterfield’s teachings. Mr Knightley goes on to expound the benefits of truth and honesty as inspiring trust and respect. His point on the benefits of a rational argument to bring about a beneficial resolution seems to align him with Enlightenment ideas on trust in reason. The epistolary mode here is used not by the hero, as in *Pride and Prejudice* and *Persuasion*, but by a questionable character who appears to have the qualities of a hero.

Austen seems to explore the epistolary form as one which may be used for the purposes of deception as she does in *Lady Susan*. Austen uses the epistolary form to explore questions of sincerity, and while Knightley is not the one writing the letters, the epistolary form here still allows an opportunity for the reader to gain some insight into Knightley's thinking and opinions. Knightley's argument against Frank Churchill becomes even more heated, "[w]hat! At three-and-twenty to be king of his company – the great man – the practised politician, who is read to everybody's character, and make every body's talents conduce to the display of his own superiority" (115). Despite his overly emotional tone, Mr Knightley's proclamations against Frank Churchill have the ring of truth, for "Mr Knightley's present denunciation of Frank's letters, coming well before the personal irritations he is to suffer, is not quite so subjective an indictment" as those he will deliver after he becomes jealous of Frank and Emma (Knoepflmacher 641). One more way in which Knightley seems to stand opposed to Chesterfield's teachings is in Chesterfield's contempt for women, which he tries to teach his son:

Women, then, are only children of a larger growth; they have an entertaining tattle, and sometimes wit; but for solid, reasoning good-sense, I never knew in my life one that had it, or who reasoned or acted consequentially for four and twenty hours together . . . A man of sense . . . neither consults them about, nor trusts them with serious matters. (91)

Significantly, Chesterfield often uses the phrase "a man of sense" to describe his idea of the ideal gentleman. Mr Knightley uses the same phrase when castigating Emma after she convinces Harriet to reject Mr Martin's proposal; "[m]en of sense, whatever you may chuse to say, do not want silly wives" (50). This is a direct attack on Chesterfield's teachings.

In Fitzwilliam Darcy Austen continues this trend of using her heroes to speak against Chesterfield's teachings. She reinforces this lesson using Wickham and other minor

characters such as the Bingley sisters in contrast to Darcy to show that an outward display of pleasing manners does not provide an accurate portrait of one's true disposition.

Mr Darcy

As discussed in the previous chapter, the character of Mr Darcy is introduced into *Pride and Prejudice* early on in the novel in a manner which is unfavourable to him because his character is contrasted with that of amiable Mr Bingley. However, the manner in which the reader is told of Mr Darcy's arrogant pride invites the reader to question these initial responses to Darcy, ". . . his manners gave a disgust which turned the tide of his popularity; for he was discovered to be proud; to be above his company, and above being pleased" (10). The use of free indirect discourse is useful here in that it signals to the reader that these are the views and idiom of the gentry, rather than that of the narrator, or the perspective of one of the main characters.

From this manner of telling, what the narrator says is that his manners "gave" disgust rather than they *were* disgusting, and that he was "discovered" to be proud rather than that he *was* proud. The narrator signals to the reader that these are assumptions based on first impressions (which was the initial title of the novel), and invites the reader to consider what Darcy might be, rather than what he appears to be. We are later told "his character was decided", but his character had been decided by those attending the ball rather than by the narrator (11). In further describing Darcy's character the narrative continues, "[o]n the strength of Darcy's regard, Bingley had the firmest reliance, and of his judgement the highest opinion. In understanding, Darcy was the superior" (15). This is a very important point for the narrator to make. While Darcy is at a disadvantage in having his public demeanour compared to that of Mr Bingley who is undoubtedly the most good-natured male character in the novel, the narrator is at pains to emphasise Darcy's intellectual prowess. This is

significant because intelligence is highly prized in all of Austen's novels. Her protagonists invariably have considerable acumen, whether in learning or emotional intelligence, and ignorance or naïveté, however kind and well-intentioned the character who possess it, is usually satirised, such as Elizabeth good-naturedly does with Jane. Mr Bingley, for example, who comes off so well in the comparison between his and Darcy's characters, is shown to be indecisive as a result of his propensity to be easily led, a flaw which is to cause both him and Jane considerable pain later on in the novel. It is noteworthy that the narrator would mention this when all the reader is given evidence of so far is Darcy's arrogance. The narrator goes on to say that Darcy was "haughty, reserved, and fastidious, and his manners, though well-bred, were not inviting" (15). Although damning to his character, the narrator only says this after his intelligence has been established with the reader. Further, Bingley, whose amiability is noted, values Darcy, which also acts as an invitation to the reader to reconsider the initial impression of Darcy. Bingley serves as more than a simple contrast here. He is also a means through which we are invited to reconsider why, as Jane rightly asks, such an amiable man might make a friend of Darcy.

The day after the ball at which Mr Darcy causes so much offence, the Bennet family are at Longbourn discussing the events of the previous night. While talking of Mr Darcy, Charlotte Lucas exclaims, "[h]is pride . . . does not offend me so much as pride often does, because there is an excuse for it" (17). So while it is finally established that Mr Darcy is indeed proud and arrogant, this is counterbalanced by mention of his intelligence, as well as by the fact that there is a reason for his pride. Charlotte Lucas brings it to the reader's attention that his handsome features and physique, his rank and his considerable fortune give reasons for his pride. A careful foundation is thereby laid for the reader to be able to accept the complexity of Darcy's character, and later to overthrow her negative opinion of him.

Pride and Prejudice is written predominantly from Elizabeth's perspective, and the narrator rarely invites the reader to experience things from Darcy's point of view, although the reader is offered some snippets of narrative insight through the use of free indirect discourse. Darcy is a very enigmatic character. He has very little direct dialogue in the novel, and we get the majority of our information about him from the perspective of other characters. This is deliberately done, and has two uses. Firstly, it allows Austen to convey his complexity of character by allowing the reader to uncover aspects of his personality in layers. Secondly, it means that Elizabeth and Darcy's hostility is maintained for as long as possible, thus delaying their eventual union, and allowing for a build-up of tension until the novel reaches its conclusion (Hinnant 297). Darcy's initial introduction to the reader at the Meryton ball, for example, is given from the perspective of the partygoers who find his pride disgusting. Information about Pemberley (which, I discuss in chapter two, as closely linked in the narrative to Darcy's character) is first conveyed to the reader by Mr and Miss Bingley with very little said about it by Darcy himself. His reserve is part of the reason why he is universally considered to be proud, and it adds to the complexity of his character, as does the second-hand information that is conveyed about him. On the somewhat rare occasions when Darcy does speak directly, his manner of talking is succinct and proclaims him to be a man mostly preoccupied with the practicalities. After Elizabeth's walk to Netherfield to care for a sick Jane, the Bingley sisters take the opportunity of making fun of Elizabeth's wild manners and inferior family. While Bingley tries to defend Elizabeth from his sisters' mocking, Darcy says very little and speaks only when spoken to. When Bingley says that their inferior family connections can have no impact on how pleasant Jane and Elizabeth are, Darcy cuts right to the heart of the matter in his reply, "[b]ut it must very materially lessen their chance of marrying men of any consideration in the world" (31). This is of course an ironic statement to make as Darcy and Bingley end up marrying Elizabeth and Jane, but it is a very revealing

statement in that it gives the reader insight into how Darcy thinks. While the Bingley sisters allow their dislike of Elizabeth to influence their thoughts and conversation, Bingley's amiable nature glosses over the truth of Elizabeth and Jane's situation because he likes them. Although it is true that their inferior family connections do not have much impact on how pleasant Jane and Elizabeth are, it is the 'bright side' of their attractiveness and this is all that Bingley sees. For Darcy, his blunt statements are, I think, a means to disguise his growing attraction to Elizabeth. While Miss Bingley often invites Mr Darcy to gossip (she is constantly asking his opinion about some ridiculous person's behaviour), the reader never sees him do so, and in the conversation mentioned above he speaks a socially accepted truth rather than an opinion in an effort to hide his attraction to Elizabeth.

In chapter 10 Elizabeth's visit at Netherfield continues. Having established early her dislike for Darcy, she is constantly taking offence at anything he says, and tries in turn to offend him by her replies:

After playing some Italian songs, Miss Bingley varied the charm by a lively Scottish air; and soon afterwards Mr Darcy, drawing near Elizabeth, said to her –

'Do not you feel a great inclination, Miss Bennet, to seize such an opportunity of dancing a reel?'

She smiled, but made no answer. He repeated the question, with some surprise at her silence.

'Oh!' said she, 'I heard you before, but I could not immediately determine what to say in reply. You wanted me, I know, to say "Yes," that you might have the pleasure of despising my taste; but I always delight in overthrowing those kind of schemes, and cheating a person of their premeditated contempt. I have, therefore, made up my mind to tell you, that I do not want to dance a reel at all – and now despise me if you dare.'

‘Indeed I do not dare.’

Elizabeth, having rather expected to affront him, was amazed at his gallantry; but there was a mixture of sweetness and archness in her manner which made it difficult for her to affront anybody; and Darcy had never been so bewitched by any woman as he was by her. He really believed, that were it not for the inferiority of her connections, he should be in some danger. (43)

Here, after setting the scene and giving us Elizabeth and Darcy’s dialogue, Austen uses the narrative style of free indirect discourse to give the reader both Darcy and Elizabeth’s perspectives. We are first given Elizabeth’s reaction to Darcy’s reply; her surprise at his gracious reaction to her attempt to provoke him. Elizabeth’s reaction magnifies the gallantry of Darcy’s reply to the reader. Darcy is clearly not so proud that he takes offence at everything that Elizabeth says to him. Despite Elizabeth’s frequent attempts to offend him, Elizabeth only manages to anger Darcy twice – once at the mention of Wickham’s ‘plight’, and secondly when she rejects his proposal and accuses him of ungentlemanly behaviour. This is in stark contrast to Lady Catherine later on in the narrative, who takes offence at the slightest sign of impertinence. After giving us Elizabeth’s reaction, the narrator switches, in the same sentence, to give us Darcy’s. Within the space of a few words, then, the reader hears that Elizabeth is “amazed at [Darcy’s] gallantry”, and that Darcy is “bewitched” by Elizabeth. This closely ties their thoughts together, and offers a hint that Elizabeth and Darcy will become a couple. Darcy doesn’t take offence at Elizabeth’s provocativeness because he finds her captivating. This softens him in the reader’s eyes as it shows him capable of gentle feelings. The reader has been predisposed to like Elizabeth, so Darcy’s reaction to her puts him in good stead with the reader. The use of “drawing near” and “great inclination” seem suggestive of the sexual attraction that Darcy feels for Elizabeth. Yet directly after this the reader is reminded of his arrogance, “[h]e really believed, that were it not for the inferiority

of her connections, he should be in some danger.” Darcy is revealed as having a complex character in which amiability and gallantry can co-exist with arrogance. It also reveals that Darcy’s thoughts and emotions are in conflict. The use of “should be”, with the qualification “were it not for” is suggestive of uncertainty. The sentence is structured so that the emphasis falls on the last three words, “in some danger”, which points to Darcy’s struggle in maintaining his distance from Elizabeth. His knowledge of her low connections does not prevent him from being “bewitched” by her (43).

Darcy’s struggle in maintaining his distance from Elizabeth causes him to act unpredictably. He is at times rudely blunt, and at others, as in the exchange above, somewhat gallant. On the fourth day of Elizabeth’s visit at Netherfield Elizabeth is walking in the garden with Mrs Hurst. When they come across Darcy and Miss Bingley taking a walk as well, Mrs Hurst leaves Elizabeth and takes Darcy’s other arm, shutting Elizabeth out in the narrow walkway. “Mr Darcy felt their rudeness” and suggested a wider walkway to accommodate Elizabeth (43). Mr Darcy further surprises the reader by showing a sensitivity to the rudeness of Bingley’s sisters. While the Bingley sisters have been impugning the Bennets behind their backs since the beginning of the novel (mostly because of Miss Bingley’s jealousy), this is the first blatant snub to Elizabeth, one which Mr Darcy does not approve. The use of the word “felt” suggests how deeply Darcy is affected by their rudeness to Elizabeth.

Mr Darcy, throughout the novel, is described as being composed and deliberate in his behaviour. He is also quite self-aware. In chapter 12, Elizabeth notices “how frequently Mr Darcy’s eyes were fixed on her” (42). Miss Bingley, later in the chapter, can only induce Mr Darcy to “unconsciously” close his book and look up by asking Elizabeth to walk around the room with her (46). When Darcy realises his mistake in paying more attention to Elizabeth than he ought, he “wisely resolved that no sign of admiration should *now* escape him” in case

she should suspect his esteem (49). He follows through on this resolve and “steady to his purpose, he scarcely spoke ten words to her through the whole of Saturday” (49). Darcy wants to appear self-possessed and in control of himself. He values his intelligence because it helps him to be in control, “[b]ut pride – where there is a real superiority of mind, pride will be always under good regulation” (47). Whatever other flaws and follies a person is prone to, Darcy believes that these can be mitigated by intelligence. Not so when he confesses his feelings to Elizabeth:

In a hurried manner he immediately began an inquiry after her health, imputing his visit to a wish of hearing that she were better . . . He sat down for a few moments, and then getting up, walked about the room . . . After a silence of several minutes, he came towards her in an agitated manner, and thus began – ‘In vain have I struggled. It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed. You must allow me to tell you how ardently I admire and love you.’ (147)

Darcy’s behaviour is described as “hurried” and “agitated” whereas one is accustomed to having his behaviour described as “grave” (23), “inflexibly studious” (45), “composed” (81) and “reserved” (134). This is not the Darcy the reader has come to know. This is clearly a deeply disturbed man whose actions and emotions are no longer “under good regulation” (47). The language he uses speaks of the uncontrollable emotions he is feeling with his use of “struggled” and “ardently” (147). The violence of Darcy’s emotions are due both to the “powerful feeling” (76) he has for Elizabeth, as well as his awareness that her lack of fortune and inferior connections make her socially unsuitable to be his wife, “he was not more eloquent on the subject of tenderness than of pride” (148). He has clearly employed great effort in trying to suppress his emotions, and has failed. It is difficult for the reader not to feel sympathy for him despite his continuing arrogance, as the reader knows that Elizabeth is about to reject him. Elizabeth takes great offence at the parts of his speech which delineate

her inferiority, “she was at first sorry for the pain he was to receive; till, roused to resentment by his subsequent language, she lost all compassion in anger” (148). The narrator interestingly does not allow the reader to be witness to Darcy’s whole speech. The reader hears second-hand that, “[h]is sense of her inferiority – of its being a degradation – of the family obstacles which judgement had always opposed to inclination, were dwelt on with a warmth which seemed due to the consequence he was wounding” (148). The reader is shielded from the worst parts of Darcy’s speech and cannot take as much offence as Elizabeth does. The reader only experiences his offensive behaviour second-hand, and is therefore able to maintain some distance from it. Elizabeth, despite being offended by Darcy, “could not be insensible to the compliment of such a man’s affection” (148). The reader, while understanding Elizabeth’s frustration with Darcy’s arrogance, is also not allowed to forget by this observation that there is a reason for the arrogance, a fact that was introduced early on in the text.

Elizabeth’s reply to Darcy is quite harsh and offensive, and interestingly, is given to the reader verbatim. Darcy, for whom control is so important, struggles for composure even more than he did at the beginning of the encounter, and manages only with the utmost effort to regain equanimity, “[h]e was struggling for the appearance of composure, and would not open his lips till he believed himself to have attained it” (148). This composure does not come quickly, “[t]he pause was to Elizabeth’s feelings dreadful”, and is not entirely successful, because when he speaks again, it is with “*forced calmness*” (148) (my italics). The encounter ends with Elizabeth saying, “I had not known you a month before I felt that you were the last man in the world whom I could ever be prevailed on to marry.” To these words the reader does get to hear Darcy’s composed and restrained (under the circumstances) response. This is an indication of his feeling for her which is not destroyed in the attack:

You have said enough, madam. I perfectly comprehend your feelings, and have now only to be ashamed of what my own have been. Forgive me for having taken up so much of your time, and accept my best wishes for your health and happiness. (151)

Here he is better able to try to control his emotions and actions. It is indeed very telling that Darcy's long and unflattering speech should be recounted so briefly, but his conversation with Elizabeth, in which she too is allowed to reveal her anger and prejudice, is faithfully recounted. His pride, unchallenged, is not allowed to flow freely here, but is only narrated first-hand when countered by Elizabeth's anger and prejudice.

The largest bulk of narrative time given to Darcy is when Elizabeth reads his lengthy letter to her, offering explanations for the accusations that she has thrown at him. The letter serves both as a "revelation" and as a concentration of "psychological and moral conflict" which Epstein speaks about (404). It gives the reader insight into Darcy more successfully than if it was conveyed as third-person narration. Austen uses this manner of narration deliberately, I suggest, to invite a reading of the complexity of Darcy's character.

Darcy begins by assuring Elizabeth that the letter does not contain a renewal of the marriage proposal which was "so disgusting to" her (153). His sense of hurt at her rejection is made clear with his use of the word "disgusting". However, his pride and practical nature reassert themselves when he continues by saying that he has no intention of "humbling" himself by "dwelling on wishes" which "cannot be too soon forgotten", and that the matter would have been put behind them "had not [his] character required [the letter] to be written and read". Darcy hereby makes it imperatively clear that he has no intention of being "crossed in love" as Mr Bennet put it, and pining away for her (109). He has every intention of putting the entire encounter behind him, as soon as he sets Elizabeth's misconceptions about him to rights. He asks no more of her than to consider his explanations and makes it

quite clear that he will not enter into another discussion of marriage, regardless of whether she believes his explanations. The tone that Darcy adopts is different to the agitated, nearly incoherent character who proposed to Elizabeth the night before, although he is still strongly moved. He tries to present an unemotional surface. He appeals to Elizabeth to read his letter not on emotional grounds, but says, “I demand it of your justice” (153). This is language that Elizabeth understands and obeys, for her principal accusation against him the night before was that he was “unjust and ungenerous” in being the principal cause of separating Bingley and Jane, and that he was ungentlemanly in his behaviour towards herself, a sentiment which would have hurt his sense of honour, as she had meant it to do (149). It is her sense of justice that has been offended in his actions toward innocents such as Jane and (she believes), Wickham. Darcy’s appeal to her sense of justice in this letter is therefore very astute.

Darcy begins his explanations by an account of his role in separating Bingley and Jane, and apologises in advance for any offence which his words may cause. He explains that having observed Jane with Bingley, the “serenity of [Jane’s] air” convinced him that she did not return Bingley’s feelings (154). He goes further to say, “I did not believe her to be indifferent because I wished it; – I believed it on impartial conviction, as truly as I wished it in reason.” His use of the words “impartial” and “reason” here, suggest that he approached the matter objectively – something which his character as presented to us suggests is entirely plausible and expected. The truth of Darcy’s words is echoed by a conversation that Elizabeth had with Charlotte Lucas in chapter 6. Here Charlotte warns Elizabeth that Jane’s caution in showing her feelings might be to her disadvantage, “[i]f she conceals her affection . . . from the object of it, she may lose the opportunity of fixing him” (19). Elizabeth cannot therefore be surprised that Darcy’s “impartial” observations have escaped seeing Jane’s infatuation with Bingley. Darcy does, however, admit that he might have been wrong in his conclusion about Jane’s feelings, and concedes that this being the case, Elizabeth’s “resentment has not

been unreasonable.” This admission shows his fairness of character as it demonstrates that he is willing to admit that he may be wrong in the interest of truth. Next he mentions why he wished to find Jane unmoved by Bingley’s affection, and it is these observations which are likely to cause Elizabeth the most offence. Yet the truth of his words are indisputable, in keeping with the overall tone of the letter, and therefore mitigates the insulting nature of his observations:

The situation of your mother’s family, though objectionable, was nothing in comparison of that total want of propriety so frequently, so almost uniformly betrayed by herself, by your three younger sisters, and occasionally even by your father. Pardon me. It pains me to offend you. (154)

These last two sentences attempt to soften the blow and show compassion. Elizabeth must painfully remember that she herself had made these observations at the Netherfield ball, and had worried about Darcy’s observing it. Darcy’s generosity is further shown when he says, “let it give you consolation to consider that, to have conducted yourselves so as to avoid any share of the like censure, is praise no less generally bestowed on you and your eldest sister” (154). With these words Darcy shows more compassion to Elizabeth’s feelings than she did the previous night in rejecting his proposal. This acts as an example of Darcy’s sensibility in his ability to display compassion. She certainly cannot now accuse him of being ungentlemanly. The details of his intervention to keep the lovers apart are next revealed, and the ease with which it was accomplished seems to lighten his responsibility in the matter. The reader has already been told that Bingley has “the highest opinion” (15) of Darcy’s judgement, and Elizabeth has gathered from her character study that Bingley has a “want of proper resolution” which makes him susceptible to the interference of others (106). Darcy’s words therefore need no further proof when he says, “[t]o persuade him against returning into Hertfordshire . . . was scarcely the work of a moment” (155). The foundation for Darcy’s

concerns as he has set them out are reasonable, and the easy execution of his task implies that he alone is not responsible for keeping Jane and Bingley apart; had Jane been more open in her affections, and Bingley more set in his resolve, Darcy's interference would not have been successful. He does admit that he was deceitful in not telling Bingley that Jane had been in London while they still in the city and, while he regrets the deception, believes that this "was done for the best" (155). Again he does not linger on the regret, he offers an explanation and moves on. Darcy confesses that his interference was kindly meant as a service to his friend, and that he had no malicious intentions with his actions. From the reasons that he has offered, there is no reason to disbelieve this. He has already proved that he has no qualms about admitting a mistake when he has committed one, so there is no reason to distrust anything that he says.

Darcy's letter thus far has been precisely tailored to gain trust. Where he has offered explanations it has been detailed and rooted in evidence, where he acknowledges that he might have been mistaken he has offered an apology, and where he believes himself right he has stated that forthrightly, regardless of whether it gives offence. Through all of this he has tried to be compassionate to Elizabeth's feelings when, truthfully, she has not earned the right to his compassion in her treatment of him. Now that this foundation has been laid, it makes it easier for the reader to digest the second part of his letter, of which the reader knows less, and therefore has to show more trust in Darcy's word.

He begins by explaining his relationship to Wickham, with all due respect offered to Wickham's father and Mr Darcy (senior). The nature of the relationship has already been stated by Wickham himself, as well as by Miss Bingley, so this information is not new, but confirms that Darcy is being truthful. The rest of Darcy's account is what Wickham touched on in his conversation with Elizabeth at the Philipses, and now the reader is faced with the choice of either believing Darcy's version of the story, or believing Wickham's, as neither

can offer concrete proof of their claims, although Darcy tries to do so by offering Colonel Fitzwilliam as a witness. The basic story is the same, that Darcy's father left a family living in his will to Wickham should he choose to become a clergyman. The reason for the living not being given to Wickham differs materially from the explanation offered by Wickham. The description that Darcy offers of Wickham is a very different one to Wickham's version. He describes Wickham as having "vicious propensities" and living a "life of idleness and dissipation" once he gives up his claim to the living in exchange for three thousand pounds (157). When the money runs out, Wickham appeals to Darcy to give him the living regardless, and abuses Darcy publicly when he refuses. Wickham's intention with Miss Darcy, to dupe her into marrying him so that he can have control of her fortune, is the cause of much of Darcy's anger against Wickham. All of these claims seem unbelievable on the face of it, taking into consideration the man we have come to know as Wickham. Yet closer examination of Darcy's claims will prove him right. Darcy's claim that Wickham had lived in "idleness and dissipation" is echoed in a comment that Wickham himself has made to Elizabeth, "I forfeited all claims to it by extravagance, imprudence . . ." (64). Wickham says this sarcastically to Elizabeth, implying that Darcy has fabricated this as an excuse to deny him the living, yet one cannot help but to remember this and reflect on how closely it matches Darcy's account. To Wickham's request for the living, Darcy explains, "[y]ou will hardly blame me for refusing to comply with this entreaty, or for resisting every repetition of it" (157). His use of "you will hardly blame me" implies that it was natural and just for him to do what he did. Wickham's "repetition" of the request makes him seem like a spoilt child begging a treat from a stern parent. Darcy's statement that Wickham was "doubtless as violent in his abuse of me to others as in his reproaches to myself" also reflects back to a comment that Wickham made to Elizabeth. He said that Darcy dislikes him because "I have a warm, unguarded temper, and I may perhaps have sometimes spoken of my opinion of him,

and to him, too freely” (65). Here, once again, Wickham seems like a spoilt child throwing a tantrum. Darcy’s last claim against Wickham, that he tried to seduce Miss Darcy into marrying him, is perhaps the most ruthless part of the tale. The reader is reminded of the fact that Wickham, as the narrator relays, suddenly pursued Miss King after it became known that she has come into an inheritance:

The sudden acquisition of ten thousand pounds was the most remarkable charm of the young lady to whom he was now rendering himself agreeable; but Elizabeth, less clear-sighted perhaps in this case than in Charlotte’s, did not quarrel with him for his wish of independence. (118)

The narrator also hints that although Elizabeth has no hard feelings that Wickham has prematurely ended their flirtation, her understanding of the events is biased, and therefore not to be trusted. This brings into question Elizabeth’s entire understanding of Wickham’s character.

Darcy continues to be quite generous to Elizabeth in his letter, by suggesting that her misjudgement of Wickham is not her fault, “[d]etection could not be in your power, and suspicion certainly not in your inclination” (158). He gives her the opportunity of applying to Colonel Fitzwilliam for authentication of everything he has said. The particulars which Darcy lays out so closely matches what Wickham has already said, and offers yet more detail that it is difficult to imagine how it could not be the truth, as his explanations of his interference in Bingley and Jane’s affairs are frankly laid out. For his statements regarding Wickham, the narrator has already offered clues to steer the reader’s opinion once Darcy offers his version of events here.

Throughout the letter Darcy strives to maintain that impersonal composure that we have come to associate with him, although this is at times belied by his concern for Elizabeth, as he deviates from his explanations to offer her words of consolation, suggesting that he still

cares for her, despite his attempts at maintaining a careful distance. His generous sentiments toward Elizabeth stand him in good stead, as he has no reason to be as kind as he is after their heated encounter the day before. Darcy's efforts at affecting a cool mask are so concentrated that he fools even himself. Near the end of the novel he reflects to Elizabeth, "[w]hen I wrote that letter . . . I believed myself perfectly calm and cool; but I am since convinced that it was written in dreadful bitterness of spirit" (284). Elizabeth is perhaps more accurate in her assessment that "[t]he letter, perhaps, began in bitterness; but it did not end so, the adieu is charity itself" (284) (Bonaparte 152).

Elizabeth's emotions "were scarcely to be defined" as she read the letter (159). "With a strong prejudice against everything he might say" she begins reading. His comments on her family "made her too angry to have any wish of doing him justice". These explicitly stated facts indicate to the reader that it would be unwise to trust the initial reactions on Elizabeth's part to regard Darcy's words as "all pride and insolence". Realising that in his account of Wickham many details match exactly with what Wickham has told her himself, Elizabeth "weighed every circumstance with what she meant to be impartiality" (160). She begins to try to do Darcy justice, as he has requested of her. She begins to accept the possibility that Darcy may perhaps be "entirely blameless" in the affair with Wickham. Now she can think back to examine the facts as she had previously accepted them and realises that she has taken Wickham entirely on his word, prejudiced in his favour as she had been by his pleasant "countenance, voice, and manner" as well as his considerable "social powers" (160). On the point of the affair with Miss Darcy, Elizabeth realises that Colonel Fitzwilliam had already hinted at this in a previous conversation he had with her, although she had not realised the details. Thinking back on her conversations with Wickham, Elizabeth "was *now* struck with the impropriety of such communications to a stranger, and wondered it had escaped her before" (161). "Every lingering struggle in [Wickham's] favour grew fainter and fainter" as,

proportionately, her opinion of Darcy is raised. She realises that, just as she has seen no evidence of Wickham's good nature, she has also "not seen anything that betrayed [Darcy] to be unprincipled or unjust" and, on the contrary, that he was "esteemed and valued" among his friends and family (162). Finally, Elizabeth "grew absolutely ashamed of herself" as she realises that she had been "blind, partial, prejudiced, absurd" (162). Now that she accepts Darcy's version of events with regard to Wickham, she can go back to the beginning of the letter which concerns Jane and Bingley. She remembers Charlotte's comments about Jane's circumspection, and realises that the comments about her family which previously had angered her, were a "merited reproach" and the "justice of the charge struck her too forcibly for denial" (163). The concept of justice is once again mentioned with this thought. Elizabeth does not forget the compliment Darcy pays to her and to Jane and while it "soothed . . . it could not console her for the contempt which had thus been self-attracted by the rest of her family" (163). Elizabeth's dwelling on this point indicates to the reader the truth and fairness of Darcy's comments. The description of Elizabeth's initial disbelief, and, upon reading and re-reading the letter, her dawning realisation, is very carefully tailored to take the reader through all of her rationalisations, solidifying her final resolution in the reader's mind as well.

The usefulness of presenting Darcy's arguments to the reader in epistolary form is manifold. Mary Lascelles finds it implausible that Darcy should be so forthcoming, "[s]o much, and such, information would hardly be volunteered by a proud and reserved man" (162). I disagree with Lascelles. From Darcy's forthright character and his belief in truth and justice, I think it highly plausible that he would seek to set Elizabeth right on these points. But perhaps Jane Austen realised that Darcy is not yet ready for the trial that such a long confession would bring and she allows him the time (he only writes the letter the morning after their argument) and solitude to order his thoughts in a manner which is much more

flattering to him and also more plausible to the reader. The letter is, in fact, more suited to Darcy as a “proud and reserved man” because he would be more comfortable expressing himself in this manner. He would also be offered the privacy of writing his response in solitude rather than be put through the trial of trying to hide his emotions from Elizabeth again in a face-to-face confrontation. Elizabeth, as we have seen, does not believe Darcy’s explanations on the first reading, and perhaps would not have borne their expression in person without some interruption. Elizabeth is allowed the courtesy of her slow awakening, of being able to digest these explanations with the same privacy that Darcy was allowed in setting them down. As Tony Tanner suggests, “a letter is also a transforming of action into words, which may then, be reflected on in a way which is impossible while one is actually involved in the action” (122).

As I mention in chapter two, Darcy’s letter and Elizabeth’s reaction to it are turning points in the novel. Darcy’s letter gives the reader, and Elizabeth, insight into Darcy and it leads to Elizabeth’s much-needed and overdue self-reflection which in turn changes her outlook on Darcy and on Wickham. Her opinion of Darcy does not change so much that she regrets saying no to his proposal; his pride and arrogance have been indisputable. Elizabeth does however, have reason to regret her past prejudice.

A more material change is wrought on Darcy, reflecting Austen’s rejection of the conventional role of mentor for her heroes brings into question simplistic critical readings of Austen’s heroes as alpha males. I will discuss this disparity in character development between the hero and the heroine in chapter four of this thesis. Darcy’s changed behaviour when he and Elizabeth meet at Pemberley has been discussed in the previous chapter. While his manner certainly is easier during Elizabeth’s visit to Derbyshire than it had been while Darcy had been in Longbourn, his character and opinions have also undergone a change. So much so that, where before he had nothing but criticism for Elizabeth’s family, in chapter 58,

when she thanks him for his intervention with Lydia and Wickham on behalf of her family, he replies, “[m]uch as I respect them, I believe I thought only of *you*” (282). This is very different to the contempt he has previously expressed for her foolish and inferior family. This second proposal in chapter 58 is very different to the previous one. Darcy’s recollections of his former behaviour are as painful as Elizabeth’s recriminations to herself have been, yet his realisations have had a more fundamental effect on him:

I have been a selfish being all my life, in practice, though not in principle. As a child, I was taught what was *right*; but I was not taught to correct my temper. I was given good principles, but left to follow them in pride and conceit Such I was, from eight to eight-and-twenty; and such I might still have been but for you, dearest, loveliest Elizabeth! What do I not owe you? You taught me a lesson, hard indeed at first, but most advantageous. By you I was properly humbled. I came to you without a doubt of my reception. You showed me how insufficient were all my pretensions to please a woman worthy of being pleased. (284)

This is perhaps the longest piece of dialogue from Darcy. It is heartfelt and humble, an adjective that certainly could not have been applied to Darcy before. His description of himself points to the fact that he must have engaged in substantial introspection to arrive at this self-knowledge. Austen seems to draw from Romantic notions of the significance of childhood in shaping the adult. Wordsworth, for example, notes in “My heart leaps when I behold”, “[t]he Child is the father of the Man”. Austen, though, unlike the Romantics, seems to place more stress on the ability of the adult to change these early shapings. While both Elizabeth and Darcy have changed and grown more mature since their previous encounter, Darcy admits that his change has been much deeper. It is a change of principle and philosophy; it is a change which he (now) embraces. Darcy’s is a masculinity anchored in old-fashioned ideas of traditionalism and responsibility. Yet he is very progressive in his

thinking and treatment of Elizabeth as an intellectual equal. It is this that makes him seriously consider her criticism of him and helps him to change for the better. While still rooted in old-fashioned, Grandisonian ideas of moral action and responsibility, Darcy possesses a dynamism and an ability (and willingness) to learn which sets him apart from Richardson's 'perfect' hero and therefore, he is, I would say, a more convincing version of a hero. Austen seems to be shifting the definition of 'hero' from idea of a model of perfection to an emphasis on the ability for critical self-reflection and change.

Elizabeth's opinions of Darcy and Wickham are so closely linked to one another, that as the one rises in her esteem, so her estimation of the other is turned on its head. This juxtaposition is very deliberate. Elizabeth, and the reader, have to learn what the narrator has been hinting at throughout the novel, that an outward show of civility and pleasing manners are not a true indication of goodness and sincerity; and that (as it has been aptly put by Paula Byrne) "to be well born [is] not necessarily to be well bred" (quoted in Todd 304). We are shown this by the fashionable Bingley sisters' bad manners toward Elizabeth, by Lady Catherine's overbearing officiousness, by Wickham's deceptively pleasing manners, and finally by Darcy's arrogance which masks his generosity and affectionate relationships with his sister and his friends and which makes the discovery of his being a caring landlord so surprising. This is a lesson which Jane Austen reinforces in all of her novels, and particularly with her heroes, in opposition to Chesterfield's teachings.

Captain Wentworth

Next I would like to examine Jane Austen's narrative handling of Captain Frederick Wentworth in *Persuasion* in comparison with Darcy. These two characters seem as distant from one another as two characters can be. Darcy is reserved, haughty (for most of the novel), and represents the class of old, landed gentry. Captain Wentworth, on the other hand,

is admired for his open, unreserved manners. Rather than having been born into it, his ambition has earned him his fortune and rank. Because of this, Wentworth represents “a wholly different scheme of values, and a potentially new model of an alternative society or community, alive and functioning where the traditional land society seemed to be moribund and largely ‘stagnant’” (Todd 228). These ideas (of old landed estates versus new money), is an idea which is extensively explored in *Persuasion*. Wentworth is therefore a very different kind of hero to Darcy, just as *Persuasion* is a different kind of novel. Yet there are points of similarity between these two heroes which I will explore.

Persuasion is a rather more sombre novel than *Pride and Prejudice*, which Jane Austen has described as “too light, and bright, and sparkling” (quoted in Chapman 299). This is in part due to the nature of the story in *Persuasion*, in which the heroine is persuaded to break off an engagement with the hero because of his lack of prospects. Seven years pass (for Anne, these years are spent in an unhappy situation) before the lovers are reunited. Rosemarie Bodenheimer suggests that *Persuasion* is “the work most overtly known for its absorption of romantic feeling”, although the central emphasis on Anne’s growing reliance on her own sense of reason also roots the novel strongly in Enlightenment ideas (606).

The first mention we get of Captain Wentworth is in chapter 4 of *Persuasion*, when the failed romance between Anne and Captain Wentworth is related and he is described (from Lady Russell’s perspective) as “a young man who had nothing but himself to recommend him, and no hopes of attaining affluence” (25). His lack of fortune is greatly emphasised. Using free indirect discourse, the narrator goes on to describe him from his perspective, “he was confident that he would soon be rich, full of life and ardour, he knew that he would soon have a ship, and soon be on a station that would lead to everything he wanted” (25). Lady Russell, “saw it very differently. . . . very little taste for wit, and of anything approaching to impudence a horror. She deprecated the connexion in every light

(25). Here is a very mixed introduction to Captain Frederick Wentworth. The adjectives used to describe him are very positive; “confident”, “full of life”, “sanguine”, “fearless”, “brilliant” yet Lady Russell disapproves the acquaintance (25). The use of free indirect discourse to describe Wentworth allows Austen both to show the attractiveness of Wentworth’s “fearlessness” and “ardour” reflected in his own words and tone, and to invite an understanding of how this language and tone would alarm a character like Lady Russell. Despite her “prejudices on the side of ancestry” (9), Lady Russell is described by the narrator as “a benevolent, charitable, good woman . . . most correct in her conduct, strict in her notions of decorum, and with manners that were held a standard of good breeding” (9). Moreover, Lady Russell is the mother-figure and champion to our heroine, Anne. All of these aspects point to the fact that Lady Russell, unlike a Mrs Bennet who does not have a trustworthy thought in her head, can be relied on to be sensible and to have good judgement. This is similar to the ambivalence created around Darcy’s character at the beginning of *Pride and Prejudice*, yet the reader must choose whether or not to believe the opinions of a reasonable character, rather than the general opinion of a faceless crowd.

Our heroine is less strong-willed than Elizabeth Bennet, and resistance by both her father and Lady Russell “was more than Anne could combat” (25). One is reminded here of Elizabeth’s confrontation with Lady Catherine (272). Anne, at nineteen, was “too young and gentle” to trust her own judgement, and broke off the engagement under the belief that it was principally for Captain Wentworth’s good (24). Despite her claims, Captain Wentworth feels himself “ill-used by so forced a relinquishment”, and their acquaintance ends badly (26). It is clear to see that Captain Wentworth does not believe in old, established ideas of parental authority which form such an important part of the narrative in *Sir Charles Grandison* and *Cecilia*, for example. This fits into Wentworth’s image as a modern, self-made man independent of ‘traditional’ values and ideas of conduct.

In *Persuasion*, as in *Pride and Prejudice*, intelligence and self-awareness are esteemed as character traits, as they signal an ability to grow and change. Captain Wentworth's "genius" (28) is matched with Anne's "elegant and cultivated mind" (39). Such intelligence and self-reflection, of course, make for the complex interior life that has invited the use of free indirect discourse. Despite Anne's regret for having let go of Captain Wentworth, it soon becomes clear that she is seen by friends and family as a barometer for right and wrong and is often "appealed to" to mediate disagreements between her sister Mary and Mary's husband Charles (41). She is treated with "too much confidence by all parties" (42) at Uppercross and is often giving "them all hints of the forbearance necessary between such near neighbours" (44). While treated almost contemptuously by her father and her sister Elizabeth as a useless relation, it is clear that Anne's sensible nature and quiet bearing make her a good confidante and mediator, taking responsibility for more than she should, with discreet forbearance.

All of these qualities come to her aid when she hears that Captain Wentworth is to return, and is coming to Uppercross to visit the Musgrove family. The build-up to Captain Wentworth's entry into the narrative makes use of dramatic tension. After the initial descriptions in chapter 4, the narrative breaks away to focus on Anne's changing situation, and the description of the scene at Uppercross. He is mentioned again at the end of chapter 6, much to Anne's distress and confusion, yet she tells herself to be "insensible" to such discussions and prepare herself for his eventual appearance (50). At the beginning of chapter 7 Captain Wentworth finally arrives, and it seems that everyone meets him before Anne does. He is spoken of by reports from other characters until the middle of chapter seven, when he appears before Anne in an encounter that is very brief after the considerable build-up:

Her eye met Captain Wentworth's, a bow, a courtesy passed; she heard his voice; he talked to Mary, said all that was right, said something to the Miss Musgroves, enough to mark an easy footing; the room seemed full, full of persons and voices, but a few minutes ended it. (58)

The rushed, contracted nature of these phrases succeeds admirably in describing the state of Anne's mind on this encounter, the feeling that everything passed in a blur.

Apart from the two sentences at the beginning of the story which belong to Captain Wentworth's perspective, the narrative point of view has been predominantly Anne's, who is the only one at Uppercross who knows the secret that she and Wentworth had been engaged. So while the action at Uppercross is described from Anne's perspective, an undercurrent of unspoken communication between Anne and Captain Wentworth is conveyed, of which the other characters are ignorant. There is a definite impression of unfinished business in his treating Anne so dismissively compared to his treatment of the Musgrove sisters, and even his pointed attention to Mary. This manner of representation is very successful in conveying the juxtaposition between the mundane events which play out, and the chaos of Anne's thoughts and feelings. The narrative shifts here from free indirect discourse, to an almost stream of consciousness style of narration which pulls the reader deeper into Anne's experience of events.

After the encounter mentioned above, though, quite a large piece of narrative is given from Captain Wentworth's perspective, in which it is made clear that, "He had not forgiven Anne Elliot. She had used him ill, deserted and disappointed him; and worse, she had shewn a feebleness of character in doing so, which his own decided, confident temper could not endure" (59–60). The narrative goes on in free indirect style from Captain Wentworth's perspective for a few more paragraphs, in which it is made known that Captain Wentworth is impatient of finding a wife, "any pleasing young woman who came his way" (60). While we

are given Captain Wentworth's version of what had passed at the ending of the engagement, the narrator also engages our empathy for him by expressing his feelings, both at the time of the engagement as well as in the present. Captain Wentworth's sense of hurt and torment is conveyed, but the use of the third-person pronoun creates a distance from the character which avoids making it sound like self-pity, a feat which would have been difficult to avoid in a first-person or epistolary narrative. His thoughts and feelings toward Anne are ungenerous and signal resentment, as his first instinct was to observe that she was "wretchedly altered" (60). His sense of anger at Anne's decision, despite the passing of eight years is made clear in the statement that her "feebleness of character" had caused her actions "which his own decided, confident temper could not endure" (60). Despite the passing of eight years in which to consider Anne's point of view, Captain Wentworth has not yet been able to throw off his anger enough to do so. The reason is made clearer in "[h]e had been most warmly attached to her, and had never seen a woman since whom he thought her equal" (60). This implies that Wentworth had been comparing women to Anne for eight years – he had thus been repeating his grievances and opinions to himself over and over for the past eight years. His anger is surely the result of an intense regard and a deep sense of loss. The statement that "[h]er power with him was gone forever" is clearly a bit of self-delusion, taking everything else into consideration, as his inability to forgive her proves that he has not put everything that passed between them behind him; that "Anne Elliot was not out of his thoughts" when he described to his sister the woman he hopes to marry (60). The way this sentence is structured is interesting. It does not say "Anne Elliot was in his thoughts". The use of "not out of" rather than "in" signals that it is an involuntary act on Captain Wentworth's part to be thinking of Anne when describing his future wife. Anne clearly still has power over his thoughts and feelings, however unwilling he may be to admit that. So while he is resentful, his sense of hurt, loss and conflict invites the reader to understand and to be sympathetic with him.

Austen seems to draw on Romantic ideas of the hero as vulnerable and develops the representation of the hero in conflict further than Richardson does, who retreats to conduct book examples rather than explore a realistic display of inner struggle. This representation of her heroes in conflict is therefore a further development of Richardson's early attempts at complexity and realism, as well as a departure from his insistence on a perfect hero. Wentworth is also not as self-possessed as the image he projects, as he cannot control his thoughts of Anne. This is similar to Darcy's pointed attempts to always appear composed despite his deep attraction to Elizabeth.

With this in mind, the reader is made aware that the two ex-lovers were "repeatedly in the same circle" and "had no conversation together, no intercourse but what the commonest civility required" (61). Captain Wentworth has cause to talk about the year of their engagement in company when speaking of other things, and while Anne does not believe these references could be as painful to him as they are to her, she feels that he must make the association to their broken engagement in his mind, "though his voice did not falter" and he showed no other signs of recognition or distress (61). From the previous discussion of Captain Wentworth's bitterness, the reader has reason to believe that Anne is correct in her supposition here, yet, for all intents and purposes, "they were as strangers" (62). There is the sense of something happening beneath the surface, a sense the reader gets throughout most of the narrative as presented from Anne's point of view. Only Anne and Captain Wentworth (and the reader) know the secret that they were once engaged. Each know that the other is most likely thinking the same thing, yet both pretend to be unaware of this. This adds to the sense of sexual tension between Anne and Captain Wentworth.

That Captain Wentworth's bitterness with Anne has not made him lose his sense of humanity is made clear. At one point in the narrative he speaks to Mrs Musgrove about her

deceased son “with so much sympathy and natural grace, as shewed the kindest consideration for all that was real and unabsurd in the parent’s feelings” (66).

Anne is generally very aware of Wentworth’s physical proximity to her, and this instance is no different, “they were actually on the same sofa . . . they were divided only by Mrs Musgrove” (66). Later on in the narrative Captain Wentworth occupies a chair lately left by Anne. Upon seeing her return he “instantly” gets up and offers it to her. Although she “immediately drew back with a decided negative”, he does not sit down again (71). This caginess and awareness of one another’s physical presence all contribute to the sexual tension between them.

On the next page, Captain Wentworth expresses an opinion which goes against his image as a ‘modern man’. He expresses an unwillingness to have women on board his ships. When his sister and brother-in-law argue with his “want of gallantry”, he exclaims, “[t]here is no want of gallantry, Admiral, in rating the claims of women to every personal comfort *high*, and this is what I do” (67). Michael Kramp suggests that Wentworth “affirms an archaic notion of fragile femininity” and “defends the actions of a chivalric man who protects and pampers elegant women” (131). His opinion is a Grandisonian contradiction of his modern persona. As his sister Mrs Croft comments, Captain Wentworth is talking as if women are “all fine ladies, instead of rational creatures” (68). Captain Wentworth’s audience includes the two Musgrove girls, two naïve, romantic girls not known for their rationality and intelligence. He is admittedly trying to impress them with this old-fashioned gallantry. It is difficult to imagine a Louisa or Henrietta Musgrove being completely at ease on a ship. In one sense he is catering to his audience. But his expressed opinion is borne of Anne’s rejection of his proposal, and an opinion which he later learns to reassess. Captain Wentworth is convinced that Anne cannot be rational. We have been told that he considers her rejection the result of “feebleness of character”, “weakness and timidity” (60). These are

all very old-fashioned ideas of femininity. He does not allow for the idea that Anne could have made a rational decision regarding her own future. One could almost substitute the word “character” above with the word “mind”. He thinks that feebleness of mind has caused her to be so easily persuadable. By the end of the novel Captain Wentworth admits to the “perfect excellence of mind” in Anne which he had deliberately overlooked for so many years (244). Anne’s intellectual merits only become clear to Captain Wentworth when compared to Louisa, a woman he is almost forced to marry. Captain Wentworth realises the importance of the trait that he has overlooked and is forced to reassess his opinion of women as lacking in rationality. Calhoun argues that:

. . . . the classical bourgeois public sphere of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was constituted around rational critical argument . . . Kant betrayed a certain elitism in the way he noted that mere business people and even women might argue, but the emphasis can be put on the positive, since participation in argument is a means of education capable of overcoming the debilities that make some arguers inferior . . . (2)

Here it might be argued that Austen, in the early nineteenth century, draws on Enlightenment ideas of rationality, but offers a critique of gendered dismissals of women as irrational. Her novels may therefore be read as a contribution to the debates of a changing public sphere.

Captain Wentworth treats Anne, when in company, with a “cold politeness” and a “ceremonious grace” which is disturbing to Anne (71). The words “politeness” and “grace” seem positive and acceptable forms of behaviour until modified by their adjectives “cold” and “ceremonious”. This signals a theme which Jane Austen explored in *Pride and Prejudice* and which is a recurring theme in her novels, that of the disjuncture between polite behaviour and sincere goodwill. Captain Wentworth’s treatment of Anne is deliberate and studied, until he is shaken out of his composure by close contact.

When forced into contact with Anne, as above in the incident with the chair, Captain Wentworth is visibly shaken. He loses all sense of composure and has to “recollect himself” visibly (78). This is very different from the restrained and dignified Sir Charles Grandison and, on the other end of the scale, from the uncontrollably passionate Delvile in the latter half of *Cecilia*. Mr Darcy, too, when left alone with Elizabeth at Netherfield, tries to adhere to a studied indifference to mask his growing attraction. Austen’s choice to represent her heroes as striving for outward composure which masks inner conflict is, as I mention earlier, an important element in her understanding of the realist novel, in comparison with Richardson’s model of behaviour for the hero. While Captain Wentworth makes it clear that he is trying to put as much distance as possible between himself and Anne, he cannot help but to be compassionate toward her. In chapter 9 Anne and Captain Wentworth find themselves together in a room with only Charles Hayter and Anne’s two nephews. The younger nephew is being troublesome while she is tending to her sick nephew, Charles and climbing all over her, ignoring her calls for him to stop:

In another moment, however, she found herself in the state of being released from him; some one was taking him from her, though he had bent down her head so much, that his sturdy hands were unfastened from around her neck, and he was resolutely borne away, before she knew that Captain Wentworth had done it. (79)

The tenderness with which this is done overwhelms Anne. Her reaction is one of a “confusion of varying, but very painful agitations, as she could not recover from” until she leaves the room (79). Captain Wentworth does this entirely in silence and deliberately engages the little boy in play to avoid Anne having to thank him. The silence is a deliberate message to Anne. This is much like the deliberate silence that Darcy uses to try to disengage himself from Elizabeth during the scene at Netherfield where they are left alone. At Netherfield, Darcy is purposely trying to make a point to Elizabeth that he is not as interested

in her as his previous behaviour would suggest. While Elizabeth seemed unconcerned with the silence, Anne takes it as it was intended – a deliberate signal to her that he wants nothing to do with her. This unspoken communication happens without anyone else being aware of it. It speaks of the awareness Wentworth and Anne have of one another. It is also a moment of intimate touching which adds to the sexual tension in the novel. Austen begins to venture on an exploration of Romantic passion about which she is more careful in her earlier novels. In *Pride and Prejudice*, for example, Darcy comes to dinner at Longbourn after his and Elizabeth's meeting at Pemberley. The sexual tension between Elizabeth and Darcy is evident in their intense awareness of being separated, "Darcy walked away to another part of the room. She followed him with her eyes, envied everyone to whom he spoke, had scarcely patience enough to help anybody to coffee, and then was enraged against herself for being so silly!" (262). Later, "[h]e stood by her, however, some minutes, in silence; and, at last, on young ladies whispering to Elizabeth again, he walked away" (262-63). There is no touching in this scene despite the sexual tension. In *Persuasion* it seems that Austen begins to explore sexual tension more boldly than in *Pride and Prejudice*. Sexuality is more strongly explored in both *Persuasion* and in *Pride and Prejudice* than in Richardson, Burney or Edgeworth, who all seem to espouse an Enlightenment caution against passion in the novels discussed in chapter one. This seems to go against Marilyn Butler's reading of Austen as "typically conservative" (109).

Captain Wentworth enacts another thoughtful gesture a few scenes later. Anne has been compelled to join in quite a long walk. On the way back to Uppercross they encounter the Crofts in their gig who make the offer that whoever is particularly tired may have a lift. Although the offer is generally declined, Captain Wentworth seeing Anne's fatigue, "cleared the hedge in a moment, to say something to his sister. The something might be guessed at by its effects" (89). Mrs Croft immediately turns to Anne to ask her particularly to accept the

offer, “Captain Wentworth, without saying a word, turned to her, and quietly obliged her to be assisted into the carriage” (90). Anne “was in the carriage, and felt that he had placed her there, that his will and his hands had done it, that she owed it to his perception of her fatigue, and his resolution to give her rest” (60). Here again is the tenderness from Captain Wentworth, the wordless communication between him and Anne. This is an example of Wentworth embodying elements of the hero of sensibility in his ability to show sincere compassion. There is also an unspoken physical awareness. The touching of their hands preoccupies Anne’s mind as she thinks particularly of “his hands” having put her in the carriage. While they do not speak, they are always aware of one another. It is an awareness that speaks of former intimacy and of frustration and suppressed passion.

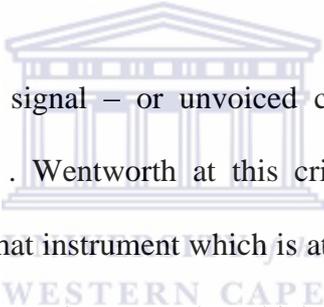
While Captain Wentworth tries to be studied and indifferent in his behaviour to Anne, there are moments in the narrative when he cannot seem to control his actions, when his true feelings are revealed and he struggles for composure, such as the scene described above in which Wentworth accidentally occupies a chair lately left by Anne. His caring actions toward her, done wordlessly and for which he seeks no acknowledgement speak louder than the “cold politeness” which he tries so consistently to maintain. They show a kindness and consideration to Anne which she is not used to. This can be compared to Darcy’s actions in saving Lydia from infamy by bribing Wickham to marry her. He does this without Elizabeth’s knowledge after she has rejected him, and tries to keep this knowledge from her. This is another shift in Austen away from Richardson: her heroes’ acts of chivalry are unspoken. It indicates a change of emphasis from the actions of the hero to the hero’s state of mind, and his motivations for his actions. This is another element of Austen’s realist novel, an emphasis on the novel of character which Samuel Richardson is credited as having first written in *Pamela* (Abrams 191). Yet while *Pamela* is constrained from realism by Richardson’s insistence on didacticism, Austen’s emphasis is on a character as convincingly

portrayed. The only other character to show Anne such kindness is the character in the novel who seems to love her the most – Lady Russell. When viewed in this light his actions are imbued with renewed significance. Wentworth’s involuntary acts therefore seem to reflect truer emotions than his studied words and behaviour. They are at odds with his professions that “[her] power over him was gone forever” (60). As with Darcy, Jane Austen seems to signal that what the hero tries to present in moments of composure is not necessarily the truth.

Captain Wentworth’s anger with Anne lessens after Louisa’s accident. Everyone looks to Anne as the most capable of making decisions, and Captain Wentworth, in his guilt, is only too happy to accept guidance and to rely on Anne’s judgement, complicating readings of Austen’s heroes as alpha males. In making arrangements for Louisa’s care he states, “if Anne will stay, no one so proper, so capable as Anne” (114). The intimate use of her name, when the more formal Miss Anne would have been more appropriate is significant. This incident is very significant as Louisa’s carelessness teaches Wentworth to “distinguish between the steadiness of principle and the obstinacy of self-will, between the darings of heedlessness and the resolution of a collected mind” (244). In short, he begins to appreciate the rationale with which Anne ended their engagement, and realises that what he has thought of as “weakness and timidity” was actually strength of character, something which he had not been able to see in the previous eight years of their separation (60). He thus begins to regret the “blindness of his own pride”, just as Darcy has cause to regret his, and his eyes are finally opened to the lesson that Anne has taught him (245).

The letter in which Wentworth confesses his feelings to Anne bears some comparison with that which Darcy writes to Elizabeth. While Frank Churchill’s letters are “full of professions and falsehoods” Wentworth’s letter is overwhelmingly truthful (114). The events surrounding the writing of Wentworth’s letter perhaps also contribute to the significance of

the letter. Mrs Musgrove and Mrs Croft are having a conversation about the evils of a long engagement. Anne, sitting on a couch looks over to where Captain Wentworth is writing a letter to see if he is listening to the conversation and sees that “his pen ceased to move, his head was raised, pausing, listening, and he turned round the next instant to give a look, one quick conscious look at her” (232). Here again is that unspoken communication between Anne and Captain Wentworth. The communication is agitated, as can be seen from the use of “instant” and “quick”, and deeply meaningful, as can be seen from the use of “conscious” and the repetition of “look”. Anne is called to a window by Captain Harville, and is engaged in a discussion about which of the sexes is more steadfast in love, when they are distracted by a sound from Captain Wentworth’s table – he has dropped his pen. Tony Tanner suggests that:



this is the most important signal – or unvoiced communication in his entire relationship with Anne . . . Wentworth at this critical moment has, however inadvertently, dropped . . . that instrument which is at once a tool and a symbol of men’s dominance over women; the means by which they rule women’s destinies, literally write . . . their lives. (242)

It seems very significant that he should do so while for the first time in the narrative really listening to Anne speaking from the heart, just before she says, “[m]en have had every advantage of us in telling their own story . . . the pen is in their hands” (234). His entire demeanour is one of great agitation as, by contrivance, he manages to sneak the letter into her hand. Anne notes that the handwriting is hardly legible, bespeaking his statement that he “can hardly write” for being overpowered by her statements to Captain Harville which hints at her unaltered love for Captain Wentworth (239). This is a contrast to Darcy’s letter which we know to be written neatly for it being written in a “very close hand” in order to accommodate everything that Darcy had to say in two sheets of paper (152). Wentworth’s

language is highly emotional and he states that he is “half agony, half hope”, a man nearly torn in two (238). His exclamations are passionate and sexualised and they bespeak the effort that it has taken to suppress his feelings for Anne over the previous eight years as well as in the recent months of their re-acquaintance. Wentworth’s expressions of yearning are as emotional as Darcy’s letter is rational. The epistolary mode can be used to invite careful reflection, and can contrastingly serve as a medium for the expression of feelings in the moment. While Darcy’s letter is an indication of his attempt at control, Wentworth’s letter is an exploration of passion. Jane Austen offers us examples of both, and in both instances, the epistolary form acts a conduit through which to view the complexity of her heroes. She uses the epistolary form to explore questions of sincerity (in *Emma*), and changes in attitude and perception in the inner life of her heroes. This speaks against Epstein’s claim that Austen rejects the epistolary mode in favour of third-person to convey complexity of character. Spurred on by Mrs Musgrove and Mrs Croft’s conversation on the one hand, and Anne and Captain Harville’s on the other, Wentworth reaches a pinnacle of hope, love, yearning and regret, and writes his letter while in the grip of these emotions. For Wentworth, who has already lost eight years of happiness with Anne, there is an urgency to their situation which does not allow him to wait and regain his composure before approaching her with his feelings. He exposes his “agony” and “hope” to her eyes in a highly charged letter, which causes Anne as much “agitation” as Darcy’s well-composed letter does to Elizabeth (239). While Wentworth writes his letter with “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” mentioned in *The Lyrical Ballads* (Wordsworth) and so prized in Romanticism, Darcy chooses to write his letter as “a calm and deliberate performance in the cool of leisure”, although of course Darcy admits near the end of the novel that he was not as calm as he thought himself to be at the time (Johnson, quoted in Epstein 402). So while Darcy uses the epistolary form in line with Enlightenment ideas of the balance between passion and reason,

Wentworth's use of the epistolary is more akin to Romanticism's ideas of passion as an exploration of the self.

The competing suitor which Jane Austen offers us in Mr Elliot seems to serve a similar role to that of Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice* and Frank Churchill in *Emma*, and I would like to spend a few moments to discuss him, as I think a discussion of Mr Elliot will reveal part of Jane Austen's intentions in offering us Wentworth as a hero. "His manners were an immediate recommendation" (144). Having at first shunned the Elliot connection, Mr Elliot is later presented as having a "value for rank and connection she perceived to be greater than hers" (146). This is an injunction which could be made for all of Anne's family, including her oldest friend, Lady Russell. In contrast to this, Captain Wentworth is only noticed by her family after he has made his fortune in the navy. His contempt for Sir Walter and Elizabeth, despite their claims to rank and connections, is most clear when he is invited, along with the Musgrove family to an evening party. His friends, though humble, have claims to his attention only by the mutual affection they have for one another. Yet Mr Elliot's manners are so pleasing to everyone, and of the right kind to please Lady Russell, that no one suspects his true character except Anne, who has been doubtful since the start of the acquaintance. Anne suppresses her doubts, though, and finds a lot of pleasure in Mr Elliot's company. His biggest flaw, from Anne's perspective, is that "he is not open" (159). Anne "prized the frank, the open-hearted, the eager character above all others" (159). "Mr Elliot was too generally agreeable. Various as were the tempers in her father's house, he pleased them all" (159). These same words could easily be applied to Wickham. This is an implied critique of Chesterfield's advice. Another character who pleases all is Charles Grandison, but while Grandison pleases through sincerity, Austen's obviously marked 'villains' please through agreeableness or flattery. It is of course soon revealed that Mr Elliot's intentions in

re-establishing the connection with the Elliots is to preserve his place as heir. Mrs Smith's depiction of Mr Elliot's character is truly shocking. Tony Tanner suggests that:

With the vivid example of the absolute non-correlation between 'manners' and character presented by Mr Elliot we have to accept that 'good manners' in the socially accepted and prescribed sense are simply no longer of any use in estimating or inferring the inner qualities of anyone. Perhaps a new code of manners altogether is necessary – manners which, however 'incorrect' or even crude according to established social notions of decorum and propriety, do nevertheless reveal the true qualities of the inner man, or woman. (227)

Socially pleasing manners, "so exactly what they ought to be" such as that of Elizabeth, Mrs Clay and Mr Elliot offer no clue as to the true character of their bearers (140). Admiral Croft, Mrs Croft and Captain Harville, while their manners are not so polished, are variously described as: frank and good humoured (167); "open, easy and decided" (46); "unaffected, warm and obliging" (97). Although not as elegant as might be prized by polite society, these characters, representing, as Wentworth does, the rise of a new middle class, offer a sincerity and openness in their manner which Anne (who is proven a good judge of character) appreciates and enjoys. These manners are offered to the reader as a new code of manners, one more trustworthy than the previously accepted norms. Admiral Croft, Mrs Croft and Captain Harville, as family and friends of Captain Wentworth, strengthen the value of the newness that Wentworth presents in his own ardent manner, a manner which Lady Russell fears, but which attracts Anne. Wentworth seems, in his personal ambition and his disregard for the seemingly useless "value of rank" to be imbued with the "limitless aspiration" which invited a view of the times as "a great age of new beginnings and high possibilities" so valued in early Romantic writing (Abrams 179).

In offering us a new code of manners, Austen seems to be following Samuel Johnson's injunction that the realist novel should provide a model for behaviour in the real world, "books are written chiefly to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life (20)." But Austen also departs from Johnson's strictures in this essay since she presents her 'villains' as mixed characters, something Johnson finds dangerous:

Many writers, for the sake of following nature, so mingle good and bad qualities in their principal personages, that they are both equally conspicuous; and as we accompany them through their adventures with delight, and are led by degrees to interest ourselves in their favour, we lose the abhorrence of their faults, because they do not hinder our pleasure, or, perhaps, regard them with some kindness, for being united with so much merit. (21)

In presenting more complex heroes, Austen finds herself needing opposing male characters who are more complex than the more traditional villain figures of Richardson, Burney and Edgeworth. The term 'villain' therefore does not fit the more complex questionable characters in Austen's novels, such as Wickham, Mr Elliot, Frank Churchill and Willoughby. Austen's predecessors have however, have made some attempt towards villain figures who are more realistic, and recognizable social types. Austen is therefore not merely following models suggested by Johnson and other earlier novelists, but is engaged in a careful consideration of these ideas about the novel, taking what she finds useful, but also departing, at times, radically, from established modes and authority. The question of Austen's 'villains', however, requires more attention than the scope of this thesis allows.

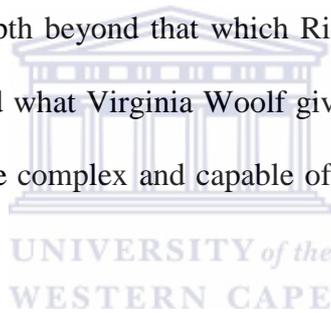
The youthful burlesque of the *Juvenilia* has developed into an acute critical reflection upon the genre of the realist novel as she inherits it, and on the adaptations and changes she brings to the form. Austen is a sceptical reader, questioning rather than taking things at face

value or adopting the popular view of things. Knox-Shaw, for example, professes that Austen belongs to “sceptical tradition” within the Enlightenment (5), that she showed “strong preference for sticking to the observable” (9) and that she had “[a] determination to get at the truth” (12). In studying Austen’s reading, and her opinions of various books, Annette B. Hopkins concludes that Austen “moved against the current” in her criticism of books and “shows and independence of mind” (425).

Jane Austen presents to us in Captain Wentworth a new kind of hero, an ambitious man who, happy in his own accomplishments, values sincerity above the relatively useless concepts of rank and connections. He is, in this way, quite similar to Darcy who, despite his pride in his own ancient lineage, is unfailingly loyal toward Bingley regardless of Bingley’s close link to commerce and his lack of connections. Although flawed in some ways, Wentworth’s innate kindness is undeniable and (as can be seen from my discussions above) he cannot suppress it despite his initial deep sense of anger toward Anne. Captain Wentworth therefore presents a new set of values which regards real friendship above ‘good connections’, and together with Darcy, represents a new kind of hero who values friendship with the woman of his choice, in contradiction to Chesterfield’s teachings.

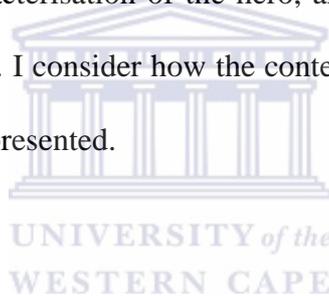
Just as Austen’s heroes contradict the ideals of manhood as set out by Chesterfield, Austen’s heroines speak out against Chesterfield’s proclamation that women are “children of larger growth” with no sense. The fact that intelligence is so highly prized in her heroines is significant in light of this. The fact that Austen’s heroines are intelligent makes it possible for the deeper understanding to exist between Elizabeth and Darcy, between Anne and Wentworth, and between Emma and Mr Knightley. These heroes fall in love with their heroines partly because of their intelligence. Their relationships are marked by trust and consultation, speaking to an equality that belies Woolf’s claim that Austen’s heroes are weaker than their heroines.

Austen's heroes possess neither the unfailing confidence and assurance of the perfect Grandison, nor the insincere, ingratiating demeanour that Chesterfield proclaims is the ideal. Perhaps what Austen is trying to say in creating these heroes is that there may be as many 'perfect' heroes as there are heroines to fall in love with them. That perhaps perfection is subjective. Margaret Madrigal Wilson suggests that, "[t]he portraits of these men [Austen's heroes], however, are tempered by realism. They are good, they are kind, they do things that might be considered heroic, but they are not perfect, and they are not every woman's dream husband" (185). Austen is quoted as having said "pictures of perfection . . . make me sick and wicked" (208). None of the heroes and heroines that she offers us are perfect, yet still, the narrative techniques she employs, including the use of free indirect discourse and the epistolary mode, give them a depth beyond that which Richardson, Burney and Edgeworth were able to achieve, and beyond what Virginia Woolf gives her credit for. Austen's heroes while undoubtedly masculine, are complex and capable of change, certainly not lacking "in vitality and character".



CHAPTER FOUR: DARCY AS INFLUENCE ON THE MODERN ROMANCE HERO

In the previous three chapters of this thesis I have considered the authors that influence Jane Austen in her use of narrative style, as well as in the characterisation of her heroes. I have paid particular attention to the ways in which Austen makes the hero Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* more complex. In this chapter I will look at the period two hundred years after the publication of *Pride and Prejudice*, and the ways in which Darcy may have influenced the characterisation of heroes in the modern romance novel. My focus in this chapter will be to sketch a context of romance publishing in South Africa. I will discuss two South African romances in relation to the characterisation of the hero, and suggest how Austen may have influenced these romance writers. I consider how the context of writing for a new black elite may shape how the heroes are represented.



Theories of romance novel reading

The definition of a romance has changed over the centuries. Whereas a romance was once considered a story which:

deploys characters who are sharply discriminated as heroes or villains, masters or victims; its protagonist is often solitary, and relatively isolated from social context; it tends to be set in the historical past, and the *atmosphere* is such as to suspend the reader's expectations based on everyday experience. The plot of the prose romance emphasizes adventure, and is frequently cast in the form of the quest for the ideal, or the pursuit of an enemy; and the non-realistic and occasionally melodramatic events are claimed by some critics to project in

symbolic form the primal desires, hopes, and terrors in the depths of the human mind, and to be therefore analogous to the materials of dream, myth, ritual, and folklore. (Abrams 192)

Romances were therefore initially outside the realm of normal human experience, and not to be confused with 'everyday experience'. In his *Rambler* essay on the dangers of the new realist novel, Johnson argues that because romances were so clearly unrealistic:

every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among men, that the reader was in very little danger of making any applications to himself; the virtues and crimes were equally beyond his sphere of activity; and he amused himself with heroes and with traitors, deliverers and persecutors, as with beings of another species, whose actions were regulated upon motives of their own, and who had neither faults nor excellencies in common with himself. (2-3)

Contemporary romance novels, however, are realist novels in that the realms they sketch closely resemble the real world. Part of the attraction of the romance novel, is that the reader can project herself into the novel and read it as a wish-fulfilment fantasy. There is thus a tension between the aspects of fantasy and reality in these novels. The novels seem to borrow from both fantasy and reality while aspiring to a realist mode. According to Janice Radway, "the popular romance simultaneously collapses the distance between its fantasy worlds and the real *and* slyly admits their disjunction" (192). As I discuss in chapter one, while Richardson aspires to the realist form, his insistence on conduct book characters detracted from the realist genre. Burney and Edgeworth, although their attempts at character complexity are more successful than Richardson, are also to some extent held back by their insistence on didacticism. Austen innovates and develops this realist trend further, and creates more complex and rounded characters, even in her 'villains'. The romance authors that I

discuss, although they do aspire to the realist genre, adapt their characters to cater for a readership of the new black South African middle class elite. While they do attempt to stay true to the conventions of the realist novel, their writing also has to include aspirational elements that will appeal to this new audience. Although the guidelines for the Sapphire novels state that the hero must be successful in his career, the heroes of the novels that I will discuss are not moderately successful, but highly successful, and possess ostentatious markers of this wealth and success, embodied by their expensive cars, designer suits, magnificent homes and their generally expensive tastes. The Sapphire guidelines state the hero should be in his late thirties to early forties, yet one of the heroes that I discuss is in his mid-thirties while the other is just thirty, and both are CEOs of big companies, thereby displaying an unusually strong sense of drive and ambition. Because the readers project themselves into the story as the heroine, the heroine does not have to have achieved a great level of success, but she must be ambitious, as is prescribed by the Sapphire guidelines. The two authors that I discuss give their heroines different levels of success, so while Langa is a corporate climber at the marketing firm she works at, Lebo is an entertainment journalist trying to start her own business. Although the Sapphire guidelines do prescribe that the protagonists need to be successful, the authors themselves decide on this level of success and how it will be portrayed. The guidelines state:

The hero is:

- strong
- intelligent
- good-looking
- slightly older than the heroine (late thirties to early forties)
- successful in his career

Both authors, as I state above, choose to make their heroes wildly successful. I suggest that this is because the realist genre these authors work in has to be adapted to accommodate aspects of the aspirational fantasy that their readers want and must incorporate these fantasies in a realist setting.

Modern romance novels have a low reputation, much like novels did in the eighteenth century. Despite the fact that romance novels outsell other forms of mass market fiction such as crime novels, they are considered to have very little literary value, and to be written and consumed for the sole purpose of providing a wish fulfilment fantasy. Laura Clawson suggests that they “are a particularly interesting form of popular culture to consider as evidence of their consumers’ fantasies because of the romance industries assiduous efforts to chart and respond to reader preferences” (462). The popularity of modern romance novels is indisputable. According to the Romance Writers of America, \$1.37 billion in sales were achieved for romance novels in 2008 (Cox and Fisher 306). While it is generally known that scholars credit the works of Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë as the precursors to the modern romance novel, I would like to extend that argument in this chapter, and suggest that Darcy has influenced the modern romance hero (Lee 56).

Before I move on to discuss Jane Austen’s contributions to the genre, I would like to briefly consider the influence Charlotte Brontë’s writing has had on the conventions of romance writing. In the time that Austen was writing at the end of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, there was increasing acceptance of the idea of marrying for love rather than for pragmatic reasons such as wealth or social position. Jane Austen advocated the idea of choosing a partner based on mutual respect and admiration rather than flighty sexual attraction. In *Pride and Prejudice* we are given extremes both of marrying for momentary lust (Mr and Mrs Bennet as well as Lydia and Wickham), as well as marrying for purely pragmatic reasons (Charlotte Lucas and Mr Collins). For Elizabeth and Darcy, who are held

up as the ideal of marriage, a great deal of emphasis is placed on their developing respect for one another. This is in fact one of the central themes of the novel – the importance of mutual admiration and respect in mate selection. In Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*, which has perhaps had a more significant impact on romance novels than any of Brontë’s other works, one can trace the close links to the Romantic Movement, which advocated intense emotion and spontaneity. Through *Jane Eyre*, Susan Ostrov Weisser suggests, Charlotte Brontë has “defined romantic love through a paradigmatic story that has lasted into our contemporary age” (39). The story of Jane Eyre and Edward Rochester is filled with deep emotion and sexual attraction. Charlotte Brontë’s contribution to the genre is the idea of the passionate attraction between the hero and the heroine. Gilbert and Gubar suggest that Charlotte Brontë “fearing male sexual power” imposes equality in her two protagonists by injuring Rochester in the fire that claims the life of his mad wife Bertha (368–69). The modern romance, I would suggest, steers away from this weakening of the hero and instead portrays this passionate attraction as more diluted and less intense. Weisser suggests that modern ideals of romance combine Charlotte Brontë’s “charged sexual passion” with Jane Austen’s ideas of “domestic virtues, affectionate intimacy and support, and suitability of temperament” (38). Charlotte Brontë herself said of Austen, “the Passions are perfectly unknown to her” (quoted in Littlewood 428). While passion might be less overt in Austen’s writing, I argue that she explores passion to some extent, particularly in *Persuasion*, as I discuss in chapter three. For the romance reader, I suggest, the sexually charged attraction represents something bigger than the hero and heroine can control. It is a primal, uncontrollable reaction – a larger force at work which can be romanticised into the ideas of fate or destiny. Austen’s more reasoned approach to mate selection is by comparison more controlled and precise. The fact that these two ideas of romantic love have been amalgamated into an ideal suggests that readers want

both the unrestrained, primal force, as well as the control suggested by choosing a mate one can respect in their romantic fantasies.

While I do suggest, as I mention above, that Charlotte Brontë's contribution to the genre has been significant, Jane Austen's impact on it has been even more so. In particular, she has offered us Darcy as the ideal romantic hero that combines passion with conservative ideas of social status and responsibility. Darcy offers an early model of the contemporary ideal which combines the passionate and the pragmatic, an ideal which, I argue, influences romance writing even today. In this chapter I discuss modern romance novels in general, their origins, conventions and readers. I consider similarities in plot and character development with *Pride and Prejudice*. I explore the romance novels which I published in my capacity as editor of Sapphire Press, a South African romance imprint, selecting two novels to examine, and including questionnaires that I sent to the authors of the selected novels and the guidelines sent to the romance writers.

Romance fiction publishers do more market research than any other publishers (Eike 28). They are therefore poised to respond to the changing needs of their market. In fact, readers often provide direct feedback to romance authors about what they want in a romance novel (Cox and Fisher 308). I suggest that this is one of the reasons why romance novels are so incredibly popular. It is generally assumed that readers of modern romantic fiction are uneducated, but research has shown that, in fact, around 42 per cent of romance readers hold at least a bachelor's degree (Lee 52). While the plots of most romance novels may seem homogenous, there are many subgenres within this category of books, including historical romances, Regency romances, supernatural romances, Christian romances, western romances and erotic romances.

An exploratory study done by Anthony Cox and Maryanne Fisher, published in the *Journal of Social, Evolutionary, and Cultural Psychology* in 2010 discusses the relative character development of the hero in relation to the heroine in romance novels. As part of their discussion, Cox and Fisher explain the typical progression of plot in a Harlequin romance novel – I suggest that this plot progression could be applied to any imprint of romance novel. Here is an extract of the summary which they present:

Being the one to undertake the majority of parental investment, the female is very selective about her potential mates and decides that he needs to improve in certain aspects before he will be a viable choice . . . She also needs proof that he has positive relationships with those around him, such as his family, friends, co-workers, all of which reflects a soundness of character . . . In some instances, [the male] engages in intrasexual competition to fend off potential rivals, which thus indicates to the female that he is interested in her, as well as displaying characteristics that might be desirable, such as physical strength . . . As this example of a plot demonstrates, the focus is on the woman choosing a mate, thus placing the heroine within an active role in the mating process. (308-309)

The above plot summary can be applied to *Pride and Prejudice*. Elizabeth Bennet, astonishingly, is allowed to be selective in her choice of husband despite the fact that her family is not particularly rich and their estate is entailed. Elizabeth has very particular ideas about how marriage should be, and is therefore opinionated about the kind of mate to choose as a husband. She rejects Mr Collins' offer of marriage because she recognises that he is not her intellectual equal, despite her mother's protestations that marrying him would secure her and her sisters a home after her father's death. Mr Bennet himself supports Elizabeth's choice to reject Mr Collins. Elizabeth of course also rejects Darcy's first proposal, despite what a connection with him could mean for her family because she feels that he is arrogant and lacks

integrity, and goes so far as to accuse him of ungentlemanly behaviour. Elizabeth first needs proof of “soundness of character” before she falls in love with him. This evidence comes in the form of Darcy’s letter to her explaining why he kept Jane and Bingley apart, and outlining the truth of his interactions with Wickham. The ultimate proof of his character comes when Elizabeth visits Pemberley, and is told that Darcy is a good master and landlord, and a loving brother to his younger sister. His character is finally reinforced when it comes to light that he tracked down Wickham and facilitated his marriage to Lydia.

While Darcy does not engage in explicit “intrasexual competition”, he does open Elizabeth’s eyes as to the real character of Wickham. Darcy rises in Elizabeth’s esteem proportionately to her loss of esteem for Wickham. In this sense, Darcy ‘replaces’ Wickham as an object of admiration for Elizabeth, and Darcy himself is the reason for this shift in Elizabeth’s perception. He supplants Wickham in Elizabeth’s affections, while also offering her evidence of his own integrity in how he has dealt with Wickham in the past. Lastly, Elizabeth, as can be seen from my arguments above, plays a very active role in choosing her mate.

Cox and Fisher conclude that the key to the Harlequin romance novel is:

the inequality between hero and heroine character development. In general, the heroine shows little character development; her personality, values, and goals are relatively, when compared to the hero, quite stable. (311)

This is so that the largely female readership finds it easier to relate to the heroine, and to fantasise themselves into the story. The most significant change which the heroine undergoes is one of perception. Her perception of the hero undergoes a material change. The hero, on the other hand, shows significant character development through the course of the novel. Darcy’s first proposal in *Pride and Prejudice* acts as the catalyst for the character

development in both Elizabeth and Darcy. Elizabeth's change, however, is one of perception. She comes to the realisation that she has been prejudiced about Darcy, and changes her opinion of him. Darcy's self-realisation as the result of Elizabeth's rejection is much deeper, and leads him to recognise his own arrogance and selfishness. After this, Darcy becomes more self-aware and consciously tries to be a better person in order to be worthy of Elizabeth, "[y]ou showed me how insufficient were all my pretensions to please a woman worthy of being pleased" (Austen 284).

One very common and well-documented plot device which is used in modern romance novels is the transformation of the hero from "cad" to "dad" (Cox and Fisher 305). In plots which use this device, the hero starts off as arrogant or rude, and at the end he would have 'transformed' into a loving family man. The heroine's altering perception and opinion of the hero is the chief mode through which the hero's transformation is tracked. The similarities of this plot device to the plot of *Pride and Prejudice* is significant. In my discussion of the narrative handling of Darcy's character development, I examine the way in which Darcy is first discovered by the people at the Meryton assembly to be "proud; to be above his company, and above being pleased" (10). Darcy's comment to Bingley that Elizabeth is "tolerable, but not handsome enough to please [him]", is overheard by Elizabeth, and raises her dislike of him (11). After this encounter, she spends a significant portion of the novel deliberately attempting to offend Darcy, and is likewise determined to be offended by whatever he does or says. She therefore misses the narrative hints that she might have been mistaken about Darcy. The reader of course sees that he has better manners than the Bingley sisters (43), and that he is devoted to his sister (39). But this is not to say that Darcy is not arrogant and proud - his comments at the Meryton assembly are undoubtedly rude; it is only to say that Elizabeth misses the hints that there could be another side to his personality. The first half of the plot is about Elizabeth's growing dislike of Darcy, while the second half of

the plot traces her discovery of the kinder side of his character. In this sense Darcy's character serves as a model for a significant portion of modern romance heroes.

In her article Linda Lee suggests that this plot line in modern romance novels which has the hero transforming from a "cad" to a "dad" is a reworking of the *Beauty and the Beast* fairy tale. Instead of a physical transformation from an animal or a monster to human form, "the modern Beast is a product of the corporate world; he is austere, powerful, and amoral but usually not physically repulsive" (59). The heroine's love, or the hero's desire for her love, transforms him into a more open, caring person, one kind enough to eventually be a nurturing father to the couple's offspring. Given the significant similarities in plot and character development which I suggest between *Pride and Prejudice* and modern romance novels, one could see *Pride and Prejudice* as a reworking of the *Beauty and the Beast* fairy tale where the aspiration for Elizabeth's love transforms Darcy from an arrogant, proud man into a more self-aware, caring one.

Much academic research has been done on romance as a genre. The genre as a whole is quite complex and continually changing, although many critics of the genre (whether academic or laymen) try to pigeonhole it as useless fluff. Academic and romance author Lee Tobin-McClain finds that she has experienced romance as, "escapism, empowerment, mood enhancement, financial lifesaver, and antifeminist tract" (295). The most well-known study of the romance genre is, perhaps, Janice Radway's *Reading the Romance* published in 1984. The purpose of Radway's study was to establish whether romance reading by women reinforces traditional patriarchy by "making women the passive recipients of self-negating messages that they quite happily, unreflectively, and unresistingly incorporate as they read" (Berlant 346). In the study, which focused on a select group of women in the American mid-west, Radway attempted to study the readers' responses to the romance novels they read. Her conclusion was that "popular romance has neither intrinsically conservative nor radical

implications but always immanently contains both sites of resistance and of valorization of the structures of female disempowerment” (348). The subject of romance novels as a genre is thus a complex one, and it is not the intention of this thesis to examine the genre critically in detail. For the Smithton readers in Radway’s study: “weak heroes have no place in a romance” (73). They prefer a hero who is “strong and masculine, but equally capable of unusual tenderness, gentleness, and concern for [the heroine’s] pleasure” (81). This seems to support Linda Lee’s research, and also to correspond with the characterisation of the romance heroes that I will discuss. The rest of this chapter will attempt to provide some context for the publication of romance in South Africa, and to suggest the ways in which Darcy may have influenced the stereotype of the hero in two South African examples of the modern romance genre.



Romance novels in South Africa

Romance publishing in South Africa is an active field. Afrikaans romance imprints at NB Publishers like Satyn and Jasmyn have been well-established and are offering new titles across their imprints each month. NB Publishers has a web page dedicated to their different imprints of Afrikaans romance novels. These titles were able to compete successfully with imported English Mills & Boon titles, and also with the large number of Mills & Boon titles translated for the Afrikaans market. Local Afrikaans publisher Lapa have their own series of romance novels called Romanza. For the English market, Fundza Literary Trust is an organisation aimed at encouraging reading in the youth aged 13–25. Using a mobile app, Fundza releases one new short story each week (one chapter per day) free of charge to their readers. Although the stories are spread across genres, many of the stories they publish are romances. Romance publishing in South Africa has become so prevalent that the Romance

Writers Organisation of South Africa was established in 2014. The non-profit organisation has chapters around the country to “provide support, encouragement and professional development to romance writers”. Further north in Africa, publisher Bibi Bakare-Yusuf has started Ankara Press, a romance imprint of Nigeria-based Cassava Republic. The romance imprint publishes African romances by African authors, with e-books available for sale on their website. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine in depth the state of romance publishing in South Africa and in the rest of Africa, so I will confine the rest of this chapter to examining the ways in which I think Darcy has influenced the characterisation of modern romance heroes by looking at romance novels written by two South African authors. By examining the heroes in these two romance novels, I hope to trace the ways in which the characteristics of Austen’s hero has influenced conventions of writing heroes in modern romance novels.

From 2010 until 2013 I worked as an editor at Kwela Books, working predominantly on their South African romance list, Sapphire Press. Sapphire romance novels were written according to guidelines established in-house at Kwela Books and made public on their website. The growth of the black middle class in South Africa opened up the possibility that there might be a market for romances aimed at precisely this market, the readers of *True Love* and *Drum* magazines. The books were initially published in partnership with *True Love* magazine as Romance Book Club offerings and were advertised in the magazine. Readers would subscribe to the book club through *True Love* and for a fee of R50 per month could receive one romance per month delivered to them. It soon became clear that readers were uncomfortable with the idea of committing themselves to a monthly fee and it was decided that the books would be sold through mainstream book shops such as Exclusive Books. The difficulty with this was that these books shops were situated mostly in metropolitan areas and were not reaching readers in the numbers that were required. Therefore, difficulties with the

distribution networks and competitive pricing in South Africa resulted in the imprint going dormant after I left the company in 2013. As a result of this there are a limited number of books available for discussion. Interestingly, at roughly the same time that Sapphire started publishing, another local publishing company also started publishing South African romance novels. They were called Nollybooks and claimed that the audience they were aiming their books at were young women aged 16-24 (De Waal). As a result, Nollybooks novels contained no sex (Mabuse and Wither). While the books received quite a bit of media attention at the time when they first launched, Nollybooks has also unfortunately gone dormant, and their books are no longer being sold in bookshops. Nélleke de Jager was the publisher at Kwela when the Sapphire series was launched. When asked during an email interview why she thinks the series was unsuccessful, she replied:

Distribution. It really is a fact that publishing is easy and the distribution hard, and costly. We managed to distribute Sapphire through the same channels as Mills & Boon in CNA, but merchandising was still a problem, and customers could often not find our books. Often. Making the Sapphires available as e-books online also didn't solve the problem, as I suspect many of our readers might not have credit cards. In the end the print runs became too low for us to justify the margins, and the project.

There might be a further explanation for why the romance novel series seem to be unsuccessful in South Africa. An article by Miki Flockemann investigates the popularity of soap operas in South Africa, particularly in townships such as Soweto. At the time of writing the article, the American soap opera *The Bold and the Beautiful*, although immensely popular in South Africa, had been overtaken in popularity by local soap *Generations*. Flockemann's discussion focuses on *The Bold and the Beautiful*, and she finds, interestingly, that the soap "simultaneously inverts and affirms gender roles" (147). The men, for example, "are often

represented as creative, passive, and emotional, capable of tears and passionate speeches of undying love” (148). The love lives of the characters, Flockemann finds, remains “the dominant narrative strand” (148). The treatment of love and desire in the soap is similar to the treatment it receives in romantic fiction says Flockemann, in which “sex is romanticized and love reduced to pure emotion” (148). Soap operas enjoy as bad a reputation as romance novels in being considered mass culture. In discussing the way in which the soap is received by an audience in Fatima Dike’s play *So What’s New?*, Flockemann comments, “there is a negotiation of meaning in the way the women enjoy the ‘sexy and passionate’ men like Ridge, while being fully aware of the unrealistic aspect of such enjoyment, given the prevailing context referred to in an ever-present threat of township ‘jackrollers’ (gang rapists)” (152). There are therefore many similarities in the negotiation of masculinity and the portrayal of romance in soap operas compared to romance novels. It offers readers a similar opportunity for wish fulfilment in watching and projecting themselves into the glamorous lives of soap opera characters whose lives seem to be dominated by love and romance. It is therefore worth considering whether soap operas contribute to the failure of the romance novel series in offering readers an alternative for the wish fulfilment needs for the much lower price of an annual TV licence rather than a fee of R50 for the two hours’ worth of entertainment to be received by a short romance novel. Alternatively, readers can have these needs met by the variety of women’s magazines currently available. According to Addison, the total South African readership of women’s interest magazines such as *True Love* and *Cosmopolitan* is in the region of about 9.4 million with fierce competition among brands for market share resulting in the careful evaluation of content for appeal to a broad segment of the market (25). In Deidre Donnelly’s study “Globalised Girlhood: The Teaching of Femininity in *Cosmopolitan* and *True Love*” she states that “[w]omen’s magazines are

aspirational devices that present the reader with utopian lifestyle images, which offer an opportunity to fantasise about an ‘ideal self’” (37).

Sapphire Press romances are short romances, roughly 30 000 words and written mostly by local authors. All of the romances have local settings, either rural or urban, and have main characters who are black South Africans. The guidelines given to authors are quite specific, but allow for a lot of variation in the details of the plot. The guidelines, which I attach as an appendix, provide some guide as to the characterisation of the hero and heroine, the target readership, and the plot progression over the course of the ten chapters. These guidelines specifically refer to the Mills & Boon imprint, perhaps the most well-known romance imprint in South Africa. The Sapphire romances are therefore based directly on this UK imprint which publishes about 120 romances each month. During the years that I was an editor at Kwela publishing these romances, we received an overwhelming number of manuscripts from would-be authors. A significant number of the manuscripts we published were from first-time authors. In this chapter I select two Sapphire romances to examine and discuss. Both of these titles are books that I published in my capacity as editor at Sapphire Press and were selected off the ‘slush pile’ – a cache of unsolicited manuscripts. Along with my discussion of the novels, I suggest the ways in which the authors may have been influenced, either directly or indirectly by Austen’s hero, through an analysis of extracts from the novels and the authors’ responses to a questionnaire. All quotes and opinions by Make and Matsaneng in this discussion are taken from their answers to the questionnaires. The questionnaires and the authors’ responses to them are attached as appendices to this thesis.

Park and Rajan’s introduction to *The Postcolonial Jane Austen* argues:

If the essays . . . in this volume which pursue the investigation of the ‘influence’ of Austen’s novels in different times and places are not mere exercises in

comparative criticism, it is because they insist upon the ways in which Austen's 'themes' - bourgeois marriage, domesticity, female 'conduct', daughterly value, property and propriety - and her novels' distinctive forms of critical, social, and mimetic realism both apply and are intransigent to these different contexts. (15)

This collection of essays, which focuses on India and the East, does not reject Austen's novels as alien to their concerns, thereby leaving the door open for a discussion on Austen's influence on postcolonial literature. Two essays in the collection: Nalini Natarajan's, "Reluctant Janeites: Daughterly Value in Jane Austen" and Sarat Chandra Chatterjee's Swami and You-Me Park's, "Father's Daughters: Critical Realism in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and Pak Wansö's *A Faltering Afternoon* [Hwichöngkörinүн Oho]" discuss similarities and influences, but the essays in this collection generally focus on representations of women while my study focuses on male characters. My study offers a different view of the significance of reading Jane Austen in Africa to that offered by Molaria Ogundipe's poem "To a 'Jane Austen' class at Ibadan University" in the same collection of essays which assumes that Austen represent for African readers only a relationship of oppression and exploitation:

sons of farmers – descendants of slavers – born of traders
in oil and liberty – offspring of riverain folk who plied to
horror ships with eyes quick white in hope – ask why the
Austen folk carouse all day and do no work – play cards
at noon and dance the while – the while the land vanished
behind closures – mothers' seeds into the holds or marts –

and pliant life into pits – and in the south or souths, the
sorrow songs rake the skies – while death the autocrat
stalks both bond and free? (12 – 20)

Louise Make: *Five-Star Seduction*

Five-Star Seduction was written by Louise Make and published by Sapphire Press in 2011. Make, like Matsaneng whom I discuss below, is also a romance reader, thus both authors are well-versed in the conventions of romance writing. Make's story is set in Johannesburg. In it, the heroine, Langaletu Cima is a marketing executive pitching to win a marketing account for the Rhadebe Omni-Chic Hotel group. The enigmatic CEO Lazola Rhadebe finds Langa's pushiness abrasive, but allows her to pitch for the account anyway. Their relationship starts inauspiciously when Langa arrives at the meeting and Lazola discovers that Langa is the same woman that he shared a heated and intimate kiss with at a formal dinner the night before. Both Langa and Lazola are caught unaware by this. Lazola assumes that Langa uses her body to get what she wants and treats her with contempt. Soon, however, their attraction becomes overwhelming and they start a relationship, but Lazola's responsibilities often call him away and Langa begins to suspect that he is cheating on her. Eventually Lazola admits that he is in love with Langa and that there never was anyone else. The story ends just after Langa accepts Lazola's proposal of marriage.

Louise Make, the author of *Five-Star Seduction* is a UCT graduate who has occupied various positions at magazine publishing companies. Louise Make has read *Pride and Prejudice* and sees some similarities with the novel and modern romance novels:

Many stories today focus on ‘fluff’: fairly simple characters in flashy, trendy worlds, living out clichés. I love a romance that surprises the main characters with serious obstacles and forces them to examine their actions and beliefs, and trigger inner growth. The romance novels I choose today are that sort; and that is what I enjoyed experiencing with Elizabeth and Mr Darcy.

Make deliberately creates a heroine that she herself describes as “strong enough to hold her own”, as Elizabeth does against Darcy. Make describes the similarities between Lazola, her romance hero, and Darcy:

I just love alpha males, so Lazola was a work of pure instinct at the time. Now, however, remembering my crush on the seemingly arrogant Mr Darcy, I think they’re actually very similar.

Both judge their heroines quite harshly upon meeting them. Darcy looks down on Elizabeth and her family’s social standing. Lazola accuses Langa of using instant seduction to secure a contract with him. Interestingly, because he is also new to love, he hurts her in the process of just being himself. By the time he realises he wants more than sex from her, she has begun cutting him out of her life – forcing him to step out of his impenetrable armour and begin a focused and relentless seduction that demonstrates his sincerity and commitment, similar to Darcy’s dedicated pursuit of Elizabeth.

For Make, then, there seems to be a close correlation between Lazola and Darcy, and she notes some direct influences.

Langa’s initial attraction to Lazola is unwilling, yet uncontrollable. This contradiction results in a complex interior life for the heroine which invites the use of free indirect

discourse as the writer wishes the reader to have both an intimate sense of the character's thought process, and the critical distance signalled by the narrator's third-person reference. I have discussed the characteristics of free indirect discourse in the third chapter of this thesis. The benefit of using free indirect discourse, suggests Jeremy Hawthorn, is "that of an apparently dramatic and intimately direct access to a character's thoughts or speech without the distracting presence of a narrator signalled by tag-phrases such as 'he thought' or 'she thought'" (132). During the first meeting between Langa and Lazola, "[s]he snapped out of her daydreaming, angry to be fretting over her hair at a time such this. And why did he insist on calling her Miss Cima while referring to the rest of her team by their first names?" (Make 27). The use of free indirect discourse is useful in letting the reader know that Langa is not entirely in control her reactions to Lazola. She is angry with herself for thinking about her appearance when she has more important things to worry about. In pondering why he would address her so formally she is also overthinking her interactions with him, signalling an unwilling attraction. The reader now knows that Langa is outside of her comfort zone because of her attraction to Lazola, and that she might act uncharacteristically in future. This form of narration is woven throughout the novel – usually evident when Langa is in a state of angst about Lazola.

In the below extract, Langa and Lazola are speaking for the first time. Langa has somehow got hold of Lazola's direct number and contacts him to propose the idea of her auditioning to be given the marketing campaign. Lazola is irritated at her forwardness and does not hide his annoyance:

She had no idea Lazola Rhadebe would turn out to be a complete beast. Sure, it must have taken incredible intelligence and brutal focus for him to have achieved the successes that he had as a property developer and investor. Very few earn the

reputation of being the multi-millionaire business mind to watch by age thirty-six, but Langa firmly believed that there was always room for good manners.

‘You don’t know me, and you have no idea what you’re up against, mister.’ She was disturbed by the aggression in her hiss, but couldn’t seem to stop herself. “Do yourself and your hotel a favour and meet with me. Give me your best shot; I’d love to see you try to overwhelm me. I have a branding concept that will knock the socks off you, your team and any archaic advertising gimmick they may have slapped together. Sir.’

Not the advised route to take when trying to make important business connections, but it turned out to be just the attitude to silence Mr Rhadebe and catch his interest. Ten minutes later Langa let out a hushed huff as she made a note of the lunch date she’d secured. One week from Monday.

She was not nervous about proving her confidence, though she had been shaken by the threat he had issued just before hanging up:

‘I will give you one hour, Miss Cima. You had better make bloody sure to impress me, or you will never work a major contract in this city again. One hour’.

(Make 8-9)

According to Make, her characterisation of Lazola is very deliberate. Her decision to show Langa and Lazola on the phone together in the first scene was designed to show that Lazola is assertive, and that Langa is not easily intimidated.

Although the differences between these two characters seem obvious, there are several points of comparison between Darcy and Lazola. The initial characterisation of Lazola in this extract is of an egotistical man, too aware of his own importance to care about

giving offence. After this encounter, in the view of the heroine, Langa characterises Lazola as a ‘beast’. Lazola would be what Linda Lee describes as a ‘modern Beast’. This is interesting in light of my previous discussion comparing *Pride and Prejudice* with the Beauty and the Beast fairy tale. Yet right after this sentence, Langa seems to qualify Lazola’s rudeness by mentioning his success as an investor and developer. She uses the word “brutal” to describe his focus – a word which seems to reinforce Lazola’s masculinity. Langa notes that “[v]ery few earn the reputation of being the multi-millionaire business mind to watch by age thirty-six,” a statement which seems to elevate Lazola as a uniquely intelligent, successful man, making him very special. The fact that his “business mind” is referred to with admiration is evidence that here, as in *Pride and Prejudice*, intelligence is a quality to be highly prized. However, while Lazola’s rudeness is qualified, it is not excused, as Langa goes on to think, “there was always room for good manners”. Langa responds with her own aggression, which, although it surprises Lazola enough to get him to agree to a meeting, puts the two further at odds with one another, creating the tension that lasts for most of the novel. This aggressive confidence is what initially piques Lazola’s interest because Langa’s persistence is not “the advised route to take when trying to make important business connections”. This action is what makes Langa interesting enough for Lazola to agree to a meeting. As with Darcy who is initially attracted by Elizabeth’s “uncommonly intelligent” eyes, Lazola’s initial attraction to Langa is not due to her physical appearance, but her prowess as a marketing guru. So although Lazola seems to fall into an old-fashioned definition of masculinity – an overbearingly masculine alpha male – his grudging respect for Langa (acquiescing to a meeting is a sign of respect) shows that his attitude to women might not be that old-fashioned. This idea is reinforced when Langa and Lazola meet to take a tour of the Sandton-based hotel. Lazola explains to Langa the intricacies of its operation:

He started out detached until she spent an extra hour discussing European trends she thought would work in the ROCH if implemented with a proudly South African influence. Detachment turned to admiration as she asked him intricate questions that went beyond the scope of marketing. (31)

In the next line Lazola asks Langa's opinion about how to set his hotels apart from the rest. Her intelligent answer "intrigued" him (31). By the middle of the novel Langa is filling in for Lazola in media interviews, standing in for him when he is unavailable. Lazola moves from 'detachment' to 'admiration', to allowing Langa to handle business matters in his stead. Eventually he offers her a job as his head of marketing. This can be compared to how Darcy's admiration for Elizabeth's common sense and intelligence is an indication that his initial characterisation as a male that upholds old-fashioned morals and ideas is misleading.

As Cox and Fisher set out in the plot summary (138), Langa sees evidence of Lazola's honourable dealings with everyone around him after their initial disagreements. In this scene, Langa tells Lazola what she has learnt about him after spending the morning walking through the hotel with him, "[y]ou have a sharp grasp of business, but that is not the sole reason for your success. You garner people's loyalty by dedicating yours to them first. That's the secret behind your success – as far as I can tell" (Make 35). The reader is provided only glimpses of the morning's interactions between Lazola and Langa and therefore has to take Langa's word for this proclamation. This scene reminds me of Elizabeth and Mr Darcy's exchange in chapter 18 during the Netherfield ball in which Elizabeth tries to "make . . . out" the "illustration" of Darcy's character but confesses to being troubled at times (76). Because the story is told entirely from the perspective of the heroine, the reader is reliant on the heroine's reading of the hero to inform her opinion of him. According to Make, it is important for her that the hero is not easily understood – it is part of what makes him attractive. The use of third-person narration is therefore useful to her in representing a certain kind of hero, one

who is enigmatic and not easily readable. Unlike Austen, who offers some glimpses of perspective from Darcy, the reader has no direct access to Lazola's mind. Readings of Lazola's state of mind are therefore filtered through the perspective of the heroine, "Lazola let it be, but she sensed that he wasn't happy about it" (70) and "[s]omething dark flitted across his handsome face, but he cleared his expression before Langa could define it" (79). In her article titled "The Disappearing Act: A study of Harlequin Romances", Tania Modleski suggests:

The vague language has a precise function; more specific language would destroy the reader's complex relationship with the heroine causing us either to identify with her too closely or to become too detached. In other words, since his look is so 'odd,' we do not view her persistence in blaming it on the bad weather and a bad mood as completely unwarranted, yet we can ourselves attribute it to happier causes unsuspected by the heroine. (440)

This coincides with Make's intentions. According to Make, she finds the use of third-person narration useful as a means not only to invite the reader's understanding of characters, but also as a way of signalling the limits of how we attempt to understand others – in particular in situations of romantic relationships. The "precariousness" of this process, according to Make, is central to the reader's identification with the experience of falling in love, "I wanted to add to the sense of precariousness by not letting the reader know what he was feeling. We've all been there, wishing we could sneak a peek inside the person we're falling for, and (because we can't tell) hoping upon hope they like us back." In these quotes above, then, the reader (and the heroine) gets the idea that something is happening beneath the surface, that there is a complexity at play in the hero that we do not yet have access to. Make says:

When falling in love, we don't always think straight and definitely don't know all the inner workings of the person we're falling for. This leads to assumptions, misunderstandings and occasional judgements to overcome – all of which add dimension to an otherwise beautiful and thrilling story.

In Make's use of third-person and free indirect discourse (she does not distinguish these modes, but implies the shifts in perspective) she attempts both to invite insight and to signal distance and possible confusions, but also intriguing aspects of characters. Says Make: "I . . . liked the hints of mystery and confusion I got to create in third person."

Later on, though, Langa converses with Lazola's hotel manager and is told stories of Lazola's youth which further paints him in a sympathetic light. It is briefly reported to the reader that this is happening, and it is made clear that, "Thomas thought highly of Lazola and felt he deserved only the best" (Make 67). This is high praise from someone who works very intimately with Lazola on a daily basis. A comparison can be made to Darcy's housekeeper, who reports to Elizabeth that Darcy is a good landlord and master.

Descriptions of physical features in Austen's novels as well as in the romance novels also seem to invite a deeper reading of the heroes' personalities. Rather than serving as mere physical descriptions, they offer hints about the heroes' character traits. In terms of the physical attractiveness, Captain Wentworth in *Persuasion* is described in the following words, "[t]he years which had destroyed her youth and bloom had only given him a more glowing, manly, open look" (Austen 59). There is very little description of Mr. Knightley at the beginning of *Emma*, although Emma sees him at the ball arranged by the Westons and we are given this description from her perspective, "so young he looked! . . . His tall, firm, upright figure . . . He moved a few steps nearer, and those were enough to prove in how gentlemanlike a manner, with what natural grace, he must have danced" (Austen 245). In

Pride and Prejudice, it is stated that “Mr Darcy soon drew the attention of the room by his fine, tall person, handsome features, noble mien . . .” (Austen 10). John Mullan speculates that Austen gives little description of her characters because, “Austen wants us to think not so much about how characters look, but how they look to each other” (57). Also, physical attributes are loaded with meaning. A character’s physical appearance thus has a lot to do with the reader’s construction of their perception of the character. I suggest that Austen gives us only enough physical description to help in our construction of the most important parts of their character, the rest of her descriptions speak to innate qualities as expressed by physical features. However, she allows the reader to imagine how these innate qualities would look when constructed as physical features. Wentworth’s “glowing, manly, open look” speaks of his youth and vitality. His vitality indicates his ability to change, which is proven when he changes his mind about Anne. His confidence allows him to incorporate the belief in the value of people rather than titles regardless of the fact that such a view is not popular. Austen does not tell us what manly openness looks like, but allows us to interpret physical features as reflecting innate qualities. Mr Knightley’s description, given so late in the progression of the novel, and through Emma’s perspective, is an indication of Emma’s change of perception of Mr Knightley. This is a departure from earlier description of him which focused on his advanced age. His “tall, firm, upright figure” speaks of the confidence with which he carries himself. The fact that he is tall speaks of a sense of physical power. Darcy’s “fine, tall person, handsome features, noble mien” actually draws the attention of onlookers, which indicates that he must be quite something to look at. It is stated that he is tall, which, as with Knightley, speaks to physical power and confidence. Although he is described as handsome, we do not know what form this takes, and because for each reader handsome could look differently, we are invited to use our imaginations in picturing this. The “noble mien” does not strictly

delineate physical features, but speaks rather of innate quality which proclaims his confidence and dignity.

Descriptions of the Sapphire romance heroes are similarly loaded with meaning, however, the authors are more explicit about the descriptions of physical features. The first physical description the reader gets for Lazola pronounces him as “towering” above the rest of the men that he is speaking to (Make 16). Next it is stated that, “[h]e’s gorgeous. His skin was dark and his shoulders were broad. But his lips were the main source of her interest. They were so full, yet firm. A contradiction that had her wondering what his kisses would be like” (16). This description is overtly sensuous. It also deliberately conveys a sense of his physical power by emphasising to the reader that Lazola is much taller than the rest of the guests, and that he has broad shoulders. His overt masculinity is thus made clear. His “full” yet “firm” lips suggest a combination of gentleness and strength, thereby hinting that despite his powerful masculinity he is capable of gentleness. Make, like Austen, describes only those physical features which will convey specific characteristics in the hero, yet she is more overt in guiding the reader to her intended conclusion. Both Lazola and Molemo (the second hero I will discuss) are described as “dark”. The idea of skin is very important in black consciousness thought. Steve Biko, for example, argues, “[w]e are in the position in which we are because of our skin” (25). There seems to be an emphasis in both descriptions of the romance heroes on the idea that black is beautiful. This shows an awareness by the authors of the black consciousness precepts that, “to overcome their overpowering sense of alienation and to regain their dignity and self-esteem, blacks must strive not only to empty their minds of soporific Western values but they must also learn to accept their blackness and to be proud of it” (Ranuga 183). Biko felt that “blacks are suffering from an inferiority complex” which can only be overcome by “a very strong grass-roots build-up of black consciousness such that blacks can learn to assert themselves and stake their rightful claim” (21). This reclaiming of

the black skin as beautiful imbues the heroes with the power inherent in the black consciousness teachings of independence of mind, and makes them stand out as unique and powerful males. According to Habermas in his theory of the public sphere which I discuss in chapter one, he states that the “public use of reason” is influenced by intimate spheres (quoted in Calhoun 10). I suggest that in engaging in question of black consciousness, these romances participate in the creation of a new public sphere. The gratuitous description of the hero seems deliberately created to play into the wish-fulfilment fantasy that romance novels offer. The fact that the heroes are described as sexually attractive, aesthetically pleasing and powerful signals to the reader that the hero is a worthy mate, and creates some emotional investment in the reader that the heroine should end up with the hero.

Although they start a passionate and intimate relationship, Langa calls off the relationship when she thinks that Lazola is cheating with someone else, indicating that she plays a very active role in her mate selection. This rejection forces Lazola to think long and hard about what it might be that is pushing Langa away – he does not know of her suspicion that he is cheating. It also causes him to act in an uncharacteristic way. Lazola unexpectedly shows up at Langa’s office after she had been treating him somewhat coldly for a few weeks. This is after he has left her alone in his hotel room following their first intimate encounter. Lazola catches Langa by surprise when he grabs her, holds her close and says, “I’ve missed you, Langa. Just give me a moment” (79). This is not the actions of a man that had previously been characterised as an “oaf” (17) and a “beast” (8). One who has previously acted in an almost physically aggressive manner when he “sneered” (29) at Langa and “practically fling[s]” her hand aside after shaking it at their first meeting (25). Langa’s rejection of him changes him and makes him softer, just as “love works upon Darcy to open and soften his heretofore inapproachably proud character” (McCann 72). The reader sees glimpses of Lazola’s vulnerability. He soon starts pursuing her somewhat desperately, “he called her

numerous times since their last conversation, but each time Langa had refused to take his calls and replied ‘no’ to every email in which he demanded to see her” (103). Langa interprets this persistence as arrogance, as Lazola’s anger at losing his marketing manager, yet the romance reader, trained in the art of narrative misdirection, and having more insight than the heroine, knows that this pursuit is personal, and Lazola is pursuing Langa because he has developed feelings for her. Langa pulling away acts as a catalyst for Lazola’s growth. This is done intentionally by Make, “Lazola grew as a man when this boundary taught him a few lessons he needed to learn about demonstrating love.” This is similar to Elizabeth’s rejection of Darcy during his first proposal spurring his self-examination and eventual change to greater humility. Lazola’s jealousy of Langa’s colleague Ben Nkosi gives us a hint of his romantic feelings for Langa. At the launch party for the hotel Langa takes Ben as her partner. When Lazola needs Langa’s help with journalists he pulls her away from Ben saying dismissively, “I’m sure your boyfriend will survive an hour without your coddling” (47). His jealousy of Ben lasts throughout the novel. Lazola’s new vulnerability is signalled by the statement that “his stance seemed cautious” (83). When Langa finally calls Lazola back after numerous calls and emails Lazola asks, “[w]hy are you doing this? Every time we are together it’s unbelievably good, only to have you disappear on me afterwards. Why?” (104). In opening himself up to rejection this way, Lazola makes himself vulnerable. Finally he shows up at her office to declare his love. He follows Langa through the office, uncaring that her colleagues are witnessing his vulnerable declarations in which he exposes the wishes of his heart. Lazola says, “I’ve spent months now thinking you hated me and trying to work out how to win your heart” (147). Langa’s rejection of Lazola (much like Elizabeth’s rejection of Darcy) leads to contemplation and self-reflection. In the end, Lazola confesses to Langa:

We’ve had a rocky start and that was because I’m a difficult man. But that ends now; this is my vow. I’ve never been in love before and I’ve had to learn to open

my heart. I am here now and I'm yours. I will spend the rest of my days showing you how important you are to me. You challenge and excite me and I can't wait to start our lives, our love, together. (149)

Lazola, like Darcy, must become a different man in order to win Langa. While still charismatic and powerful, Lazola has been "properly humbled" by Langa and learns to be more open and vulnerable (Austen 284).

Lerato Matsaneng: *Love on the Menu*

The second romance that I would like to discuss is called *Love on the Menu*, written by Lerato Matsaneng. The story's heroine is Lebo Mokoena. Lebo is an entertainment journalist at a local newspaper. She wants to start her own catering business with her mother and aunt. At a party she is introduced to local businessman Molemo Tladi. Lebo asks Molemo whether he would be willing to mentor her as she tries to start her business. Soon Molemo and Lebo discover that they are attracted to one another. However, Lebo suspects that Molemo has been bragging to his friends about the intimate details of their relationship and calls it off. Molemo must eventually force Lebo into a room long enough to explain that there has been a misunderstanding after which the two are reunited.

Lerato Matsaneng is a former journalist who now works as an independent marketing and communications consultant. *Love on the Menu* is her first published novel. As with Louise Make, I asked Matsaneng some questions about the genre of romance and the influence of *Pride and Prejudice* on the genre. For Matsaneng, the influence of Austen and *Pride and Prejudice* is indirect, "I do see some similarities in Jane Austen's novels to current day novels, in that at the root of it all, despite the era you are in – all young women (mainly

because the books are written from this perspective) all want to be loved by someone worthy of their love.” In *Love on the Menu*, I would like to explore the similarities in the development of the hero and heroine compared to *Pride and Prejudice*.

In the following extract from *Love on the Menu*, Lebo calls Molemo to arrange a meeting to discuss the next steps in their mentoring plan:

He left Lebo with very little choice in the matter. She needed his help and would therefore have to do as he said.

‘Not a problem,’ Lebo answered. She would do whatever it took to get her business off the ground.

‘Perfect. Tomorrow night at Katzy’s in Rosebank, 8pm. Can you get there on your own?’

‘Yes, I actually live in Rosebank, so that’s perfect for me.’

‘Great, see you then. Good night,’ Molemo said and ended the call.

Lebo couldn’t believe the arrogance he’d displayed in setting up the meeting – he hadn’t even asked if she was available! But maybe that was what was needed to survive in business: to be arrogant and aggressive.

She vowed to work on her own arrogance, but chuckled at the idea of ever managing to be as arrogant as Molemo Tladi. (Matsaneng 25-26)

There are a lot of similarities between this extract and *Five-Star Seduction* above. Once again, we have a hero who is arrogant and aggressive. Molemo’s ‘beastly form’ is not just a result of his arrogance, though. He also has the reputation of being a ladies man, a fact which Lebo’s friend Tebogo warns her about, and this will cause the rift between him and

Lebo. Also as in *Five-Star Seduction*, the heroine does not respond in a typical manner to Molemo's arrogance. Rather than take offence to it, Lebo laughs it off. She even thinks about emulating Molemo's arrogance. Here too, Molemo's arrogance is qualified by the statement, "maybe that was what was needed to survive in business: to be arrogant and aggressive". Matsaneng characterises Molemo's arrogance as a mask that he puts on to protect himself rather than as a characteristic of who he really is:

Molemo was a successful young man, and had learnt that in order to be respected at that young age, with all that responsibility, he has to put up a hard and somewhat arrogant face. This is a typical mask that people put up in order to protect themselves. Does not mean that is who they truly are. But once he found someone who made him comfortable enough, he took off the mask and allowed himself to be who he really was.

This could be compared to McCann's idea that Darcy's arrogance shows itself when he is in uncomfortable situations, "at Pemberley, where setting and Elizabeth's company are congenial to him, the forbidding manner falls away, thereby revealing it to be a polite form of indignation. At Pemberley, with those he cares for, he can be his true self" (72).

In terms of physical description, Molemo, is "tall, clean-shaven, dark and attractive . . . She was taken aback by just how handsome he was, with big, brown eyes and full lips. He was well-built, with broad shoulders, and looked very secure in himself with his relaxed demeanour" (Matsaneng 16). Once again, as with Lazola, Molemo is "tall", "dark", and "attractive", "with broad shoulders". There is a combination of masculine power and sensuality in the language used for this description. Matsaneng give a little more detail than Make does in telling us that Molemo is "clean-shaven" and has "big brown eyes". Both Lazola and Molemo are tall and carry an air of confidence with them, much like Darcy.

Matsaneng goes as far as to state that Molemo is “very secure in himself with his relaxed demeanour” to make it clear that he is quite confident. Despite the obvious masculinity conveyed by the description, his “big brown eyes” and “full lips” also convey gentleness in Molemo. Matsaneng, like Make, therefore lays the groundwork in this physical description for the hero’s transformation to a thoughtful lover. Matsaneng, like Austen, conveys a great deal about her hero’s characterisation in the way in which his appearance is described.

Lebo takes Molemo’s overbearing personality good-naturedly, even when he imposes it on her, “Molemo had a habit of stating his requests, rather than asking them. It made him seem arrogant, and Lebo didn’t know whether to kiss him or slap him when he did that” (65). In this novel, however, unlike *Five-Star Seduction* above, Lebo and Molemo enter into a mentor-mentee relationship. When Lebo and Molemo meet for the second time to discuss her progress as an entrepreneur, Lebo is late for the meeting due to a deadline that she had to meet at the newspaper where she works full time. Molemo reprimands her, “[t]he most important thing in business is to be professional at all times. The minute you realise you’re running late, you should contact whoever you’re meeting – not ten minutes into your meeting” (38). Lebo at first wants to protest, but quickly backs down and feels embarrassed, after which Molemo responds with sympathy. Molemo, like Lazola, is a self-made man. Although he has joined and taken over the business his father started, he has earned a degree, and was made to work his way up through the company ranks. His credentials as a mentor is thus earned rather than assigned solely due to his sex or status. This, as with Lazola, is meant to inspire respect in the reader, as it indicates Molemo’s intelligence and business acumen.

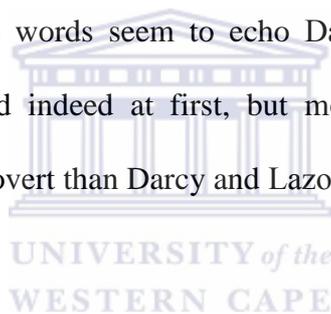
Matsaneng feels that Lebo grows into her strength after being mentored by Molemo. I suggest that Lebo grows in insight and confidence rather than strength. Her ambition is what leads her to Molemo, and she handles the stresses of running her own business with the same composure than she does making a deadline at the newspaper. For Matsaneng, the growth of

the heroine is more important than the growth of the hero in the romance novel, “his story wasn’t about growth as much as Lebo’s was”. Matsaneng’s focus on the growth of the heroine does have some correlation in *Pride and Prejudice*. For while Darcy’s transformation is the more drastic one, Elizabeth’s transformation is the one the reader is allowed to experience. Elizabeth begins the novel by being offended by Darcy. Once her prejudice is established she is determined to be offended by everything he says, and to offend him in turn. Once Elizabeth reads and rereads his letter, her awakening begins. She begins to see how blind she has been in misjudging Wickham and Darcy. Her visit to Pemberley creates a material change in her opinion of Darcy, and she admits, at the end, that she has “long been most heartily ashamed” of her behaviour (283). The power dynamic between Molemo and Lebo is not a typical mentor-mentee relationship. Matsaneng suggests that “the mentor-mentee relationship was over-shadowed by the relationship that developed.” As soon as Molemo and Lebo enter into a relationship, Molemo’s advice and guidance is less ‘formalised’ and becomes the help of a caring boyfriend. Molemo, rather than just imposing his authority over Lebo, is genuinely interested in helping her empower herself and her family through her ventures as an entrepreneur. After two quite formal meetings, Molemo suggests that they spend a Saturday afternoon together. They have lunch, and while Lebo has the opportunity to get some very practical advice from Molemo, they also share personal stories with one another. The relationship becomes less formalised, with personal and professional conversations intertwining. He recommends her for an event planning job at his company, even though she has no formal experience in event planning.

While Lebo is accommodating with Molemo’s arrogance, she does not give over complete control of their relationship. She stands up to Molemo when necessary, and walks away from the relationship when she feels that he has crossed a boundary. Here, too, free indirect style is woven into the narrative while Lebo considers her decisions with regard to

Molemo, “Lebo was feeling guilty about how things had turned out between the two of them. Maybe she’d overreacted about everything. Maybe if she had let him explain properly what had happened, they would have sorted things out” (126). The use of free indirect discourse functions to signal to the reader how conflicted the heroine is about her decision to break up with Molemo. Because the reader has been given clues about Molemo’s personality, doubt already exists that he would be able to so callously hurt Lebo. By showing Lebo’s uncertainty in her decision to completely let go of Molemo without allowing him to explain, the reader’s doubt is strengthened, thereby also strengthening the possibility that Molemo will be vindicated. Lebo does not give in to these thoughts and feelings, even though Molemo repeatedly approaches her to apologise. For Matsaneng, it is important that the hero prove ‘worthy’ of the heroine’s love. Darcy’s worthiness of Elizabeth’s love is signalled to the reader when it is revealed that he has been the instrument of bringing about the wedding between Wickham and Lydia, thus saving the family from scandalous ruin. In *Love on the Menu*, this is signalled when Molemo facilitates a reunion between Lebo and Kgotso. Kgotso and Lebo are childhood friends and were previously in a relationship. Lebo and Molemo’s breakup had occurred because Kgotso overheard Molemo telling his friend that he and Lebo were in a relationship. Hurt because he had been hoping to win Lebo back, Kgotso overreacts and punches Molemo, then drunkenly calls Lebo to let her know that Molemo is bragging about having taken her to bed. For Molemo to forgive Kgotso’s actions, and read past the anger in order to see that Kgotso is reacting out of hurt is a signal to the reader that he is mature, forgiving and caring – worthy of the heroine’s love. Despite this, Lebo only gives in to Molemo when he humbles himself before her, displaying the unsure nervousness that Darcy shows when he proposes to Elizabeth, just as Lazola has done as well. In his final profession of love, Molemo “was speaking a lot of things all at once, not taking a second to breathe, and just went on and on”, Lebo has to tell him to slow down and make more sense

(147). He “closed his eyes, took a deep breath and began” before getting muddled, after which, “Molemo punched the palm of his left hand with his right hand” in frustration (147). Molemo apologises again for the mistakes he has made, “I’m sorry for treating you like one of those other women. I want you in my life, I need you. I want to laugh with you and help you make all your dreams come true. I want to talk to you about things I can’t share even with my closest friend. You are the one for me, Lebo. Please give us another chance” (148). Molemo has to bare himself before Lebo before she will agree to take him back. Molemo, like Lazola and Darcy, gets a lesson in humility from his heroine. He also has to make it clear that she is special and unique – the only woman who could inspire such a transformation in him, “[b]efore I met you, I thought I had it all and knew it all. But you came and changed the way I saw things” (147). These words seem to echo Darcy’s proclamation to Elizabeth, “[y]ou taught me a lesson, hard indeed at first, but most advantageous” (Austen 284). Molemo’s transformation is less overt than Darcy and Lazola’s, but no less humbling.



The modern romance hero

In comparing Lazola and Molemo, it seems immediately obvious that both have been characterised as alpha males. This is a very central element to romance novels. Romance writer Mary Jo Putney says, “[a] romance can survive a bland or even a bitchy heroine, but it cannot succeed with a weak hero” (quoted in Clawson 468). The hero’s often stereotypical masculinity is usually made up of a combination of sexual magnetism, a powerful physique, an arrogant, domineering personality and a high-powered, high-paying career. The hero’s masculinity plays a very significant role in the plot development. Not only is the powerful hero attractive to the heroine (and the reader), it makes the heroine’s ultimate ‘taming’ of the hero that much more satisfying. Lazola and Molemo begin the novels as arrogant and cynical

about women and love. Langa and Lebo teach them humility, and lead them to believe in the power of everlasting love. This is of course one of the most satisfying plot developments of *Pride and Prejudice*: that Elizabeth Bennet, who is not as beautiful as Jane or as rich as Miss Bingley, should through the power of her charming wit and intelligence, win over a man of such rank and fortune as Mr Darcy. This has played a significant role in the enduring popularity of *Pride and Prejudice* and has significantly influenced the conventions of modern romance novels.

When considering Darcy's attractiveness to modern romance authors compared to other Austen heroes, it is worth mentioning that *Pride and Prejudice* has perhaps the biggest presence in popular culture compared to any of Austen's other novels. It is often featured on lists of most loved books in English literature, and has inspired numerous film, television and theatre adaptations, as well as countless 'spin-off' novels. *Pride and Prejudice* therefore has a further reach than Austen's other novels due to being her most well-known novel. One of the most important aspects to note when discussing Darcy's appeal as a romance hero is that he is Austen's richest hero. Women's desire for mates with access to social and financial resources has been well documented.⁵ Both Lazola and Molemo are successful businessmen. Their access to resources is made obvious in various ways during the course of *Five-Star Seduction* and *Love on the Menu*, both through the narrator explicitly saying that they are rich, and also through mention of expensive status symbols. Lazola's wealth, for example, is made obvious whenever Langa has to meet him at his five-star hotel, where he permanently resides in the penthouse suite. Although the reader knows that he is rich, his powerful, domineering personality is reinforced more often than is his wealth. Molemo, on the other hand, drives an ivory Range Rover, lives on a "fancy golf estate in Johannesburg" (15), drinks only Johnny Walker Gold (28), has a Louis Vuitton wallet (17), and wears a Rolex

⁵ See, for example, Buss and Schmidt 224.

(32). His wealth is repeatedly reinforced to the reader. While none of Austen's other heroes are facing poverty, they also cannot compete with Darcy when it comes to financial resources. According to Janice Radway, this preoccupation with the material is a staple of romance writing:

if the story's setting is contemporary, brand-name appliances, popular furniture styles, and trendy accessories . . . typically populate the heroine's apartment . . . [these] descriptions assert tacitly that the imaginary world of the novel is as real as the reader's world because it is filled with the same, solid teeming profusion of commodities. (194)

While these descriptions undoubtedly establish realism in the world of the novel, I would suggest that these descriptions serve a second purpose which I discuss briefly earlier in the chapter – to satisfy an aspirational need in the reader. The readers that the romance novels are aimed at – readers of *True Love* and *Drum* magazines, are the growing black middle class. The Sapphire guidelines describe these readers as:

- proudly black, dynamic, ambitious, enlightened, mature and sexy
- seeks empowerment through self-development, relationship advice, career guidance and spiritual inspiration
- respects and honours her cultural traditions
- aspires to live a successful, fulfilling and dynamic life in a country that continuously presents her with interesting challenges and opportunities
- generates her own income and seeks financial security and independence, to realise her desires and enjoy her many choices as a consumer

In 2013 an article on the UN's African Renewal Magazine page placed the number of black middle class citizens in South Africa at 4.2 million (Benjamin). According to the

article, this black middle class are, “showing flashes of middle class life: buying new cars, modern electronics, mobile phones, designer dresses and houses”. This conspicuous consumption serves as a measure of success. The quiet good taste that Darcy displays is inadequate for the black romance hero aimed at an audience so obviously concerned with status. This black middle class audience, then, also has some share in shaping the ideals of the modern romance hero as the author must accommodate these aspirational fantasies within a realistic setting.

In her “Plan of the novel based on hints from various quarters” Jane Austen delineates what she does not want to write about. The “hints from various quarters” comprised clichéd characters and scenarios in the writing of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries which Austen does not want to repeat in her writing. The villain, described as a “totally unprincipled and heart-less young man, desperately in love with the Heroine, and pursuing her with unrelenting passion” sounds like Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, who kidnaps Harriet in Richardson’s *Sir Charles Grandson* in order to force her to marry him (231). I have previously discussed Austen’s aversion for characters that are “all perfection” as is her hero in “Plan of the novel” (231). Austen deliberately veers away from these conventions in novel writing in order to create characters and stories that are realistic and believable, and also unique. While Austen is undoubtedly influenced by the writing of Richardson, Burney and Edgeworth, as I discuss in chapter one, Austen’s innovation in realist writing of creating complex characters ensures that she is not re-using clichés. The use of free indirect discourse and the epistolary mode allows Austen to go much further in her complex characterisation than Richardson, Burney or Edgeworth managed to do before her. The fine attention that Austen pays to her characters ensures that she does not recreate stereotypes. Darcy has, however, influenced the stereotype of the modern romance hero, and I suggest that the

authors that I discuss in this chapter recreate the stereotype that exists because of Austen's original. This is a stereotype that has endured for more than two hundred years.

Although Make and Matsaneng appreciated how the guidelines shaped their writing, they felt restricted by the guidelines set by Sapphire Press, although to different extents. Both understood the commercial importance of writing within the conventions of romance. Make would have liked to create unconventional characters:

I'll admit that it did frustrate me at times to get excited about a slightly unusual character or situation (e.g., an overweight heroine going healthy; or a couple where the man is significantly younger than the woman) only to be told it would suit "chick lit" better than a Sapphire . . . I understood, though, that those decisions are a tightrope walk: more leeway could be exciting, but how far before it's too far? I might love the idea of witnessing an unpopular character-type overcoming a struggle like that, but it still has to sell. Sapphire was too new for risks like that, I think.

Matsaneng found it a little easier. When asked whether she thinks the guidelines were restrictive she replied, "[y]es in the beginning I did. However you soon realise that you aren't writing for yourself but for a wide audience and thus, you need to amend some of your content to suit your audience. It wasn't too compromising, but it allowed me to practice some restraint." It is interesting to note that while Make seems keener on variety in her characters, when writing within the conventions of romance, she creates a hero that is much more closely aligned with the 'dad vs cad' stereotype which is so popular in romance, and which resembles Darcy. So while both Make and Matsaneng find the Sapphire guidelines restrictive, they are also very aware of why the conventions exist.

Both Make and Matsaneng are very clear on the kinds of characters they wanted to create. I have argued that Austen's Darcy has influenced the way that modern romance heroes are imagined. The question which next needs to be answered then, is why Darcy, apart from the appeal of his wealth? Why not any one of Jane Austen's other heroes? From my discussion in the first chapter of this thesis on the authors that influenced Jane Austen, I suggest that Darcy offers the most attractive mix of the characteristics Grandison, Delvile and Hervey present to us. While Darcy is as morally active as Grandison, he is not as static as Richardson's hero, and far less pompous. Austen presents to us in Darcy a flawed hero, as Burney does with Delvile. Yet Darcy's reasoning throughout *Pride and Prejudice* remains sound. He admits his mistakes and overcomes them while maintaining a controlled and authoritative manner. This is in contrast to Delvile who seems to lose control and depend solely on Cecilia for guidance. Darcy is dynamic enough to learn from his mistakes, like Edgeworth's Clarence Hervey. Yet rather than misjudging a situation out of selfishness and ignorance, as Hervey does, Darcy's mistakes are made out of a sense of moral obligation, which is more easily forgiven. Austen uses the epistolary mode and free indirect discourse to guide the reader's opinion of Darcy carefully, from the initial impression of him as an arrogant aristocrat to accepting him as a thoughtful lover. In doing this Austen departs from Richardson's insistence on an exemplary hero constrained from change by his conduct book role. Younger and perhaps more heroic than Mr Knightley, more emotionally mature and less impetuous than Wentworth, Darcy seems to offer a mix of characteristics designed to appeal to a female audience more than two hundred years after his creation. He is rich, handsome, devoted to his family and friends, loyal and generous (231). He also offers to female readers the ultimate fantasy – the idea that a man could change who he is in order to be worthy of his heroine's love. He is certainly not "all perfection", but perhaps this is part of his charm.

CONCLUSION

The idea of the hero is a complex one, one that has been the subject of revision and academic criticism since the inception of writing. Through every literary age the ideals of the hero are refigured. The literary texts that I discuss in this thesis are shaped by the ideas of the Enlightenment, Romanticism and conventions of Sentimental literature. In chapter one I discuss how Jane Austen's predecessors Samuel Richardson, Frances Burney and Maria Edgeworth construct their heroes in relation to these literary ideals. Samuel Richardson's Sir Charles Grandison is a model of perfection, exemplary in all he does. Yet Sir Charles begins the novel fully formed, with very little room for character development. Although Richardson does attempt to complicate his character slightly, this is not entirely successful and Sir Charles often does not escape the label of pomposity as he goes about his beneficent errands, dispensing advice and criticising what he thinks is wrong behaviour. Although Frances Burney and Maria Edgeworth attempt to complicate the hero, they succeed only to a limited extent. Both authors are hampered by the fact that the novels they write attempt to be didactic. While Delvile does to some extent learn to break free from his dependence on his parents' approval, his retreat to the Romantic conventions of the hero make him unreliably passionate and emotional. And while Clarence Hervey begins the novel espousing Romantic ideas, he is duly humbled and in the end retrieves Enlightenment conventions. Burney and Edgeworth are critical of Romantic conceptions of the hero. However Austen, while sceptical of the excesses of the Romantic ideal of the hero, draws on the Romantic focus on the exploration of the complexity of the inward life of the hero. My reading of this differs from that of critics such as Butler who read Austen as rejecting Romantic ideas.

In chapter two I use the idea of setting to discuss the ways in which Austen attempts to give her hero more complexity. Using Pemberley as a complex metaphor for Darcy's characterisation, I discuss how Austen draws on Romantic ideas of vastness and variety, and on Enlightenment ideas of order and harmony to invite a multi-faceted reading of Darcy's character. I discuss and extend Charles McCann's argument that Darcy's personality seems to be influenced by uncomfortable situations, and that it is at Pemberley that he can be his true self – thus accounting for the drastic changes in personality that some critics find unconvincing. I use this argument to counter Kenneth Moler's suggestion that Darcy lapses into a model of Sir Charles Grandison. I go on to discuss how Austen uses the language of picturesque landscape design to further plot and characterisation and how she uses the significance of setting to give specific scenes added meaning. I extend the argument of setting as a metaphor for character to include Mr Bennet and Longbourn, arguing that the ailing stasis at Longbourn is a metaphor for Mr. Bennet's failures in fatherhood as a result of his constant retreat from his family and his insistence on treating even serious situations ironically, and that this comparison of the two estates is significant in shaping Elizabeth's changing perception of the hero.

In chapter three I offer some comparison between three of Austen's heroes: Mr Knightley, Darcy and Captain Wentworth. I discuss Austen's use of the epistolary mode and free indirect discourse to complicate these characters. I disagree with Julie L Epstein's argument that Austen abandons the epistolary mode in favour of free indirect discourse to convey "psychological or moral conflict" (404). I show how Austen uses both of these forms to convey character complexity. I discuss how each of these three heroes in some way speak against Lord Chesterfield's ideals of masculinity in his *Letters to his Son*. Although Austen offers us flawed heroes, the narrative techniques she employs engages the reader's understanding and esteem for these heroes.

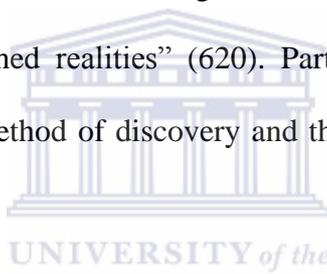
Chapter four of this thesis discusses the way in which I believe Darcy has influenced the conventions of the modern romance hero. I discuss how the generic plots of Harlequin romance novels resemble the plot of *Pride and Prejudice*. I choose two locally published romance novels to demonstrate how pervasive the stereotypical construction of the romance hero has become. One of the most popular stereotypes in romance heroes is the transition from ‘cad to dad’ which sees the romance hero transforming from an arrogant ‘beast’ to a gentle lover, much like Darcy’s transformation in *Pride and Prejudice*. Using Austen’s technique of imbuing physical description with innate characteristics the authors of these romance novels begin to construct a masculinity in their heroes that is both powerful and capable of gentleness. This negotiation of masculinity is important in a patriarchal society such as South Africa, and is also important in order for the hero’s final confession of love to the heroine to be considered sincere. Austen’s innovation in the realist mode saw her breaking away from the conventions of her predecessors to create complex characters free from conduct book modelling. Although these contemporary romance novels aspire to the realist mode in which Austen is so adept, they do adapt their novels to accommodate the aspirational fantasies of their readers. I include in my discussion opinions from the authors regarding the extent to which they are influenced by Austen. While Louise Make notes a direct influence, for Lerato Matsaneng the influence is indirect as she does not admit to an influence but uses elements of the Darcy stereotype in her characterisation of her hero. Finally, while the Sapphire romances are no longer in print, I note that a similar construction of masculinity and focus on romance occurs in soap operas, thus some of these ideas are being perpetuated in another medium.

Cynthia Griffin proposes that *Pride and Prejudice*:

may be seen as an experiment in the art of developing reality in terms of many points of view. . . The real triumph of this new conception of reality, however, is

the subtlety with which it allows Austen to define her characters. She has come to understand that character cannot be presented as an unvarying 'object.' Each person plays many roles. He is as many different people as there are people with whom he comes into contact. People are neither uniformly good nor bad. Darcy may be boorish in a social gathering, but this illuminates only one of the many roles which he plays in life. Elizabeth's (and our) understanding of his complete character can come only after examining a multiplicity of the roles he plays. He may be a good friend, a generous landlord, and a solicitous brother - despite the fact that he is an odious dancing partner. (49 – 50)

Levine, similarly, quotes Lukacs in stating that realism "is a method of discovery, not of representation of pre-established realities" (620). Part of Austen's contribution to the realist novel, I suggest, is this method of discovery and the way in which it unfolds from a multitude of viewpoints.



Bakhtin's view on the development of the novel is that:

The novel is the only developing genre and therefore it reflects more deeply, more essentially, more sensitively and rapidly, reality itself in the process of its unfolding. Only that which is itself developing can comprehend development as a process. The novel has become the leading hero in the drama of literary development in our time precisely because it best of all reflects tendencies of a new world still in the making; it is after all, the only genre born of this new world and in total affinity with it. (7)

Bakhtin's ideas of the novel as a genre embody the possibilities for change rather than fixity. This is a view espoused by Austen, which I have explored in this thesis. Like the genre of the novel itself, Austen's heroes are presented as changing, rather than as models of

behaviour. There seems to be a close correlation between Austen's representations of her heroes, in particular, Mr Darcy, and her adaptations and innovations in relation to the genre of the novel. Bakhtin's metaphoric use of the term 'hero' in his reading of the development of the genre of the novel is interesting in light of my argument that Austen's experiments in narrating the complex inner lives of her heroes contributes to the development of the genre of the novel.

Word count: 59 839



WORKS CITED

- Abrams, M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. United States of America: Heinle & Heinle, 1999. Print.
- Addison, Graeme. "New Agenda for Women's Magazines". *Journal of Marketing* 9. 4 (2003): 24-28. Web. Sabinet Online. 26 November 2015.
- Anderson, Walter E. "Plot, Character, Speech and Place in *Pride and Prejudice*", *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 30.3, Jane Austen 1775-1975. JSTOR. Web. 7 May 2011.
- Austen, Jane. *Catharine and Other Writings*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1998. Print.
- . *Emma*. London: Penguin Popular Classics, 1996. Print.
- . *Persuasion*. London: Penguin Popular Classics, 1998. Print.
- . *Pride and Prejudice*. London: Penguin Popular Classics, 1996. Print
- . *Selected Letters*. London: Oxford University Press, 2009. Print.
- . *Northanger Abbey*. London: Penguin Popular Classics, 1995. Print.
- Austen-Leigh, James Edward. *A Memoir of Jane Austen and Other Family Recollections*. London: Oxford University Press, 2002. Print.
- Bakhtin, M.M. *The Dialogic Imagination*. Ed. Michael Holist, Translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981. Print.
- Ball, Charles. *Samuel Richardson's Theory of Fiction*. The Hague: Mouton & Co NV Publishers, 1971. Print.
- Batey, Mavis. "The Picturesque: An overview." *Garden History* 22.2, *The Picturesque* (Winter, 1994): 121-132. JSTOR. Web. 14 October 2015.
- Bennet, James R. "Doating on you Faults and All: Mr George Knightley". *Studies in the Novel*, 5.2 (Summer 1973): 248-50. JSTOR. Web. 2 October 2014.

- Berlant, Lauren. Review. *Modern Philology* 84.3 (February 1987): 346–50. JSTOR. Web. 8 November 2015.
- Biko, Steve. *I Write What I Like*. Ed. Aelred Stubbs CR. Great Britain: Heineman, 1978. Print.
- Bodenheimer, Rosemarie. “Looking at the Landscape in Jane Austen.” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 21.4, *Nineteenth Century* (Autumn, 1981): 605-23. JSTOR. Web. 15 September 2015.
- Bonaparte, Felicia. “Conjuring Possibilities: Reading and Misreading Texts in Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*”. *Studies in the Novel* 37.2 (Summer 2005): 141–61. JSTOR. Web. 23 July 2014.
- Bradbrook, Frank W. *Jane Austen and her Predecessors*. Oxford: Cambridge University Press, 1966. Print.
- Brontë, Charlotte. Comments on Jane Austen. *Jane Austen: Critical Assessments*. Ed. Ian Littlewood. London: Helm Information, 1998. 427-29. Print
- Burgan, Mary A. “Mr Bennet and the Failures of Fatherhood in Jane Austen’s Novels”, *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 74.4 (October 1975). JSTOR. Web. 30 June 2014.
- Burney, Fanny. *Cecilia*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press. 1999. Print.
- . *Evelina*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press. 1999. Print.
- Burney, Frances. *Journals and Letters*. ed, Peter Sabor and Lars E Troide. London: Penguin Classics, 2001. Print.
- Buss, David M and Schmitt, David P. “Sexual Strategies Theory: An Evolutionary Perspective on Human Mating.” *Psychological Review* 100.2 (1993): 204–32. EBSCO. Web. 18 June 2015.
- Butler, Marilyn. *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*. London: Clarendon Press, 1975. Print.

- . *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and its Background 1760-1830*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1981. Print.
- Calhoun, Craig. *Habermas and the Public Sphere*. Ed. Craig Calhoun. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992. Print.
- Chapman, RW. *Jane Austen's Letters*. London: Oxford University Press, 1952. Print.
- Chesterfield, Philip Dormer Stanhope. *Lord Chesterfield's Letters*. London: Oxford University Press, 1998. Print.
- Chesterton, G.K. Jane Austen's Knowledge of Men. *Jane Austen: Critical Assessments*. Ed. Ian Littlewood. London: Helm Information, 1998. 438. Print
- Clawson, Laura. "Cowboys and Schoolteachers: Gender in Romance Novels, Secular and Christian." *Sociological Perspectives* 48.4 (Winter 2005): 461–79. JSTOR. Web. 9 October 2014.
- Cox, A and Fisher, M. "Man Change Thyself: Hero versus Heroine Development in Harlequin Romance Novels." *Journal of Social, Evolutionary, and Cultural Psychology* 4.4 (2010): 305–16. EBSCO. Web. 22 April 2011.
- De Waal, Mandy. "Nollybooks Opens the Romance of Reading for a New Generation of SA Readers". *The Daily Maverick*, 12 January 2011, N. pag. Web. 11 June 2015.
- Donnelly, Deidre. "Globalised Girlhood: The Teaching of Femininity in *Cosmopolitan* and *True Love*". *Global Media Journal – African Edition* 2.1 (2008): 32–52. Web. Sabinet Online, 26 November 2015.
- Doody, Margaret Anne. *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1988. Print.
- . "George Eliot and the Eighteenth-Century Novel." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 35.3 (December, 1980): 260-291. JSTOR. Web. 17 June 2011
- . Introduction. *Cecilia*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1999. Print.

- Durr, Benjamin. "A Toast to South Africa's Black Middle Class". *Africa Renewal Online*, December 2013. Web. 10 November 2015.
- Eason, Sarah. "Henry Tilney: Queer Hero of *Northanger Abbey*". *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal* 34.1 (2013): N. pag. Persuasions Online. Web. 19 November 2015.
- Eddleman, Stephanie M. "Henry Tilney: Austen's Feminized Hero?" *Persuasions: the Jane Austen Journal* 32 (2010): pp 68-72. Persuasions Online. Web. 19 November 2015.
- Edgeworth, Maria. *Belinda*. London: Oxford University Press, 1994. Print.
- Eike, Ann M. "An Investigation of the Market for Paperback Romances". *Journal of Cultural Economics* 10.1 (June 1986): 25–37. JSTOR. Web. 9 October 2014.
- Epstein, Julia L. "Jane Austen's Juvenilia and the Female Epistolary Tradition." *Papers on Language and Literature* 21.4 (Fall 1985): 399-416. EBSCO Host. Web. 17 June 2011.
- Ferber, Michael. *The Cambridge Introduction to British Romantic Poetry*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Print.
- Flockemann, Miki. "Watching Soap Opera." *Senses of Culture: South African Studies* Eds. Sarah Nuttall and Cheryl-Ann Michael. Cape Town: Oxford University Press Southern Africa, 2000. 141-154. Print.
- "Fundza Literary Trust". Editorial. Ngopulse.org. N.page. N.d. Web. 8 November 2015.
- Gilbert, Sandra M and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984. Print.
- Graham, Peter W. "Henry Tilney: Portrait of the Hero as Beta Male". *Persuasions: the Jane Austen Journal* 31.1 (2010): N. pag. Persuasions Online. Web. 19 November 2015.
- Griffin, Cynthia. "The Development of Realism in Jane Austen's Early Novels." *ELH* 30.1 (March 1963): 36-52. JSTOR. Web. 25 November 2015.

- Hamilton, Patricia L. "Monkey Business: Lord Orville and the Limits of Politeness in Frances Burney's *Evelina*". *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 19.4 (Summer 2007): 416–40. EBSCO. Web. 29 April 2012.
- Hawthorn, Jeremy. *A Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory*. London: Arnold, 2000. Print.
- Hinnant, Charles H. "Jane Austen's "Wild Imagination": Romance and the Courtship Plot in the Six Canonical Novels". *Narrative* 14.3 (Oct, 2006:) 296 – 390. JSTOR. Web. 13 August 2015.
- Hogarth, William. 1753. *The Analysis of Beauty*. Digital Repository Art History, N. pag. Web. 13 October 2015.
- Hopkins, Annette. "Jane Austen the Critic." *Modern Language Association* 40.2 (June 1925): 398-425. JSTOR. Web. 17 May 2011.
- Jameson, Fredric. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. London: Routledge, 1983. Print.
- Johnson, Samuel. *The Rambler, no. 4*. Behold the Stars. Web. 18 August 2015.
- . *Samuel Johnson's Dictionary*. Ed. Jack Lynch. London: Atlantic Books, 2004. Print.
- Kinkead-Weekes, Mark. *Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist*. London: Methuen and Co Ltd, 1973. Print.
- Kirkpatrick, Kathryn. Introduction. *Belinda*. London: Oxford University Press, 1994. Print.
- Knight, Charles A. "Irony and Mr Knightley". *Studies in the Novel* 2.2, *British Neo-Classical Novel* (Summer 1970): 185–93. JSTOR. Web. 2 October 2014.
- Knoepfmacher, U. C. "The Importance of Being Frank: Character and Letter-Writing in Emma." *Studies in English Literature, 1500 – 1900* 7.4 Nineteenth Century (Autumn, 1967): 639-658. JSTOR. Web. 2 October 2014.

- Knox-Shaw, Peter. *Jane Austen and the Enlightenment*. London: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Print.
- Kramp, Michael. *Disciplining Love: Austen and the Modern Man*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 2007. Print.
- Lascelles, Mary. *Jane Austen and her Art*. London: Oxford University Press, 1979. Print.
- Lee, Linda J. "Guilty Pleasures: Reading Romance Novels as Reworked Fairy Tales. Marvels & Tales", *Erotic Tales* 22.1 (2008): 52–66. JSTOR. Web. 9 October 2015.
- Levine, George. "The Realistic Imagination: English Fiction from Frankenstein to Lady Chatterley." *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach*. Ed. Michael McKeon. Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. Print.
- Litz, A. Walton. "The Picturesque in *Pride and Prejudice*." *Persuasions* 1 (1979) 13-15, 20-24. *Persuasions Online*. Web. 16 October 2015.
- Mabuse, Nkopile and Wither, Emily. "New Wave of Chick lit has Romance – but no Sex". *Edition.cnn.com*. Inside Africa, 16 February 2011, N. pag. Web. 10 June 2015.
- Make, Louise. *Five-Star Seduction*. Cape Town: Kwela Books. 2011. Print.
- . Email interview. 25 May 2015.
- Marshall, David. "The Problem of the Picturesque." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 35.3 (Spring 2002): 413-37. Project Muse. Web. 15 September 2015.
- Matsaneng, Lerato. *Love on the Menu*. Cape Town: Kwela Books. 2011. Print.
- . Email interview. 6 June 2015.
- McCann, Charles J. "Setting and Character in *Pride and Prejudice*." *Nineteenth Century Fiction* 19.1 (June, 1964): 65-75. JSTOR. Web. 7 May 2011.
- McGirr, Elaine. 2007. "Manly Lessons: Sir Charles Grandison, The Rake, And The Man Of Sentiment". *Studies in the Novel* 39.3 (Fall 2007). Web. 7 July 2012.

- McKeon, Michael. "Subjectivity, Character, Development." *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach*. Ed, Michael McKeon. Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. 485-491. Print.
- Modleski, Tania. "The Disappearing Act: A study of Harlequin Romances". *Signs* 5.3 (Spring 1980): 435-48. JSTOR. Web. 21 May 2015.
- Moler, Kenneth. "*Pride and Prejudice*: Jane Austen's "Patrician Hero."'" *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 7.3, Restoration and Century (Summer, 1967): 491-508. JSTOR. Web. 6 May 2011.
- Morris, Pam. *Realism*. Great Britain: Routledge, 2003. Print.
- Mullan, John. *What Matters in Jane Austen?*, London: Bloomsbury, 2012. Print.
- Outram, Dorinda. *The Enlightenment*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Print.
- Pagden, Anthony. *The Enlightenment and Why it Still Matters*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 2013. Print.
- Radway, Janice A. *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature*. London: Verso, 1984. Print.
- Rajeswari Sunder Rajan. Introduction. *The Postcolonial Jane Austen*. Eds. You-me Park and Rajeswari Sunder Rajan. London: Routledge, 2004. Print.
- Ranuga, Thomas K. "Frantz Fanon and Black Consciousness in Azania (South Africa)". *Phylon* (1960-) 47.3. (3rd Quarter, 1986): 182-191. JSTOR. Web. 9 November 2015
- Richardson, Samuel. *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*. Blackmask Online. Web. 2001.
- "Romance Writers Organisation of South Africa". ROSA. N. pag. N.d. Web. 8 November 2015.
- Sabor, Peter and Lars E Troide. Introduction. *Frances Burney: Journals and Letters*. London: Penguin Books, 2001. Print.

- Sapphire Press *Manuscript Guidelines*. Kwela Books Webpage. Web. 5 March 2015.
- Schweizer, Bernard and Robert A Segal. *Critical Insights: The Hero's Quest*. Massachusetts: Salem Press, 2013. Print.
- Southam, Brian, ed. *Jane Austen's Sir Charles Grandison*. Oxford: Clarendon Press: New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. Print.
- Tanner, Tony. Appendix: Introduction. *Pride and Prejudice*. London: Penguin Books, 2003. Print.
- . Introduction. *Pride and Prejudice*. London: Penguin Classics, 1972. Print.
- . *Jane Austen*. London: Macmillan Education, 1986. Print.
- Ten Hermself, Henrietta. "The Villain-Hero in *Pamela* and *Pride and Prejudice*." *College English* 23.2 (November, 1961): 104-108. JSTOR. Web. 5 May 2011.
- Tobin-McClain, Lee. "Paranormal Romance: Secrets of the Female Fantastic". *Journal of the Fantastic Arts* 11.3 (2000): 294-306. JSTOR. Web. 30 July 2015.
- Todd, Janet. *Jane Austen in Context*. Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2005. Print.
- Todd, Janet. *Sensibility*. New York: Methuen & Co, 1986. Print.
- Townsend, Dabney. "The Picturesque". *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 55.4 (Autumn 1997). JSTOR. Web. 11 July 2014.
- Waldron, Mary. "Men of Sense and Silly Wives: The Confusions of Mr Knightley." *Studies in the Novel* 28.2 (Summer 1996). Web. 2 October 2014.
- Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*. London: The Hogarth Press, 1987. Print.
- Weisser, Susan Ostrov. *The Glass Slipper: Women and Love Stories*. USA: Rutgers University Press, 1993. Print.
- Wiesenfarth, Joseph. *An Errand of Form: An Assay Of Jane Austen's Art*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1967. Print.

- Wilson, Jennifer Preston. ““One has got all the goodness, and the other all the appearance of it”: The Development of Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*”. *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal*, 25.1 (Winter 2004): N. pag. Persuasions Online. Web. 9 November 2015.
- Wilson, Margaret Madrigal. “The Hero and the Other Man in Jane Austen’s Novels”. *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal* No 18 (1996): N. pag. Persuasions Online. Web. 19 November 2015.
- Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. 10th Edition. University Avenue, Oxford: Project Gutenberg, 2002: N. pag. Web. 14 November 2015.
- Woodworth, Megan. “If a man dared act for himself: Family romance and independence in Frances Burney’s *Cecilia*.” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 22.2 (Winter 2009–10). Web. 28 May 2012.
- Woolf, Virginia. Unsigned Review. *Jane Austen: Critical Assessments*. Ed. Ian Littlewood. London: Helm Information, 1998. 439-42. Print.
- Wordsworth, William. *Lyrical Ballads. Second edition 1800*. Project Gutenberg, 2005, N. pag. Web. 20 November 2015.
- . *Wordsworth’s Poetical Works Volume 2*. Ed. William Knight. 1896. Project Gutenberg, 2004, N. pag. Web. 20 November 2015.

APPENDIX A

Questions and answers – Louise Make:

1. *Have you ever read a Jane Austen novel? If so, which one?*

Oh, yes! A couple, actually. My favourite will always be *Pride and Prejudice* . . .

Because of my relentless crush on Fitzwilliam Darcy, yes.

2. *If you have read a Jane Austen novel, do you see any similarities between her novels and romance novels?*

Absolutely. I don't know if this is personal preference speaking more than any sort of expert opinion, but Ms Austen wrote exactly *my* kind of romance.

Many stories today focus on “fluff”: fairly simple characters in flashy, trendy worlds, living out clichés. I love a romance that surprises the main characters with serious obstacles and forces them to examine their actions and beliefs, and trigger inner growth. The romance novels I choose today are that sort; and that is what I enjoyed experiencing with Elizabeth and Mr Darcy.

Jane Austen had a way of balancing fantastical passion and emotion with the reality of relevant challenges and a consistently justified journey (as opposed to convenient coincidence continuously chucking characters together). It's easy to be entertained by a light, easy story – believable love, however, requires a full exploration of its highs and lows.

3. *Do you read a lot of romance novels? What do you like about the romance genre? Why do you think it's so popular?*

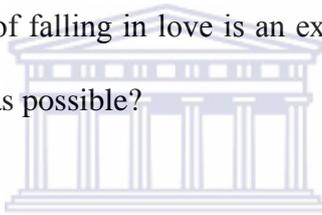
I love reading romance. I love “unlikely love” most: watching characters that might not be society's concept of popular/perfect, or might not be the expected kind of

match, find each other. I was very shy myself as a young girl, and I think it's that girl in me that loves seeing characters she identifies with being chosen and adored.

In general, I think the simple answer is that readers love the escape romance provides. People are going through a lot these days and are more stressed than ever before. Romance is a quick escape into a world where you know things are going to work out and everyone is guaranteed happiness, reader included.

More complex motivations would include variations of my personal example: readers enjoying a fantasy in which someone like them in whatever way, is chosen and cherished. Love is a powerful and uplifting emotion; experiencing it – even (especially?) vicariously – never grows old.

Also, the *process* of falling in love is an exciting one. Who wouldn't want to relive that as many times as possible?



4. *Five-Star Seduction* is written mostly in third-person narration as prescribed by the Sapphire Press guidelines. Are you satisfied that this allowed you to do everything you wanted with the characters?

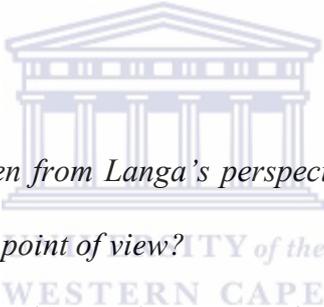
I've written stories in both first- and third-person . . . and to this day can't choose one over the other as a personal preference. Each version has its pros and cons.

I would have chosen to write *Five-Star Seduction* in third-person even if the guidelines had allowed me to choose. The stipulated word-count limit meant I had to make my kind of love journey happen within a fairly short novel. The best thing about doing this in third-person is that I got to hover over all the characters in any given scene rather than being locked in one person's thoughts/feelings. More information bounces around when everyone gets to pitch in on the scene.

I also liked the hints of mystery and confusion I got to create in third-person. First-person narrating encourages me to explain characters' inner workings more. In third-person, it was easier to accept what Langa told us without over-exploring her mind and heart. It also made it easier to get to know Lazola from the outside, from her perspective – and get to watch from her perspective as he got to know her.

When falling in love, we don't always think straight and definitely don't know all the inner workings of the person we're falling for. This leads to assumptions, misunderstandings and occasional judgements to overcome – all of which add dimension to an otherwise beautiful and thrilling story.

Third-person Sapphire novels allowed me all this. I'm *definitely* happy with that.

- 
5. *Most of the novel is written from Langa's perspective. Why did you choose to show the reader mostly Langa's point of view?*

Lazola is a difficult man. And Langa has never prioritised love before.

So, I had a heroine falling (in spite of herself) for a man who is complex and intimidating. I wanted to add to the sense of precariousness by not letting the reader know what he was feeling. We've all been there: wishing we could sneak a peek inside the person we're falling for, and (because we can't tell) hoping upon hope they like us back.

Putting all Lazola's thoughts out there on the page would have reduced the suspense to simply waiting 'til the end when he would tell Langa her misconceptions were way off base. It's simply not as exciting if you know all along which of her judgements are spot-on and which are way off.

6. *In Five-Star Seduction, the first scene of the novel has Langa and Lazola talking on the phone. Lazola comes across as arrogant and rude in this first scene. Why did you choose to portray him like this?*

I wanted to make two things clear as early as possible:

1. We have a very assertive alpha male type hero; and
2. Langa is a woman strong enough hold her own by his side, never cowering in his shadow.

The phone call allowed this perfectly in a few ways:

The first thing he asks her is how she got his direct number. This tells us he's not usually easy to reach, which also means he's an important and private man. He is irritated by whatever trick she must have pulled to get his number, possibly her timing as well (he might be busy) . . . but also is being forced to acknowledge this woman's guts and resourcefulness.

And, having worked sales jobs, I know how harsh people can be when it comes to cold calls. Immediate line cuts to name-calling are all within the realm of possibility in this situation. Lazola conveyed his irritation, but still listened – so, the scene got to show her capabilities, but also a fairness in him. She'd grabbed his attention within minutes.

7. *Was there anything or anyone in particular that inspired the character of Lazola?*

I just love alpha males, so Lazola was a work of pure instinct at the time. Now, however, remembering my crush on the seemingly arrogant Mr Darcy, I think they're actually very similar.

Both judge their heroines quite harshly upon meeting them. Darcy looks down on Elizabeth and her family's social standing. Lazola accuses Langa of using instant

seduction to secure a contract with him. Interestingly, because he is also new to love, he hurts her in the process of just being himself. By the time he realises he wants way more than sex from her, she has begun cutting him out of her life - forcing him to step out of his impenetrable armour and begin a focused and relentless seduction that demonstrates his sincerity and commitment. Similar to Darcy's dedicated pursuit of Elizabeth.

8. *Lazola is an incredibly successful man. He seems entirely in control in all of the interactions with Langa. Do you think that Langa changes him? Makes him softer?*

Without a doubt. They grow together.

Langa has never made love a major priority before their paths crossing; she's in love with her career (a little too much, according to those who know her). And Lazola has been tough and in charge since his late teens when his father passed away. His responsibilities piled higher and higher as he matured, I'm sure. By the time he meets Langa, business has been his entire adult life and he has spent many years giving orders and being the one his family leaned on.

At the beginning of their relationship, he reacts to her more as a businessman than an emotional man. He immediately assumes she responded to him the way she did (when they first kissed) because she wanted something in exchange – the contract. Even when he starts understanding how deep his feelings for her truly are, he still messes up. He hurts her by putting work first at her most vulnerable times. A man used to coming and going as he pleases and having employees obey without complaint, is bound to make a few mistakes in his first forays into love.

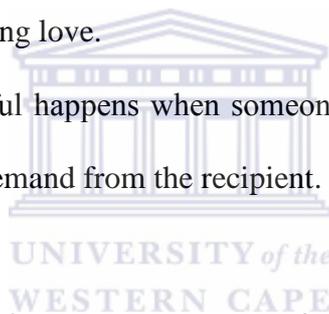
But he learns to grow. He learns to actively prioritise her needs - because his happiness centres on hers.

One of my most important love beliefs is that we should never set out to change each other. That is a stunted and selfish way of approaching love. So, I try to create characters that grow with lessons that make them better people and, as a result, better lovers.

Langa doesn't demand that Lazola change. She weighs up her feelings and his repeated behaviour and draws a line. She sets up boundaries because she isn't happy with the sex-only relationship she thinks he wants.

So, the change doesn't come about because she demanded a different Lazola or forced anything. She simply walked away when she felt he wasn't honouring her worth. Lazola grew as a man when this boundary taught him a few lessons he needed to learn about demonstrating love.

Something beautiful happens when someone's change is a freely offered gift from them rather than a demand from the recipient.



9. *The Sapphire Press guidelines were quite specific about some aspects of what they wanted in a manuscript. Did you find these guidelines restricting?*

Extremely, to tell the truth. As a completely new writer, I appreciated solid guidelines that kept me on track. I also fully respected the need for rules that would cater to that very specific niche market.

That said, I felt it was all a bit limiting. The main characters, for example, felt a little . . . cloned. A little too similar in the stories I read. I'll admit that it did frustrate me at times to get excited about a slightly unusual character or situation (eg, an overweight heroine going healthy; or a couple where the man is significantly younger than the woman) only to be told it would suit "chick lit" better than a Sapphire.

My understanding is that Sapphires are books featuring Black couples targeted at Black readers. My other understanding is that there are a range of Black people in a range of relationships within that definition. A girl with a muffin top, learning to love herself and accept love from her dream prince is not just chick lit. It's life - and can be wonderfully romantic and inspiring.

I understood, though, that those decisions are a tightrope walk: more leeway could be exciting, but how far before it's too far? I might love the idea of witnessing an unpopular character-type overcoming a struggle like that, but it still has to sell. Sapphire was too new for risks like that, I think.

10. If you could have disregarded the guidelines, would you have written anything differently?

PLENTY. The interesting thing about human beings is how diverse we are. Like I said, even within a niche target group like "Black South African reader", we have innumerable different people who would love to see even just a hint of themselves in the hero and heroines they loved.

Something like specifying a successful, career-building heroine is not the only kind of inspiration we have to offer readers. A woman who is tenacious and innovative, no matter her financial struggles, is also inspirational. It's okay to have them look and live differently – and show them to be good and strong in different settings.

Many formerly strict imprints have expanded, though. So, there is always hope for diversity with growth in ranges like Sapphire.

25 May 2015

APPENDIX B

Questions and answers – Lerato Matsaneng:

1. *Have you ever read a Jane Austen novel? If so, which one?*

The only Jane Austen novel I have read was *Pride & Prejudice* – only because I felt like a bit of a “loser” writer for not having read any of her work.

2. *If you have read a Jane Austen novel, do you see any similarities between her novels and romance novels?*

I think romance novels are subjective and often are a reflection of the writer’s experiences and circumstances. I think romance novels have evolved over time, from the age when young women were “readying” themselves to find the right man to love them to an age where young women are bold enough to turn away love they believe isn’t worthy of them. The novels are reflective of the societies we live in. I do see some similarities in the Jane Austen’s novels to current day novels, in that at the root of it all, despite the era you are in – all young women (mainly because the books are written from this perspective) all want to be loved by someone worthy of their love.

3. *Do you read a lot of romance novels? What do you like about the romance genre? Why do you think it’s so popular?*

Not as many as I used to. I like that there is no formula to finding the perfect love and that no matter who you are, what your orientation is – finding love is at the heart of it all. Being happy enough to be yourself and be loved just the way you are. And that’s what makes them so popular, ’cause everyone can relate to that.

4. *Love on the Menu is written mostly in third-person narration as prescribed by the Sapphire Press guidelines. Are you satisfied that this allowed you to do everything you wanted with the characters?*

Yes I am. I think that as a first time writer, it's very easy to get carried away with the words, characters and situations. I think the guidelines helped reign in the book and allow it to blossom within the perimeters. I think they made writing the book that much more challenging and exciting.

5. *Most of the novel is written from Lebo's perspective. Why did you choose to show the reader mostly Lebo's point of view?*

As part of the guidelines by Sapphire Press, I had to write the book from the perspective of the main character. But also because the focus of the book was about Lebo, beyond finding love, it was about Lebo finding herself. Moving from being a journalist to being a businesswoman. Molemo was more established in his career and was at a bit of a plateau in his career and his story wasn't about growth as much as Lebo's was.

6. *In Love on the Menu, Lebo and Molemo meet because Lebo wants to start a catering company and she wants Molemo to monitor her. Was the decision to create a mentor/mentee relationship between the two main characters deliberate?*

Yes it was. It was a typical story of the hero-syndrome, where the victim (Lebo) falls for her hero/savior (Molemo). You will see that the mentor-mentee relationship was over-shadowed by the relationship that developed.

7. *Lebo isn't a typical mentee, she's impressed by Molemo but not intimidated. Was that intentional?*

I think that Lebo was a bold young woman but her role as a journalist limited her ability to be who she was. Once she started taking the reins on her life, she was fully

able to be who she was – a strong bold young woman. And once Molemo helped give her the kick-start she needed she started growing into her own. I liked that, because we see a more empowered, stronger and even stubborn version of who she really was.

8. *Initially Molemo comes across as somewhat arrogant, but soon the readers (and Lebo) discover that he's actually a nice guy. Why did you decide to portray him this way?*

Molemo was a successful young man, and had learnt that in order to be respected at that young age, with all that responsibility, he has to put up a hard and somewhat arrogant face. This is a typical mask that people put up in order to protect themselves. Doesn't mean that is who they truly are. But once he found someone who made him comfortable enough, he took off the mask and allowed himself to be who he really was. But also, when things went bad with Lebo, he was also very quick to put the mask back on to protect himself.

9. *The Sapphire Press guidelines were quite specific about some aspects of what they wanted in a manuscript. Did you find these guidelines restricting?*

Yes in the beginning I did. However you soon realise that you aren't writing for yourself but for a wide audience and thus, you need to amend some of your content to suit your audience. It wasn't too compromising, but it allowed me to practice some restraint.

10. *If you could have disregarded the guidelines, would you have written anything differently?*

Yes but not as good. Like I said, it was challenging to stick to the guidelines – but a good challenging because it allowed me to better tailor the content and put myself in my readers' shoes. I love the final product. It's my best work yet.

6 June 2015