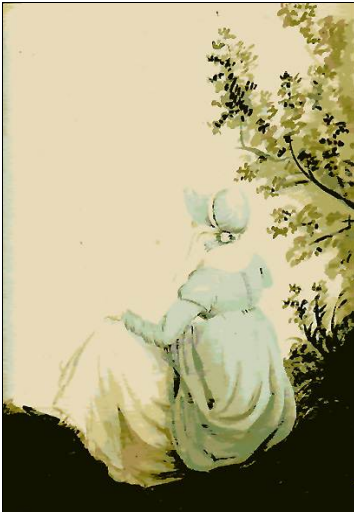


Jane Austen in Context
English 564.02 ** Virginia Cope
Autumn 2009*MWF 11:00-12:18



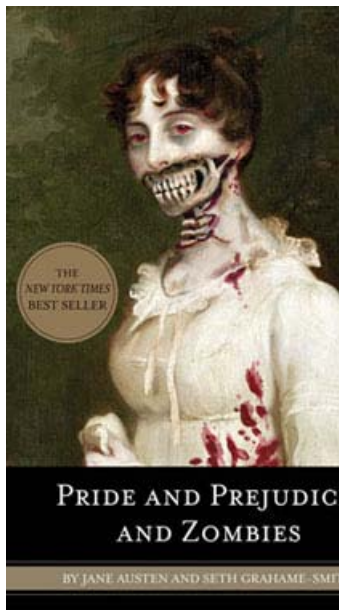
Austen, sketched by her sister Cassandra (1810)

Jane Austen loved and hated with passion, a passion often forgotten when we read her “timeless” novels of a lost England. To restore Austen to the literary ferment in which she came of age, we will read not only her novels but the authors she herself parodied, updated, or excluded.



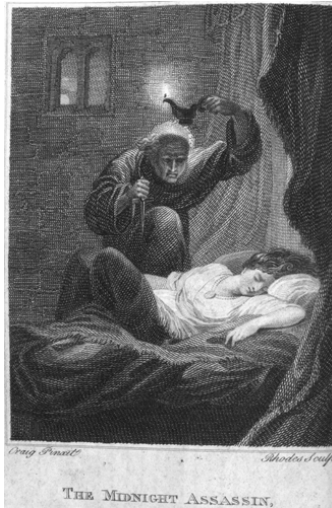
With a feeling of terror not very definable, she fixed her eyes on the staircase, and in a few moments it gave Henry to her view. — Northanger Abbey

Austen’s Northanger Abbey humorously depicts a girl who expects her placid life to contain Gothic tyrants (1817).



How fitting that a modern writer has restored the Gothic to Austen!

Our readings include a lurid 1790s Gothic novel she skewered, the more respectable Gothic of Ann Radcliffe, and the writings of Mary Wollstonecraft, whose strident style Austen rejected.



Eliza Parsons attracted readers in droves with Gothic potboilers.

“I love my man as my fellow; but his scepter, real, or usurped, extends not to me.”



Wollstonecraft, dubbed the “hyena in petticoats,” portrayed women’s lives as Gothic oppression in her novel Maria (1797), and proposed a radical solution in The Vindication of the Rights of Woman