Université de Montréal


**Revisiting the Gentleman: A Study of Hegemonic Masculinity in the
Works of Jane Austen**


par


Suyin Olguin


Département d'études anglaises

Faculté des arts et des sciences


Mémoire présenté à la Faculté des arts et des sciences

en vue de l'obtention du grade de maîtrise

en Études anglaises

option avec mémoire


Decembre, 2013

**Résumé**

L'augmentation grandissante de l'attention portée dans les études sur la masculinité tant à la littérature féminine qu'à ses auteurs incite les chercheurs à se pencher de nouveau sur l'icône qu'est le gentilhomme, sur la réponse qu'offre la littérature du XVIIIe siècle face à cette idéalisation de la masculinité, et comment ces standards ont contribué à façonner nos propres perceptions des différenciations des rôles sexuels. Ce mémoire présente une analyse des personnages masculins des romans de Jane Austen, *Emma*, *Persuasion* et *Mansfield Park*, à travers le concept de « masculinité hégémonique » de R.W. Connell, concept qui a eu un impact certain dans les recherches retraçant comment l'histoire et l'hégémonie ont fabriqué les attentes sociales et nationales envers l'homme anglais. Les livres expliquant la conduite à avoir pour être un gentilhomme viril ont sans aucun doute perpétué ces idéaux. À travers l'étude de la politesse, de la sincérité et de l'héroïsme, perpétuellement renouvelés afin de correspondre aux nouveaux idéaux de la masculinité, cette thèse étudie les livres éducatifs influents, notamment de Locke, Knox et Secker, afin de comprendre de quelle façon la masculinité hégémonique est devenue une partie intégrante du discours et de l'éducation à l'époque de la Régence anglaise. Les œuvres d'Austen ne cesse de rappeler la vulnérabilité de l'hégémonie en rappelant constamment au lecteur l'importance des expériences et de la croissance personnelle, et ce, peu importe le sexe. Néanmoins, ses romans correspondent tout de même à ce que devrait être une éducation appropriée reposant sur les règle de conduite, l'autonomie, le travail et la sincérité; lesquels, tel que l'histoire analysée dans ce mémoire le démontrera, appartiennent également aux idéaux du nationalisme anglais et de la masculinité.

**Abstract**

The increasing amount of attention to literature and female novelists in masculinity studies invites academics to revisit iconic figures like the gentleman in order to explore how literature responds to idealizations of manliness in eighteenth-century society and how these standards contribute to our own view of gender differentiation. This thesis analyses male characters in Jane Austen's *Emma*, *Persuasion* and *Mansfield Park* under the scope of R.W. Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity," a concept that has been influential in the study of how history and hegemony influence social and national expectations of English masculine character. Conduct books that instructed genteel men how to be a manly gentleman perpetuated these ideals. Through the study of how politeness, sincerity, and heroism were continuously transformed to incorporate new ideals of manhood, this thesis examines influential conduct books by Locke, Knox, and Secker in order to understand how hegemonic masculinity became an essential part of Regency masculine education and discourse. Austen's works highlight the vulnerability of hegemony by reminding the reader about the importance of human experience and growth regardless of gender. Nevertheless, her novels respond to appropriate education that instructs on principle, self-governance, industry, and sincerity, all of which, as the history addressed in this thesis demonstrates, also belonged to ideals of English nationalism and masculinity.


Key words: Jane Austen, masculinity, hegemony, gentry masculinity, gentleman, politeness, sincerity, gallantry, hegemonic masculinity, sailor.

**Table of Contents**

**Abbreviations**

All references to Jane Austen's novels are taken from The Broadview Edition of the Works of Jane Austen with the exception of *Emma* and *Pride and Prejudice*, which are referenced from the Norton Edition.


*E Emma*

*MP Mansfield Park*

*P Persuasion*

*PP Pride and Prejudice*

*SS Sense and Sensibility*

To my Father, a true Gentleman

**Acknowledgements**

Reassuring smiles and cuddles from my wonderful son, Nathan, comforted the long nights working and the lack of sleep that writing this work and becoming a new mother entailed. I must first thank my supervisor, Dr. Michael Sinatra, for your guidance, patience, and support. I truly admire your work and I feel lucky to have had the opportunity to work with you. I thank my husband, Nicholas, for all of his love and support. You have been so patient and so encouraging with every decision I make. I am lucky to have found you. To my sister, thank you for believing in me, you are my greatest inspiration! Your feedback and love for my work has made me a better writer. Daddy, congratulations on getting your own M.A., thank you for always setting the best standards of gentlemanliness and academia. Mom, to you I owe my passion for reading and writing. I am thankful for all the sacrifices you have made for me. The two of you have taught me to always work hard to accomplish my dreams. Danielle and Joe, thank you for all of your help, love, care, and for all those pizzas and reassuring words. To my friends—Kelly, Will, Jacqueline—I will always be thankful for your kindness, understanding, and support throughout my pregnancy and now in motherhood. You guys have been my rock! A special thank you to Kelly McDevitt for her encouragement, criticism, hilarious commentary, and dedication in proof reading this work. My wonderful cousins and other family members, I love you all! I wouldn't be here without any of you. To Dr. Broke Cameron, thank you for trusting me. Our work together has transformed me as an academic and writer. I also would like to thank Dr. Claire Grogan, for your reassurance and for awakening my passion for Jane Austen; you will always be a source of inspiration.

 I look forward to thanking you all again, this is just the beginning.

**Introduction**

> "The women do this better—Edgeworth, Ferrier, Austen have all had their portraits of real society, far superior to any thing Man, vain Man, had produced of the like nature"
>
> (Walter Scott, *Extract from Journal entry, 28 March 1826*)
>
> "Every book, even a masterpiece, yields a little more if its assumptions, its language, are understood. And whatever may be true of *Emma*, it is open to question whether *Sense and Sensibility* and *Mansfield Park* can in fact ever be fully independent of their historical context"
>
> (Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*)

The presence of eighteenth-century historical and social discourses in the novels of Jane Austen drives critics from various disciplines to revisit her work in order to understand the evolution and malleability of standardized forms of gender construction. Butler and Scott are not alone in their recognition of Austen's "[superior] portraits of real society" (Scott 144). The work of a female novelist continues to be essential to the study of masculinity because "the study of male protagonists, most traditional literary studies, have proven inherently flawed" as their focus turns to the "particularity, as opposed to the universality, of male experience" (Horlarcher "Charting Masculinity Studies" 12). For instance, Horlarcher argues that new studies of masculinity should "delegate a voice to men who do not represent the universal anymore in order to articulate the unutterable within the patriarchal system" and to apply critical knowledge of masculinity studies to the "vast and diachronic field of literature" (12). Novels, in general, therefore, are of interest to historians like Robert Shoemaker (*Gender in English Society 1650-1850),* who considers the novel an important sourcebook in the study of masculinity because it exemplifies the progressing and often contradictory ideology

surrounding past and contemporary ideals of manhood. Shoemaker states: "Much more work needs to be done on representations of masculinity in literature, especially since by the end of the [nineteenth century] 'manliness' had become a frequent topic of discussion. It is possible to identify some important, and sometimes conflicting, themes" ("Ideas about Gender" 43). As such, the study of Austen's novels allows one to identify the "rhetorical" construction of the gentleman's morality and manners through educational ideals and how these convey patriarchal and masculine dichotomies (Horlarcher 12). The gentleman, therefore, is a symbolic figure of what Connell denominates as "gentry masculinity" (*Masculinities* 190) because his moral and literary education aims to construct an ideal of masculinity that parallels English national character. Jason D. Solinger, in *Becoming a Gentleman: English Literature and the Construction of Modern Masculinity, 1660-1815,* highlights the ongoing critical interest in this form of masculinity:

> Over the past 20 years, the subject of masculine gentility has been examined by such historians as G. J. Barker-Benfield, Steven Shapin, Lawrence Klein and Michele Cohen and by a small but growing number of literary critics that includes Shawn Maurer, Linda Zionkowski, Michael Kramp and Erin Mackie. I share with these scholars the conviction that our modern conceptions of gender, class and labor came into view in the course of reimagining the gentleman. (5)

In short, contemporary literary and historical studies are fascinated by the gentleman and his masculinity because our society continues to question gender politics and relations, which are partly derived from genteel idealizations of gender.

Certainly, just as much as the gentleman has been a source of interest by historians, literary critics have also given the gentleman appropriate attention, these critics include: Penelope Fritzer (*Jane Austen and Eighteenth-Century Courtesy Books*), who surveys a gentleman's manners, and Jane Miller (*Women Writing about Men*) who analyses the role the

gentleman plays as both father and son. Most recently, Sarah Emsley (*Jane Austen and the Philosophy of the Virtues*) explores Austen's characters in relation to Aristotelian virtue. In her work, Emsley analyses texts by Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle and explores these values as pivotal to the character construction of Austen's works. The study of the gentleman's virtues continues to be of interest to academics and students alike. For example, Elaine Laberge in her Master's thesis, *Jane Austen and Her Men: Ancestors of the Modern Romances*, identifies the gentleman's flaws and virtues in Austen's novels and parallels these characteristics with the Harlequin[1]. Furthermore, the gentleman is also an iconic figure in contemporary movie and television adaptions that often highlight Regency masculine prowess and manners[2]. The increased interest in Austen's male characters along with the existing study of Austen's domestic discourses only emphasizes how her novels continue to meet numerous disciplinary and/or critical interests.

This thesis expands on the works of historians, literary, and masculinity scholars like Michéle Cohen, Jason D. Solinger, Brian Southam, Robert B. Shoemaker, Erin Mackie, Marilyn Butler, Juliet McMaster, R.W. Connell, and Todd Reeser, to name a few, to study the influence of politeness, virtue, and national heroism in the refashioning of the Regency gentleman as masculine in Jane Austen's *Emma*, *Mansfield Park*, and *Persuasion*. It identifies ideas that were disseminated through conduct books and educational treatises including the

---

[1] Although Laberge similarly draws attention to the gentleman's virtues such as generosity, truthfulness, merit, as well as flaws such as gallantry and deceit, this thesis analyses such traits in relation to English masculinity. Nevertheless, I would encourage the reader to refer to Emsley and Leberge's work for additional readings of gentlemanly virtues.

[2] Think of Colin Firth's portrayal of Mr. Darcy in Langton's adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice.*

[3] Jenny Davidson in *Hypocrisy and the Politics of Politeness* provides a list of the conduct books that were the "most influential in Britain from the Renaissance through the end of the eighteenth century" (7). The list includes "Erasmus's *De Civilitate morum puerilium* (1530), Elyot's *Boke Named the Governour* (1531), Castiglione's *Il*

[2] Think of Colin Firth's portrayal of Mr. Darcy in Langton's adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice.*

work of John Locke (*Some Thoughts Concerning Education*), Vicesimus Knox (*Liberal Education*), and Thomas Secker (*Fourteen Sermons Preached on Several Occasions*) regarding, as Solinger eloquently states, certain "violations of gentlemanly decorum—contraventions such as unsociability, mindless frivolity and insincerity" (102). These weaknesses are analysed adjacently to opposing principles like sincerity, leadership, self-government, and industry. Each chapter addresses significant changes during the eighteenth century that contributed to the opposition of formerly regarded practices like politeness and to the resurgence of the perception of virtue as manly. Lastly, it regards how national heroism and the values represented by returning naval officers challenged, yet again, the composition of Regency hegemonic ideals of virtue and manliness.

Butler's consolidation of Austen's novels as analogous to their "historical contexts" (4) opens the possibility for critics to regard literature as an important source of historical information. Increasingly, the novel is studied not only as a chronological response to history but also as influential in the production and transformation of those histories. In other words, fiction has, according to Ryan Kiernan in *New Historicism,* a "reciprocal role in the shaping of their time" ("Introduction" xiv). Kiernan argues that much can be learned about human nature by looking at the works circulating at a certain point in history. He states: "To understand human beings, therefore, we need to grasp them as 'cultural artefacts', whose significance is to be found inscribed in the specificity of local circumstance and concrete detail" (1). Nevertheless, studies of gender construction pay attention to how this environment is also vulnerable and subject to modification. Then, texts produced in response to discourses of gender formation demonstrate the "reciprocal" relationship Kiernan refers to between the circumstances that inspired the text and how the text influenced the practice and/or evolution

of those values. For example, medieval and early-modern English society was influenced by philosophical and religious theories that divided males and females into two separate entities possessing biological and temperamental differences that empowered one over the other. As Shoemaker argues, the construction of gender was divided into "the biblical story" and "medical understandings of the biological differences" between the sexes (16). Eighteenth-century views and opinions about gender differences were not only derived from Renaissance tradition but also from conduct books[3] instructing on "ideal" or "proper" male and female behaviour (Shoemaker 21)[4]. This is not to say that Regency society reproduced only medieval gender attributions, but that their own conceptions and expectations were partly influenced by the medieval view on gender differentiation[5]. Therefore, the novel, just as conduct books, participates in the manufacturing, enforcement, and propagation of evolving ideas throughout the eighteenth century.

Austen's novels comment on conduct and education and clearly oppose insincerity in favour of virtue as much as educational and social masculinity discourses did. Nonetheless, her ideas of how to improve one's morals are represented through characters of different gender and social status. In other words, there is no elevation of female or male virtues based on their biological and psychological differences so commonly depicted in eighteenth-century

---

[3] Jenny Davidson in *Hypocrisy and the Politics of Politeness* provides a list of the conduct books that were the "most influential in Britain from the Renaissance through the end of the eighteenth century" (7). The list includes "Erasmus's *De Civilitate morum puerilium* (1530), Elyot's *Boke Named the Governour* (1531), Castiglione's *Il Libro del Cortegiano* (1528), Lyly's *Euphues* (1584), Allestree's *Whole Duty of Man* (1658), Halifax's *Lady's New-Years-Gift, or, Advice to a Daughter* (1688), Fordyce's *Sermons to Young Women* (1766), Gregory's *A Father's Legacy to His Daugthers* (1774) and Chesterfield's *Letters to his Son* (1774)" (8).
[4] "Conduct books form part of a long tradition of books of moral instruction, including discussions of the purpose of marriage, and the proper ordering of domestic relations, which date back to before the Restoration…Judging by the numbers of editions published, the works were even more popular between the 1770's and the 1830's" (Shoemaker 21).
[5] Brod also acknowledges that these standards drove "early men studies" to be "insufficiently attentive" because of the "influence of the 'separate spheres' models, ingerited from an early phase of women's history in which each gender was said to inhabit its own sphere of activity separate from the other" (28).

culture; her narratives emphasize the potential for wickedness and improvement in all humans equally. Austen's approach can be problematic because it subjugates her work to readings associated with morality, class and female liberation, and distances one from studying her work as exemplary of masculine discourse. Critics like G.H. Lewes recognize Austen's "greater genius, and incomparable deeper experience" ("The Lady Novelists" 141) as a novelist; yet, such recognition is usually accompanied by a literary confinement of her writing as that which only expresses female understanding and genteel manners and decorum. Lewes patriarchal praise of Austen positions her equally insightful male characters as secondary. The following passage is an excerpt from Lewes review published in 1852 and titled "The Lady Novelist"[6]:

> Never does she transcend her own actual experience, never does her pen trace a line that does not touch the experience of others…We recognise the second and more special quality of womanliness in the tone and point of view: they are novels written by a woman, an Englishwoman, a gentlewoman; no signature could disguise that fact; and because she has so faithfully (although unconsciously) kept to her own womanly point of view, her works are durable. There is nothing of the *doctrinaire* in Jane Austen; not a trace of woman's 'mission;' but as the most truthful, charming, humorous, pure-minded, quick-witted, and unexaggerated of writers, female literature has reason to be proud of her. (141, emphasis in original)

Lewes is not alone in his review of Austen; certainly, Henry Austen's infamous "Biographical Notice" positions Austen's work as "imaginative" and "never from individuals" ("Henry Austen: The Biographical Notice" 77).

In a similar manner, nineteenth-century reviewers praise Austen's wit and talent, but continue to identify her novels as part of the Romantic sentimentalism that offers little insight into actual life experience. Consider the following passage from an unsigned review published

---

[6] This passage of Lewes's review is part of a compilation found in B.C. Southam's *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage*.

in 1866 that compares Austen's "refined, genteel, and little given to the exhibition of emotion" with Charlotte Brontë's "rough" and "passionate" writing. The reviewer argues that Brontë's "experience led her to consider life as a severe struggle in which happiness is only attained by severe personal toil" whereas Austen writes "as a series of little tea-parties, picnics, and routs, where the road to happiness was accomplished by the short cut of an eligible offer" ("Miss Austen" 200). To read Austen's novels as a "series of tea parties" undervalues the true meaning of her work, including her depiction of the gentleman and the sailor, characters who offer insight into masculine discourse of the Regency period. Still, there are contemporary writers like Sarah R. Morrison, in "Of Woman Borne: Male Experience and Feminine Truth in Jane Austen's Work," who also approaches Austen's work in the study of "feminine truth" and argues that men are "of secondary importance in the novels, however useful they may be to the plot, and male experience becomes relevant only in so far as it confirms "feminine" truth. And by this I mean not a truth for women alone but what for Austen is a universal truth reflected more clearly in women's experience" (342). Conversely, this thesis opposes such confining views and demonstrates how Austen's men are not "secondary" because their instruction, which also prepared them for an advantageous marriage, reflects upon the nation's anxiety over masculine construction. All of Austen's characters embody a developing humanity that is influenced by particular discourses circulating in their environment that were equally propagated by conduct books and literature.

Masculinity theorist like Connell, Reeser, Messerschmidt, and Horlarcher agree that every single period of time has had its share in the construction of contemporary masculine studies and therefore it is important never to dismiss any input because of race, class, and/or gender. Evidently, to disdain Jane Austen's contribution to the body of work dedicated to the

gentleman because of her gender or genre of choice is prejudiced and inconsequential. Just as

Austen has been praised for her wit and for her profound heroines,[7] she must receive the same

amount of attention for writing equally profound male characters. In order to understand the

origins of the construction of the gentleman as one symbol of English hegemonic gentry

masculinity it is essential to approach both genders as "subjects continually negotiating and

constructing their gender identities" (Brod 28)[8]. R.W. Connell and James Messerschmidt, in

"Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," argue that masculinity is not a "fixed

entity embedded in the body or personality traits of individuals. Masculinities are

configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action and, therefore, can differ

according to the gender relations in a particular social setting" (836). In other words, because

masculinity is not "fixed" and does not specifically define the individual as a separate entity,

masculinity should be regarded as possessing a multiplicity of meanings and representations

that include historical discontinuities. As Todd Reeser, in *Masculinity Theory: An

Introduction*, remarks:

> By going back in time and by looking at definitions of what a man used to be, it
> becomes clear very quickly that masculinity has a history that does not always
> affirm our own modern ideas about what a man is…With innumerable
> variations in time and in space, masculinity is more complicated than we might
> first believe and, consequently, masculinity can be studied not as a single
> definition, but as variety and complexity. (2) [9]

---

[7] The following anonymous review in *Critical Review*, March 1813, draws attention to the popularity of Elizabeth
Bennet during Austen's life time: "Although these young ladies claim a great share of the reader's interest and
attention, none calls forth our admiration so much as Elizabeth, whose archness and sweetness of manner render
her a very attractive object in the family piece…Elizabeth's sense and conduct are of superior order to those of
the common heroines in novels. From her independence of character, which is kept within the proper line of
decorum, and her well-timed sprightliness, she teaches the man of Family-Pride to know himself" (45,46).
[8] Passage from Harry Brod "The Construction of the Construction of Masculinity."
[9] Brod has a similar argument: "One gains clearer understanding of the dynamics of the social construction of
gender if one understand individual gender identities as resulting from the internalization of social structures

Austen's figure of the gentleman is one cultural "entity" which portrays numerous discourses present in her society; her characters do not define, but construct English masculinity.

It is as difficult to define English masculinity in the Regency period today as it was during Austen's lifetime, which makes it imprudent to regard the gentleman as a definitive example of English masculinity and disregard other figures that also contributed to the formulation of masculine character such as members of the lower and working classes, monarchs, politicians, soldiers, clergymen, etc. Also, one must not ignore that Austen is one among other novelists who produced equal responses to masculine construction and the historical instances that transformed masculine discourse during the Regency[10]. It is essential, therefore, to approach these "innumerable variations" (Reeser 2) of English masculinity by studying hegemony. The term "hegemony" was introduced and defined by Raymond Williams, in *Marxism and Literature*, as "the whole lived social process as practically organized by specific and dominant meanings, values, and beliefs of a kind which can be abstracted as a 'world-view' or 'class outlook' (109). It is in relationship to culture and ideology that Williams relates hegemony as an "internalised form of social control" (Barry 165). Although theorists like Antonio Gramsci study hegemony in regards to the use of force in political control (Connell & Messerschmitt 831), this thesis does not elaborate on the political implications of hegemony because hegemony does not "mean total control and it 'may be disrupted' or 'disrupt itself'" (Connell *Masculinities* 37). As such, hegemony allows

---

rather than if one attempts to understand gender in society as simply the externalized sum of gendered individual writ large" (28).

[10] Studies in Masculinity have also analyzed the work of Mary Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft, Sarah Fielding, Frances Burney, and Aphra Behn, among other female novelists. For insightful readings of how these women respond to gender construction please refer to the various works found in *Engendering Images of Man* in the *Long Eighteenth Century, Constructions of Masculinity in British Literature from the Middle Ages to the Present*, and *Becoming a Gentleman: British Literature and the Invention of Modern Masculinity, 1660-1815*.

one to scope standardized forms of masculinity at a specific time, space, and history to understand gender formation. As "different masculinities are produced in the same cultural or institutional setting," Connell argues that one "must also recognise the *relations* between the difference kinds of masculinity" and by incorporating ideology and history as symbolic of what he calls "hegemonic masculinity" (37, emphasis in original).

Hegemonic masculinity, thus, distinguishes "subordinated masculinities" to study the "normative" and "most honored way of being a man" to which "all other men…position themselves in relation to it" (Connell and Messerschmidt 832). According to Connell and Messerschmidt, "hegemonic masculinity" was first proposed in an article written by Tim Carrigan, Bob Connell and John Lee titled "Towards a New Sociology of Masculinity," which recorded a series of studies done by Australian high schools that "extensively critiqued the male sex role in literature and propose a model of multiple masculinities and power relations" (830). These Australian studies regard social discrimination, patriarchy, domination and their relationship with constructions of masculinity and the body; also, they provide evidence that there are a variety of hierarchies at work like class and gender in the construction of masculine identity (830). As such, to study masculinity in Austen's work by analyzing certain codes in hegemony allows one to divide masculinity into multiple subjects of study in relation to all or selected discourses embedded in a nation, culture, tradition, language, and/or history. In other words, hegemonic masculinity enables a literary critic to focus on selected themes in fiction that illustrate the "normative" and "most honored way" of being a gentleman in the Regency England of Austen's novels. For example, Erin Mackie in "Historicizing Masculinity: The Criminal and the Gentleman" argues that the "Modern English gentleman has been cited in contemporary masculinity studies as the first type of "hegemonic masculinity"" (1). Mackie

applies Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity to study the rake, the highwaymen, and the pirates; her approach shows how through this scope one is able to explore several figures and their contribution to perspectives of manliness throughout the eighteenth century[11].

Nonetheless, hegemony also has its limitations and attention must be given to geographical boundaries or "change in locality" (Connell & Messerschmidt 849). To illustrate, let us look at a common contention in regards to Austen's novels' "carefully defined limits" (Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* 2) in class and geographical setting. Consider how, although the gentleman visits other places like London and Bath and Austen's characters often relate their experiences outside of England, the reader is never transported to these places through the narrative[12]. Austen's characters belong to the established gentry living in small communities where they interact with members of certain social circles including other families of equal or lower income and members of the clergy and of specific working classes like tradesmen, farmers, and lawyers. Butler suggests that because Austen's works relate the story of selected families within a genteel microcosm who have, as Butler intelligibly says, "local and not national importance" (3), critics have often read Austen as "merely a snob" (3). Nonetheless, Butler encourages readers to consider the history and ideology circulating in the period in order to identify and understand the "contemporary issues" (3) that are embedded within the narrative; in Butler's words: "[t]he novel of Jane Austen's day was not just didactic. It was also seen as relevant to contemporary issues, and, since these issues were unusually

---

[11] The work of Harry Brod ("Construction of Masculinities" 27), Stefan Horlacher ("Charting Masculinities" 7), Michéle Cohen, and of John Tosh's, also recognize Connell's influential contribution to masculinity studies by conceptualizing "hegemonic masculinity." Connell's approach continues to influence gender studies.

[12] David Grey, in "Topography," makes a similar observation and argues: "Jane Austen approached topography as carefully as she did the chronology of her novels. She rarely strayed outside the English terrain with which she was familiar from her travelings and shifts of residence...Other women writers of her time roamed the map of Europe, indeed the entire world, in search of eccentric locales and presented them cloaked in fantastic imaginings. Jane Austen makes only passing references to places outside of England" (380).

deep and clearcut, inevitably partisan" (Butler 3). Similarly, Juliet McMaster, in her study of "Class" in Austen's novels, defends the selectiveness often criticized in Austen's work and states that: "class difference [was a] fact of life" for Jane Austen and her novels reflect upon those "fine distinctions between one social level and another" (115)[13]. In this way, Austen's work is not a form of social elitism but a clear illustration of how class division relatively determined gender categorization.

As such, Connell and Messerschmidt propose the following three levels of analysis in the study of hegemonic masculinities: "local (immediate interactions), regional (cultural/nation-state), and global (transnational arenas)" (849). This thesis studies the country gentleman as portraying a "local" hegemonic masculinity; it also explores how the gentleman's instruction through conduct books, educational treatises, and public/private education illustrates both a "local" and a "regional" hegemonic masculinity. Finally, this thesis analyses how the national regard for heroism generated by the return of the navy incorporates new ideals to the already established "regional" hegemonic masculinity. It is noteworthy to mention that even this regional hegemonic masculinity is not absolute because one cannot disregard the presence of *local* divisions and subdivisions within the regional margin. For example, the analysis of the gentleman in the narrative could be divided into: counties, landed property, or family relationships (dividing distant and close relatives) (Connell, Messerschmidt 849). It is important, therefore, to look at Austen's work as representative of a community within a nation: with values regarded and practiced by some, but neglected by others. Todd Reeser, in *Masculinities in Theory*, argues that the "ideology of masculinity itself

---

[13] Another important observation that McMaster remarks is the fact that Austen does not write about royalty neither does she give important roles to characters that possess a title (116). In this way, even though monarchical division and aristocratic behaviour are essential to the construction of English masculinity, it is yet another type of hegemonic masculinity that needs independent study.

can serve as one element of a given national community's imagined style" (179) [14]. As such,

the manliness portrayed in Austen's men symbolizes an "imagined style" that responds to the

nation's masculinity discourses and illustrates numerous shifts that were present throughout

the Regency[15]. These shifts included, according to Claire Grogan in her introduction to the

Broadview edition of *Northanger Abbey*, the effects of the French revolution, industrialization,

and early Feminist upheaval. Grogan writes:

> Manners well might have changed between the late 1790's and 1816 since
> English society was undergoing immense social and political upheaval. Rapid
> industrialisation lead to a dramatic increase in urban populations, and the
> burgeoning middle class promoted blooming trade and subsequent demands for
> luxury goods, publications, and improved living standards. There were also
> undoubtedly changes in fashion, but Austen's comments about social conduct
> remain pertinent since she targets general types of characteristics. (9,10)

As the passage shows, social and political changes were partly responsible for the ongoing

reorganization of social values[16]. Austen is careful never to engage in political debates as her

---

[14] Reeser's conclusion is derived from an analysis of the work of Benedict Anderson, in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, explored at length in page 179 in *Masculinities in Theory*.
[15] Iris Marion Young ,in "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference," argues that community "proponents conceive the social subject as a relation of unity composed by identification and symmetry among themselves" (307). On the other hand, other critics see community as a "part of an opposition" which only divides its members into the ideal and the other (Young 306). Austen's world is a community because her characters represent one part of the nation that shares similar views and expectations of the English gentleman. However, the unity among the members of Austen's community also affects the way certain values and manners are instructed, regarded, and engendered.
[16] In addition, in her study of the relationship between infamous criminal masculine figures like the rake and the pirate, "Historicizing Masculinity: The Criminal and the Gentleman," Erin Mackie highlights the following:
> As has been widely recognized, the modern civil gentleman emerges to make his claim on patriarchal power from a set of historical changes that can be see to coalesce around the Whig settlement of 1689. The changes that affect the relative authority of different masculine types and traits are tied into the larger sociopolitical upheavals of the seventeenth century. Most basically, these might be viewed as a set of related crises of authority in politics, religion, knowledge and the social order. The civil wars beginning in 1642, the execution of Charles I in 1649, the institution of Cromwell's commonwealth, the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, and the continuance of dynastic crisis, exacerbated by James II ascension to the throne of 1685 and his flight in 1688—these are the bare political bones of events that signal changes in the conception, exercise, and representation of authority. (5,6)
It is of great importance to keep this historical background in mind for, as Mackie argues, it was a pivotal foundation for the construction of the English gentleman as a symbol of hegemonic English masculinity.

narratives address human character and growth; nonetheless, the moral improvement she advocates influenced her reader and responded to communal hegemonic ideologies.

The study of how Austen illustrates several social and political developments is essential to the understanding of the hegemony of English masculinity. Stephen Copley, in *Literature and the Social Order in Eigheenth-Century England*, argues that "[d]iscourses are not static or self-contained; although they are distinctive they are continually modified by the contexts in which they are found, and these modifications must be taken into account in any discussion of them" (2). Hence Austen's male characters, throughout her body of work, vary from novel to novel (think of Mr. Darcy and Captain Wentworth, for example) because their differences correspond to changing ideologies about masculinity. "Chapter one: Masculinity and the Paradox of Politeness," begins with a survey of the history of polite manners: the emphasis on their practice through conversation with women and their association with effeminacy and insincerity. It also addresses the mutability of politeness and gallantry through forms of flattery used as tools of seduction and masculine empowerment. Evidently, *Mansfield Park* initially illustrates the superficiality of politeness and *Emma* further explores the contention between gallantry and the enforcement of sincerity[17]. It is important to remember that the novels do not openly discuss these tensions, yet Austen disputes superficial manners because of their duplicity. The duplicity, however, also responds to the continuous need to establish a masculine ideal that favoured truthfulness as part of the nation's reformulation of English character (G. Newman 127). "Chapter two: Masculinity, Education, and Sincerity" highlights how books of instruction and private education played an important role in re-

---

[17] Davidson considers *Emma* as "the novel where Austen most obviously revisits *Mansfield Park*'s equivocal conclusions about virtue and concealment" (164).

shaping masculine character and their influence in a gentleman's construction of their own identity and manners. The first part surveys the gentleman, the origins of the title and its association with class. The work of Locke, Knox, and Secker are incorporated in order to support the idea of parental discipline and example as essential in the instruction of self-government, morality, and life experience[18]; all of which formulated manliness and national character. Furthermore, the chapter explores how educationalists worked to establish virtue as a manly and English trait. Inevitably, the new ideal of virtue reinforced patriarchal control (virtue meant protection of women) and advocated sincerity, productivity, speaking and acting in a truthful manner, and self-government. "Chapter three: Masculinity and National Heroism" expands the analysis of the gentleman to the gentleman-sailor in *Persuasion*. It begins with a survey regarding the growing regard for the returning navy and the values they represented—heroism, leadership, and mental and physical dexterity—that gradually began to be incorporated to English masculinity standards. Austen compares the "idiocy" and idleness that led to Sir Elliot's economic misfortunes with Captain Harville's domestic comfort derived from the knowledge of economy and optimization learned at sea. The chapter draws further attention to education in order to address how the improper instruction of self-government and moderation in genteel families like the Musgroves instigate tragedy and opposes the masculine ideal of man's domestic control. The final part of this chapter studies Wentworth's embodiment of masculine prowess and how his presence threatens the masculinity of

---

[18] These perception of experience was also shared by Knox who states that "the mind is in truth the man…all business is conducted by the exertion of the mental powers" and the "minds of the great have more influence in the regulation of affairs…that it is therefore a most valuable object, to secure to the great a solid education" (32). Similarly, Emsley writes that education "cultivates" character and that character, just like the body, "need exercise to keep it healthy" (27).

gentlemen like Charles Musgrove. Austen's novels, therefore, are approached not as a historical illustration but as a response and projection of certain historical developments.

**Chapter one**

## Masculinity and the Paradox of Politeness

> "There is one thing, Emma, which a man can always do, if he chooses, and that
> is, duty; not by manoeuvring and finessing, but by vigour and resolution"
>
> "I was tempted by his attentions, and allowed myself to appear pleased…I
> always found him very pleasant…Latterly, however—for some time indeed—I
> have had no idea of their meaning any thing. —I thought them a habit, a
> trick…"
> (Jane Austen, *Emma*)

Mr. Knightley's disapproval of Frank Churchill's flattery, indecision, and misconduct as well as Emma's realization of the insincerity of Frank's attentions reflect upon an ideal of manliness that discredited the practice of gallantry or politeness as appropriate and sincere forms of decorous masculine manners. Erin Mackie argues that manners were "formalized codes of behaviour" that provided an "authentication" for "codes of morality" which were concerned with "establishing the harmonious conformity between the individual, subjective, and more on the one hand, and the social, objective, and behavioural on the other". Therefore, a gentleman was expected to portray all of these norms "from the inside out" (*Rakes, Highwaymen, and Pirates*, 13-14)[19]. The aim was to "cultivate masculine prestige" through "birth and status;" politeness, "assertion of national identity;" "religious and moral cultivation;" "sexual self-assertion;" and "literary and cultural" achievement (Mackie 17). This chapter analyses Austen's depiction of politeness and gallantry as insincere systems of behaviour. Characters like Frank Churchill, Mr. Elton, and Henry Crawford portray the

---

[19] Consider the following excerpt from the introduction of Daniel Defoe's *The Complete English Gentleman*: The born gentleman "hath the natural beauties of his mind embellish'd and set off with a vast fund of learning and acquir'd knowledge; that has a clear head, a generous heart, a polite behaviour and, in a word, shews himself to be an accomplish'd gentleman in every requisite article, that of birth and blood excepted" (Copley 41).

nation's preoccupation with constructing a man with polite manners, who could communicate without flirtatious insinuations, possess sensibility towards his inferiors, but who also embodied masculine prowess. The novels highlight how Mr. Elton, Frank Churchill, and Henry Crawford's education encourage superficial manners like gallantry, which often serve as a tool to exert masculine dominance over women. Eventually, the association of effeminacy and hypocrisy with politeness and gallantry positions honesty and generosity as more adequate characteristics of manliness. As critics like Jenny Davidson acknowledge that politeness and gallantry are terms that are used analogously[20], the first part of this chapter surveys the history of both gallantry and politeness during the eighteenth century. The second part analyses how *Emma* and *Mansfield Park* illustrate the social regard and opposition to polite manners in order to emphasize sincerity and goodness as superior traits of gentry hegemonic masculinity.

Shoemaker (*Gender in English Society 1650-1850*) remarks that a "'cult of sentiment'" in the eighteenth century influenced the production of conduct books instructing on self-regulation and genteel manners (21) to improve the faults of each sex. A man's fault, Shoemaker continues, was related to "austerity," "rigour," "sternness," "pride," and "violence" and these flaws were often counteracted through the "civilising influence of female conversation" (29). In other words, conversation with women provided gentlemen with the opportunity to "refine" and "improve" their manners (Cohen "Manliness, Effeminacy, and the French" 46). Frank Churchill, Mr. Elton, and Henry Crawford's education is influenced by the period's emphasis on politeness, which, according to Lawrence E. Klein in *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness*, originated in "Italy as early as the fourteenth century" and became

---

[20] Davidson writes: " hypocrisy and its affiliates (a cluster of related terms, including gallantry, manners, tact, all coming under the umbrella of politeness" (2).

prominent in "seventeenth- and early eighteenth century England" (3). Klein also notes that throughout the eighteenth century, politeness was "associated with and often identified with gentlemanliness since it applied to the social world of the gentlemen and ladies" (3). In addition, politeness was considered an "art de plaire" or the "art of pleasing" which involved flattery, "self-effacement", and was associated with "social performance" (Cohen 314)[21]. Cohen argues that politeness "was at the heart of the sociability that developed in the social and cultural spaces of the new urban culture of early eighteenth-century England;" it became essential to men's "self-fashioning as gentlemen" ("Manliness, Effeminacy, and the French" 46). Also, politeness was considered a trait for the "new definition of virtue" (Nünning 258) or, as Jenny Davidson in *Hypocrisy and the Politics of Politeness* states, politeness became a ""good enough" approximation of virtue" (7). Davidson states that discourses regarding politeness and virtue were common in conduct books and in the works of Jonathan Swift, Samuel Johnson, Frances Burney, and Edmund Burke. These authors, Davidson continues, attempt to demonstrate the "compatibility" between virtue and politeness (8). For example, the Earl of Chesterfield, in *Letters to his Son* (1774), remarks: "politeness and good breeding are absolutely necessary to adorn any or all other good qualities or talents. Without them, no knowledge, no perfection whatsoever, is seen in its best light" (*The PG Edition of Chesterfield Letters to His Son* xvi).

However, Davidson refers to politeness as another term for hypocrisy and observes that gallantry is also a synonym of politeness[22]. Consequently, the relationship of politeness

---

[21] Michéle Cohen ""Manners" Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830"

[22] Davidson writes: "There is an important difference between texts that name hypocrisy and dissimulation without disavowing them and texts that avow something very like hypocrisy under another name (chivalry,

and gallantry created social contention because their practice often did lead to insincerity and adultery (Davidson 46). Opposition to the negative implications of politeness increased throughout the end of the eighteenth century (Cohen 314)[23] as it threatened the ethics of social interaction. Klein explains the social threat posed by politeness as follows:

> "Politeness" concerned sociability but was not identical with it: while human sociability was a primal and original stuff requiring work, "politeness" was a refined sociability, bringing aesthetic concerns into close contiguity with ethical ones. Although "politeness" implied that sociability was enhaced by good form, tension might arise between these principles; for instance, when "politeness" declined into mere formality or ceremoniousness, it could be portrayed as hostile to true sociability. (4)

Austen illustrates the duplicity of polite manners in *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*; for example, Willoughby's "open, affectionate manners" (*SS* 84) and Wickham's "pleasing address" (*PP* 49) are used to charm women and to hide the egotistical and mercenary traits of their character. Austen also explores the incivility of polite manners in *Emma* and *Mansfield Park*; however, the former pays more attention to the analogous relationship between gallantry and politeness than her first novels do. In fact, the word "gallant" is used to introduce and describe Mr. Elton and, similarly, it is used eleven times to refer to Frank Churchill. Mr. Elton and Frank Churchill's gallantry parallel the "pleasing" address of Henry Crawford, Wickham, and Willoughby as their practice pleases the heroines and conceals their own selfish goals. As one can see, the tension between the malleability of these two behaviours clearly threatened the order of Austen's microcosm.

---

gallantry, politeness, self-restraint). Books on education are especially likely to brazen about hypocrisy, insofar as hypocrisy offers a "good enough" approximation of virtue" (7).

[23] ""Manners" Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830"

Mr. Elton's gallant attentions to Emma and Harriet warn the reader against the over use of flattery in conversation because, as Claudia L. Johnson expressively puts it, "gallantry is intrinsically nonsensical: artificial and disingenuous, taking on the very femininity it courts. No man, as the logic of this novel would have it, talks or believes such rubbish" ("Remaking English Manhood in *Emma"* 200). Johnson is right; no man in the novel believes in gallant words and actions because Mr. Elton is only gallant in the presence of women. The narrative emphasizes that Mr. Elton's manners are superficial and therefore unworthy of genuine attention or feeling by both the characters and the reader. Austen's critiques superficial values in order to reinforce the practice of honesty, a trait that began to be considered essential to "English manliness" by the mid eighteenth century (Cohen "Manliness, Effeminacy, and the French" 60). Equally important, Cohen and Isabelle Bour also draw attention to the association of politeness with French manners, which, according to Bour, included "courtly culture" and "the manners of the aristocracy in France and Italy" ("Locke, Richardson, and Austen: or How to Become a Gentleman" 160). Austen portrays this controversy in Mr. Knightley's regard of Frank's "amiability" as an exertion of French manners and the insincerity that accompanies it: "No, Emma, your amiable young man can be amiable only in French, not in English. He may be very 'amiable,' have very good manners, and be very agreeable; but he can have no English delicacy towards the feelings of other people: nothing really amiable about him" (105). Mr. Knightley draws attention to Frank's insincerity and highlights the superficiality of his relationship to others: Englishness, therefore, involved truthful action rather than performance.

The emphasis on transforming the "roughness" of male character into a "softer and more refined" gentleman originally relied on French politeness for improvement; however, the

advantages of polite conversation were not "necessarily more manly" because the continuous exposure to women could also be effeminizing to a man (Cohen 47, 50) [24]. England's association of politeness with French effeminacy and insincerity was "incompatible" with the period's refashioning of English "masculine national character" (Cohen 314) [25], which included sincerity, self-discipline, and good manners without turning to "woman-like" behaviour or to the practice of "French-like" manners (Cohen 50) [26]. Connell argues that the preoccupation with masculinity and effeminacy was strongly present throughout the eighteenth century and reached its peak towards the end of the nineteenth century to the point where "heterosexuality became a required part of manliness" (*Masculinities* 196). The polarity between manliness and effeminacy is constantly addressed in masculinity studies; for example, Reeser regards masculinity and effeminacy as reciprocal and complementary:

> There's no denying that the threat of effeminacy frequently factors into masculine self-definition. Effeminacy often signifies the threat of a man becoming like a woman, but effeminacy is not necessarily the opposite of masculinity. A man's fear of becoming effeminate does not have to mean that he is not masculine, and a man can lack masculinity and still fear effeminacy. A man can be both very masculine and very feminine at the same time. (120)

In short, as much as gallantry was associated with effeminacy it was also a cruel way to seduce women, which is a very masculine practice according to George Justice in the Introduction to the Norton Edition of *Emma*: "Both flirting and gallantry are aggressive tricks of the young that mark out their youth; flirting and gallantry are the backdrop for the crime against a fellow woman, and against humanity" (xxvi). How then, is being gallant attributed to

---

[24] "Manliness, Effeminacy and the French: Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth-Century England."
[25] ""Manners" Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830."
[26] "Manliness, Effeminacy and the French: Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth-Century England."

effeminacy when it is used to impose masculine power over women? Mackie answers that seduction is considered a masculine trait because "claims of aristocratic masculinity are made most insistently and conventionally by the prestige secured through sexual prowess" (10)[27]. Like this, to use gallantry to seduce women heightens a man's masculinity and eclipses any effeminate associations. Think of Henry Crawford, who reasserts his masculinity through the flattery of women.

It is clear that Austen was aware of the paradoxical relationship between gallantry and effeminacy; however, her works do not attempt to distinguish nor parallel the two terms or to re-define masculinity through the reformation of her most popular characters. On the contrary, her novels focus on exploring the evolution and transformation of personal character for both men and women; thus, affirms her understanding that "masculinity and femininity are not opposites" (Reeser 120). Sarah Emsley, in *Jane Austen and the Philosophy of the Virtues,* approaches Austen in a similar way and argues that Austen "represents the range of the virtues as something that both men and women can learn and practice" and that her novels show "how both men and women most work at negotiating the appropriate balance that constitutes virtue" (3). Although there are references to the opposition to French-like manners in Austen's narrative that illustrate the preoccupation with effeminacy, this thesis studies the depiction of gallantry in *Emma* and *Mansfield Park* as an opposition to truthful manners, not specifically to effeminate traits. With this in mind, this next section analyses three characters that embody the initial regard for polite manners—Henry Crawford, Mr. Elton, and Frank Churchill—and the

---

[27] Margaret Hunt in *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender, and the Family in England* also points out the relationship between seduction and masculinity: "In many societies male sexuality is a powerful marker of masculinity, and it is often envisioned as a species of conquest" (69).

social apprehension politeness originated in the refashioning of the gentleman as masculine. Just as Mr. Elton and Frank Churchill's amiable manners are attractive in Highbury, so are the Crawfords' charm, city manners, and their eloquent speech in Mansfield. Edmund and Maria cannot resist the "Crawford charm" (Graham 869)[28]; hence, their struggle to exert good judgement and principle is conflicting to Edmund and proves disastrous to Maria. As the associations of vanity, charm, gallantry, and politeness are rooted in hypocrisy (Davidson 7), the study of Henry's behaviour continues to be in relationship to superficial manners that opposed the emphasis on sincerity as a trait of the gentleman and his manliness. Davidson argues that *Mansfield Park* "takes on a series of eighteenth-century arguments about the relationship between merit and compensation, between politeness and hypocrisy, and indeed about the nature of virtue itself" (146). Although Davidson's focus is on the hypocrisy of Fanny Price's manners, this chapter studies how Henry Crawford's character also responds to eighteenth-century debates over the relationship between virtue and politeness. For instance, Henry embodies the negative associations of politeness with insincerity and deceit, yet he also resorts to the practice of virtue in order to gain the heroine's favour.

Henry Crawford is one of the most peculiar characters because he is introduced as an indulgent and "most horrible flirt that can be imagined" (Austen 32) whereas the faults of rogues like Wickham or Willoughby are only known towards the end of the novels. His own sister, Mary, is careful to warn Mrs. Grant that if the Miss Bertrams "do not like to have their hearts broke" they should "avoid Henry" (32). Henry's flirtatious are motivated by boredom, "cold-blooded vanity" (317), and lack of moral instruction. However, it is important to point out that vanity is used in the novel as another variation of gallantry and politeness. Butler

---

[28] Peter W. Graham "Falling for the Crawfords: Character, Contingency, and Narrative."

defines vanity as the "pursuit of earthly goals" which is a "characteristic of the fashionable…[unable to]… place [themselves] in a larger moral universe" (*Jane Austen and War of Ideas* 222). These are characteristics that also define politeness. Another variation is "charm," as Graham points out in "Falling for the Crawfords." Graham defines "charm" as a "contrast to virtue" because it is a "matter of style rather than substance, a simulacrum of the real thing…a surface expression" that "attracts others to an individual whose public behaviors and deeper personal qualities may or may not be worthy of esteem" even though there might be "virtue underneath" (869). The similar traits of vanity and charm with politeness are reminiscent to Davidson's remark about the relativity of gallantry, politeness, and hypocrisy. She explains further:

> [M]id-eighteenth century British writing lacks a consensus on politeness. When supporters of politeness use the word civility, for instance, their opponents are quick to redefine civility as hypocrisy and to condemn it on moral grounds. The word politeness proves equally vulnerable to the process of hostile redefinition. An easy way to refute an argument for politeness is to argue that politeness in a euphemism for something more insidious: politeness means tact, and tact equal lying; politeness means gallantry, and gallantry equals adultery. (46)

Henry Crawford's "charming" or "vain" manners are a form or a variation of gallantry and their practice indeed leads to adultery.

Henry Crawford is not as handsome as other infamous rogues in Austen's novels, but his "air and countenance" (30) as well as his "gentleman manners" and "pleasing address" (33) are superior enough to distinguish him among other gentlemen in London and specially enough to break several hearts wherever he is introduced. The Bertram sisters, who are as proud and as vain, fall for his charm by the second day of their acquaintance and he becomes the "most agreeable man" (33) they have ever met. All of his adult life, Henry Crawford has

enjoyed making women fall in love with him without any intention of reciprocating and his arrival in Mansfield is no exception:

> Mr. Crawford did not mean to be in any danger; the Miss Bertrams were worth pleasing, and were ready to be pleased; and he began with no object but of making them like him. He did not want them to die of love; but with sense and temper which ought to have made him judge and feel better. He allowed himself great latitude on such points. (33)

He is initially only interested in amusing himself by getting the attention of both sisters: "The sisters, handsome, clever, and encouraging, were an amusement to his sated mind" (82). Henry's behaviour clearly exemplifies the use of gallantry for amusement and seduction of women. His attentions to the Bertram sisters are selfish and only serve as a boost to his sexual prowess, which, as formerly discussed, was attributed to manliness. Nonetheless, Henry's superficial amiable manners eclipse the selfishness of his actions. The Bertrams do not realize that Henry is malicious because he, as Jane Nardine argues in *Those Elegant Decorums: The Concept of Propriety in Jane Austen's Novels,* plays the "lover to women for whom he cares nothing" (96). In other words, the Bertram ladies are not aware that Henry only pretends to like them because his actions seem genuine even though the reader is aware that he is only flirting out of amusement rather than true interest for the girls. Fanny, the heroine, is the only one who does not fall for this charming side of the Crawfords because she is able to see through the untruthfulness of their pleasing behaviour. The Miss Bertrams, however, only see Henry's "animated" and "agreeable" manners "as to lose no ground with either, and just stopping short of the consistence, the steadiness, the solicitude, and the warmth which excite general notice" (*MP* 82).

*Mansfield Park* emphasizes the impropriety of indecorous behaviour of men towards women through Henry's character; however, Henry's background suggests that the culprits are lack of discipline and proper moral education from his uncle, Admiral Crawford, who "delighted in the boy" (30) but unfortunately was a "man of vicious conduct, who chooses, instead of retaining his niece, to bring his mistress under his own roof" (30). Admiral Crawford disrespects his wife because he had a mistress when she was alive, he lives with said mistress out of wedlock after her death, and he refuses to provide a home to his wife's protégé. As a consequence, Henry, his closest pupil, directly acquires and practices his uncle's treatment of women as a commodity. The fact that Henry does not stand out for his sister nor does he advice his uncle on the impropriety of his behaviour proves how oblivious or careless he is about the overall situation: "had he been more in the habit of examining his own motives, and of reflecting to what the indulgence of his idle vanity was tending; but thoughtless and selfish from prosperity and bad example, he would not look beyond the present moment..." (82). The narrator draws specific attention to Henry's "ruin" as a consequence of improper education, "an early independence," "bad domestic example," and the practice of "cold-blooded vanity a little too long" (317).

Henry also has a distorted interpretation of utility or usefulness as a way to improve a man's character and estate; he considers seduction a "labour" that satisfies his desires and prevents him from "eat[ting] the bread of idleness" (157). His attentions towards Fanny begin out of a selfish need to entertain himself when Maria and Julia leave Mansfield. To Fanny, he was "gallant" and "attentive" like he "had been to her cousins" and was sure that he wanted to "cheat her of her tranquility as he had cheated them" (178). For Locke, behaviour like Henry's should have been censored by the parents (Henry's guardians) at a very early age; not doing so

forms a disobedient mind that lacks discipline during adulthood: "The great mistake I have observed in people's breeding their children has been...that the mind has not been made obedient to discipline, and pliant to reason, when at first it was most tender, most easy to be bowed" (19). Although Henry has the advantage of a prestigious and public education at Westminster and Cambridge (*MP* 45), his vanity and inconstancy were never fully corrected by either the Admiral or his instructors. Henry's lack of discipline from Admiral Crawford, for example, provided him with the opportunity to indulge in selfish past-times instead of exerting his mind with good values and healthy habits that would nurture the very present goodness of his character. Similarly, his early financial independence allows him to experience the world without any goal or preoccupation, without any moral to follow. In Locke's ideal of education, Henry's "vanity and pride of greatness and riches" creates an "unprofitable" and "dangerous pastimes" that distracted the mind of a gentleman into actually practicing "any thing that was useful" (120).

Henry Crawford's self-indulgent character and vanity are stronger than his sense and determination; he "longed" to have done this and that, but his longing is merely a fantasy for the sake of "glory" and "exertion" (*MP* 162) rather than true conviction:

> ...The glory of heroism, of usefulness, of exertion, of endurance, made his own habits of selfish indulgence appear in shameful contrast; and he wished he had been a William Price, distinguishing himself and working his way to fortune and consequence with so much self-respect and happy ardour, instead of what he was! The wish was rather eager than lasting...he found it was as well to be a man of fortune at once with horses and grooms at his command. (162)

The fact that the narrator adds that this "wish" of his was "rather eager than lasting" (162) reveals that Henry's desire arises from the associations of these traits with true masculine character not because he truly values William's virtues and profession. Henry's admiration of

28

William's traits reflects upon the "gentry codes of masculinity" which were generated as a response to the "mass armies of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars" (Connell 192). However, Henry's want of manliness is satisfied through the command of his "horses and grooms" and with the commodities of his fortunate position. Nevertheless, Henry's regard of William also shows "a warmth of heart which did him credit" (*MP* 190) and that suggest a genuine potential for improvement. When Henry falls in love with Fanny he begins to exert the ideal of manliness by the practice of his humility towards Fanny's family, who are his social inferiors. He also begins to take care of his landowner duties in Everingham and assists William to improve his career.

With this in mind, it is evident that Henry's improvements could turn him into a deserving and masculine gentleman. Some critics, nonetheless, remark that Henry Crawford is not fundamentally good and that his newfound constancy is only superficial because he does not truly understands the meaning of constancy. For example, Penelope Fritzer, in *Jane Austen and Eighteenth Century Courtesy Books*, argues that "the noble side" of Henry Crawford's character "cannot prevail" because his "good humor is not a true reflection of his good will toward human kind" (103); instead, it is "ephemeral and cannot save him from folly" (103). Similarly, Joyce Kerr Trapley, in *Constancy & the Ethics of Jane Austen's Mansfield Park*, states that Austen intends to make Henry an example of how true constancy comes from within and how characters like Henry Crawford are the antithesis of the moral virtue he attempts to embody:

> Henry's persevering *is* a kind of constancy, but it is the wrong kind because it proceeds from a vicious intention. Moving beyond an Aristotelian consciousness of intention, Austen presents, with a characteristic concern for appearance and reality, an anti-type for constancy in Henry Crawford. She employs Henry to show how characters fall short of the standard of conduct denoted by the ethical term. (22, emphasis in original)

Tarpley[29] and Fritzier's analysis of Henry as someone who does not have any possibility for improvement because he is essentially bad contradicts the novel. The narrator states that Fanny's affections would have been "bestowed" as a reward for Henry's constancy "within a reasonable period from Edmund's marrying Mary" (317). Henry's love is sincere but he is "entangled by his own vanity" and falls prey to the "gallantry" and "flirtation" which "bounded his views" (317) and instigate Maria's imprudence. Nardine also recognizes that Henry is capable of good and genuine feeling and blames his decision on a lack of "stability or satisfaction" (67). The text says Henry is "entangled" not "driven" (*MP* 317) and the blame is on superficial manners like gallantry not on a wicked nature[30].

Austen further expands her critique on the duplicity of Henry's manners in *Emma,* whose young heroine of the same name is blinded by her regard for polite manners and falls pray to gallantry practices just as Maria Bertram does. Emma faces a painful series of unfortunate but comical misunderstandings and learns to identify and value true gentlemanly virtue. At the beginning, Emma has an exalted view of Mr. Elton's "gentle" manners as superior to any other gentlemen in Highbury (26). However, Emma's desire to establish Harriet into a respectable society blinds her of Mr. Elton's weaknesses:

---

[29] In "Constancy: A Definition," Tarpley similarly highlights that the novel is conflicted in its closure because the narrator provides an "ambiguous attitude about the potential good of Henry's marriage to Fanny" (50,51). Nonetheless, her closing argument is in relation to Fanny's morality and sense of constancy and is not specifically concerned with Henry's.

[30] Consider this, a good example of a man who is ill natured and is not offered any possibility of redemption or improvement is Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice,* who is manipulative, selfish, and ambitious. He tricks Lydia into eloping with him without intending to ever marry her and only consents to do so after he secures his financial future. Also, another trait of the villain is sexual misconduct: Willoughby fathers an illegitimate child and Wickham engages in premarital intercourse with Lydia. Henry Crawford, as far as the reader is aware, does not engage in such illicit behaviour and does not have a shameful past that could prevent him from achieving happiness with Fanny Price. Austen is clearly aware of this, had she not intended for Henry to improve, there would have been a discovery of the same or similar nature as Wickham's or Willoughby's.

> Mr. Elton's situation was most suitable, quite the gentleman himself, and without low connections...He had a comfortable home...and Emma imagined a very sufficient income...she thought very highly of him as a good-natured, well-meaning, respectable young man, without deficiency of useful understanding knowledge of the world. (26)

Initially, Emma is only interested in the social and discernible qualities of the gentleman and does not show any interest in differentiating between Mr. Knightley's superior countenance and Mr. Elton's superficial persona. Byung Chun Min, in "What Manners Mean in Jane Austen's Emma," also identifies Emma's biased opinion and argues that "Emma's judgement wholly depends on the extent to which manners are refined in their physical appearance" (160) and her description of Mr. Elton only draws attention to his "refined display of manners, on which Emma's standard of deciding appropriate manners is focused" (160). Min's argument supports the idea that Emma's superficial view of the gentleman is morally inaccurate. In other words, Emma's problems are rooted in her inability to overlook the superficial and the social aspect expected in a gentleman and is left to face the consequences of her premature eminence of Mr. Elton and later on of Frank Churchill.

Evidently, Mr. Elton's "gallantry," which is always "on the alert" (36), was a form of social performance and provide him with the means to practice his "politeness" to flatter Emma: "indeed be a delight; let me entreat you, Miss Woodhouse, to exercise so charming a talent in favour of your friend" (32). For any reader who is not familiar with the negative connotations associated with gallantry, Mr. Elton's attentions are convincing because as a "handsome" and "pleasing young man" he is also "admired" in Highbury (27). John Knightley, however, notices how Mr. Elton strives to be "agreeable" and tells Emma how it is "downright labour to him where ladies are concerned. With men he can be rational and unaffected, but when he has ladies to please, every feature works" (80). Emma is easily misled

because she does not have access to both sides of Mr. Elton's character: he plays the polite and gallant gentleman with the ladies, yet he is "rational" and "unaffected" in the presence of gentlemen (80). Mr. Elton, therefore, is not truly interested in Emma romantically[31] regardless of his pleasing manners and polite flattery towards her. Klein explains that the basic idea of politeness as "the art of pleasing in company" (3) "seemed to arise in a generous concern for the comfort of others" (4). However, in most cases, politeness was instrumental to deceit: "In reality, the polite concern for others might be a secondary effect of a far more basic self-concern. Thus, the altruistic or charitable appearance of politeness might conceal opportunistic egoism" (4)[32]. The Knightleys are truly aware that Mr. Elton knows the "value of a good income" and although he might talk "sentimentally," ultimately he will act "rationally" and will not "make an imprudent match" (*E* 48). Hence, Mr. Elton's "pleasing manners" are not out of love, but are tools to approach and win Emma's heart and, by proxy, her capital.

The culmination of Mr. Elton's deceit finally arrives after the Christmas party when he proposes to Emma and reveals that he has never been interested in Miss Smith.  He tells Emma rather harshly:

> Miss Smith is a very good sort of girl…and, no doubt, there are men who might not object to—Everybody has their level; but as for myself, I am not, I think, quite so much at a loss…I need not so totally despair for an equal alliance as to be addressing myself to Miss Smith! (95)

In addition, Mr. Elton tells Emma that all of his attentions at Hartfield (the portrait, the charade, the flattery) were for herself only (95). Evidently, Emma is horrified by Mr. Elton's

---

[31] Michéle Cohen in, ""Manners" Make the Gentleman: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830," argues that the "ideal of politeness as an of "art of pleasing" implied that men must please women" and that pleasing "was not love" but "the instrument by means of which the gentleman was fashioned as polite" (320).

[32] From *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness: Moral Discourse and Cultural Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century England.*

insensitivity towards Harriet for he "protested that he had never thought seriously of Harriet" (95) even though he once called her portrait "exceedingly precious" (50). Emma is right to believe herself "misled" by Mr. Elton's "unmarked, wavering," and "dubious" manners (95) because they hide the fact that he is "proud, assuming, conceited; very full of his own claims, and little concerned about the feelings of others"(95). This final description of Mr. Elton as "proud" and "conceited" is a big fall from the gallant and obliging gentleman from the beginning of the novel. As such, his "abundant sighs and fine words," Cohen argues, did not prevent the "cold, selfish, and venal" (327)[33] traits from being revealed. Nonetheless, it is important to argue that Mr. Elton's polite manners highlight the weaknesses of his character, not of his profession just as Frank Churchill's imprudence and selfish disregard for others are the result of immoderation and lack of discipline, not the standard trait of all gentlemen[34].

Austen anticipates Frank Churchill's arrival and does not disappoint the reader when this handsome and sensible character is introduced. Initially, Frank embodies the "markings" of a polite standard of genteel masculinity for he is a "handsome young man" with exceptional "height," "address," "sensibility", a "well-bred ease of manner, and a readiness to talk" (132). Frank Churchill personifies the qualities of the "born gentleman" that Daniel Defoe, in *The Compleat English Gentleman*, defines as a "valuable man if bred up as a gentleman ought to

---

[33] ""Manners" Make the Gentleman: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830."

[34] The reader must note that *Emma* is equally concerned with the heroine's moral and emotional growth and that most criticism has paid attention to how her immaturity and vivid imagination are responsible for the misunderstanding regarding Mr. Elton's address to Harriet. For example, Susan J. Morgan, in "Emma Woodhouse and the Charms of Imagination," argues that "Emma will see what she wants even if it is not there and she will not see what she does not want even if it is. Both Knightleys, for example, warn her of Mr. Elton. She is explicitly shown the truth and insists on her connections in spite of it. Emma's fancies, her manipulations, her imagination, are all those of a creator. She makes it all up and thinks it is real" (37). However, this thesis is not concerned with the heroine's transformation or self-discovery and proposes that although Emma is partly responsible, Mr. Elton's politeness and calculated address also play a very important role in indulging the heroine's imagination and vanity.

be that is, educated in learning and manners suitable to his birth" (41). Further in his analysis of the "born gentleman", Defoe defines these manners as those of "polite behaviour" (41). As Frank Churchill possesses equally pleasing manners as Mr. Elton, the people in Highbury also respect him. They judge him with "great candour" and "liberal allowances were made for the little excesses of such a handsome young man—one who smiled so often and bowed so well" (149). Both Mr. Elton and Frank Churchill start as agreeable characters and are adored because of their performance and appearance. Nonetheless, there is the voice of reason, a "spirit among them not to be softened, from its power of censure, by bows or smiles—Mr. Knightley" (149). Mr. Knightley censors a gentleman's display of polite mannerisms because he recognizes them as performance that does not show the truthfulness of character. Justice sees Frank Churchill's behaviour towards Emma as gallantry or a "stylized" form of flattery and as a "masculine behaviour that lies in stark contrast to the plain-spoke realism of Mr. Knightley" (xxvi). As Cohen shows, the "plain spoke realism" Justice refers to became the ultimate trait of Englishness by the middle of the eighteenth century ("Manliness, Effeminacy, and the French" 66) and Mr. Knightley's disapproval and recognition of flattery as a weakness of character illustrates this shift.

However, Emma and the community oppose Mr. Knightley's views because they associate respectable and truthful character with polite manners. For example, the Westons and Emma justify Frank's delay in his visit to be a form of attention to Mrs. Churchill. However, Mr. Knightley disagrees and does not see Mrs. Churchill's opposition as a valid excuse to neglect his duty:

> Your amiable young man is a very weak young man, if this be the first occasion of his carrying through a resolution to do right against the will of others. It ought to have been a habit with him, by this time, of following his duty, instead of consulting expediency. (104, 105)

According to Mr. Knightley, a gentleman should establish his grounds the moment he becomes "rational" and Frank Churchill "ought to have roused himself, shaken off all that was unworthy in their authority," and oppose the "first attempt on their side to make him slight his father" (105). Locke also advocates this idea: "A mind free, and master of itself and all its actions, not low and narrow, not haughty and insolent, not blemished with any great defect...The actions, which naturally flow form such a well-formed mind, please us also, as the genuine marks of it" (32). As such, if Frank Churchill had disciplined his mind "as he ought," he would have overcome the "fear of the child" and not succumb to his aunt's irrational commands (*E* 108). To Locke and Austen, Frank Churchill's actions are unacceptable and should not be excused but reprimanded. Emma believes that Frank Churchill possesses outstanding gentleman-like manners, but Mr. Knightley sees him as indecisive and immature.

Soon enough, Frank Churchill proves that he is not all "bows and smiles"; as Emma discovers he is self-indulgent and even at times is irritated by his "merriment" and excessive use of "flattery" (258). For example, Emma acknowledges that Frank's "little whim" (142) of going to London to have a haircut has an "air of foppery and nonsense" and holds him "liable" for "vanity, extravagance, love of change," and "restlessness of temper" (143). Locke also condemns such a weakness in a man's character and argues that "prudence and good-breeding are, in all stations and occurrences of life, necessary; and most young men suffer in want of them" (53)[35]. Even if the haircut was a cover up story, buying a piano for Jane is equally inappropriate and causes her great pain and anxiety. Similarly, Frank's "excessive flirting" (254) with Emma during the Box Hill picnic is very disrespectful to the entire party and,

---

[35] J.H. Newman continues to condemn this behaviour in "The Definition of a Gentleman" and states that a "true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast" (576)

specially, to Jane Fairfax because, whether it was a secret engagement or not, Frank should not have been paying such an open address to another woman. As Emma declares to Mrs. Weston:

> What right had he to come among us with affection and faith engaged, and with manners so *very* disengaged? What right had he to endeavour to please as he certainly did—to distinguish any one young woman with persevering attention, as he certainly did—while he really belonged to another? —How could he tell what mischief he might be doing? —How could he tell that he might not be making me in love with him? —very wrong, very wrong indeed. (274)

After the picnic, Emma finally identifies Frank's attentions as "habit[s]" and "trick[s]" that were not a sincere attempt to "attach" her but a "blind to conceal his real situation with another" (294). Frank recognizes that his behaviour to Emma "indicated…more than it ought" (301). Yet, he excuses himself on the conviction of Emma's indifference to him "had I not been convinced of her indifference, I would not have been induced by any selfish views to go on" (301). Frank convinces himself that Emma is not the type of "young woman likely to be attached" and that, at the time, he was sure Emma knew about his secret (301). However, Frank's assumptions are not acceptable and it shows his disregard for sincerity and gentlemanly character, something that Emma finally values: "Impropriety! Oh! Mrs. Weston— it is too calm a censure. Much, much beyond impropriety!...*So unlike what a man should be*!—None of that upright integrity, that strict adherence to truth and principle, that disdain of trick and littleness, which a man should display in every transaction of his life" (274, my emphasis). Emma's remarks highlight the growing idea of uprightness and sincerity as emblematic of manliness.

This lack of "prudence" and "good-breeding," two virtues that Locke faithfully advocates, are also underdeveloped in Henry Crawford in *Mansfield Park*. Frank Churchill and Henry Crawford share many similarities and their trickery is a consequence of

overindulgence and improper moral education. In *A Reader's Guide to the Nineteenth-Century Novel*, Brown makes a similar argument and states that characters that are prone to weakness in Austen's works lack discipline in their education:

> In her [Austen] novels, "nature" has so little chance against "society" that those who do not acquire the little mental discipline that comes with education are more vulnerable to corruption than those who do. Like Dickens, Austen can be cynical about the corruptness of education, as in her treatment of Henry Crawford's "refinement" in *Mansfield Park*, but she is more cynical about the corruptibility of nature without it. (59, emphasis in original)

Although Austen is preoccupied with the overall improvement, her novels often address how even someone who is as good-natured as Frank Churchill has the potential to behave unpleasantly as to injure others because of improper instruction. Like Henry Crawford, Frank Churchill is also indulged as a child and is the sole heir of the Churchill fortune. He practices vanity, and the integrity of his character is questionable in his selfish behaviour towards Jane and Emma. However, Frank is not influenced by adulterous or reckless acts of weakness like Henry's uncle. Mr. Weston was imprudent in his first marriage, but he never disrespects his first wife by having a mistress before and after she dies. The only fault Frank inherits is "the unmanageable good-will of Mr. Weston's temper" (*E* 243). Also, Mr. Churchill, the man who raised him, is respectful of his wife even if she is proud and unreasonable. Frank's character certainly has weaknesses, as Mr. Knightley points out, but his flattery is used for concealment rather than flirtation.

On the other hand, Henry's use of flattery to assert his masculinity over women is influenced by his uncle's indecorous example. Also, Admiral Crawford gives Henry much more liberty than Frank has from the Churchills (Frank is not permitted to travel abroad or marry whomever he chooses). Fritzer argues that Frank is "essentially a good person spoiled

by overindulgence in luxury and joking, though he has the potential for being a charming rake a [sic] la Wickham or Willoughby..." (65). Nevertheless, Frank is not the wicked villain because of the constancy of his regard for Jane Fairfax and the benefits of Jane's good example onwards. Mr. Knightley agrees: "I have never had a high opinion of Frank Churchill…And even if I have not under-rated him hitherto, he may yet turn out well. —With such a woman he has a chance" (*E* 294). Similarly, Fritzer argues that Frank "falls prey to weakness" and that although his "humor" only "spreads unhappiness" it is not "malicious;" instead, it is "an example of lack of discipline and of too great levity combined with insensitivity for the feeling of others" (60). Frank's character might not be "malicious," but his conduct is "malicious" because he manipulates the people around him in order to get his way; something Henry does as well. Frank, however, is, as Mr. Knightley says, "the favourite of fortune" (295). Henry is not as fortunate and his deeds are irredeemable because he is unable to exert self-discipline and, as a consequence, loses the opportunity to benefit from Fanny's "sweetness of…temper, the purity of her mind, and the excellence of her principles" (*MP* 318).

Henry's transgression with Maria is motivated by "curiosity," "vanity," and the "temptation of immediate pleasure" which was "too strong for a mind unused to make any sacrifice to right" (*MP* 316). And, the reassertion of his manliness through flirtation reawakens his false attentions to Maria Rushworth for he cannot stand "so proud a display of resentment" from the woman whose "smiles had been so wholly at his command" (*MP* 317) at Mansfield. Henry underestimates the recklessness of Maria's temper and "*[a]ll that followed was the result of her imprudence*; and he went off with her at last, because he could not help it, regretting Fanny" (*MP* 317, my emphasis). His gallantry, thus, turns against him because he

does not have control over Maria's response to his fallacious behaviour and he lacks the mental and emotional maturity to address it as a man of superior understanding. If his mind had possessed the discipline required, he would have refused Maria's attentions and insist on her return to her husband's house[36]. In short, both Frank and Henry lack understanding of self-restraint and honesty. Henry Crawford is just another "trifling, silly fellow" Mr. Knightley would disapprove of (*E* 143). Frank is lucky Emma is not in love with him—"Abominable Scoundrel […] Fortunate that you affections were not father entangled!" (*E* 293)—unlike Maria Rushworth; otherwise, there would be much more than just, to use Fritzer's expression, the "spread[ing] of unhappiness" (60) by Frank's conduct.

Overall, the fates of Mr. Elton, Frank Churchill, and Henry Crawford instruct the reader to regard genuine qualities of a gentleman's behaviour over pretensions of courteous behaviour. Emsley argues that Austen's work "stresses the moral education of character as preparation for ethical action" (4). Mr. Elton, however, does not go through that process of "moral education" and instead marries the insolent Miss Hawkins whereas Frank Churchill, who also is polite and gallant, learns and marries Jane Fairfax. Henry Crawford also experiences moral transformation, but his instruction is interrupted by his lack of self-control and continuous need to assert his masculine virility. In Fritzer's opinion, "generally, the characters who flout courtesy are not worthy of her heroes and heroines" (107); nonetheless, as one can seen, it is not the lack of courtesy but its excess of it that prevent a connection to Austen's heroines. Henry and Frank highlight the superficiality and egotistical side of overly pleasing manners like politeness and gallantry as well as the consequences of improper moral

---

[36] The blame is equally Maria and Henry's and Austen reminds the reader of this by italicising the "his" on "*his* share of the offence" (*MP* 318, emphasis in original).

education and self-discipline. *Emma* and *Mansfield Park* illustrate the growing disregard of gallantry and politeness in favour of the mid-century regard for "blunt" sincerity as a "defining feature of English manliness" (Cohen, "Manliness, Effeminacy, and the French" 60). The new standards of manhood, which represented "the rightly educated mind" and "combines the rational and the affective, the reason and the emotion, the mind and the heart" (Tarpley 59), are clearly embodied by Mr. Knightley as the next chapter explores.

# Chapter two

## Masculinity, Education, and Sincerity

> "Miss Austen was a thorough mistress in the knowledge of human character; how it is acted upon by education and circumstance, and how, when once formed, it shows itself through every hour of every day, and in every speech of every person"
> (G.H. Lewes, "The Novels of Jane Austen")

> "…[I]n Fanny's excellence, in William's continued good conduct, and rising fame, and in the general well-doing and success of the other members of the family, all assisting to advance each other, and doing credit to his countenance and aid, Sir Thomas saw repeated…the advantages of early hardship and discipline, and all the consciousness of being born to struggle and endure"
> (Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*)

Discipline, endurance, responsibility, and virtue are traits that increasingly became associated with English manliness throughout the middle of the eighteenth century. According to Claudia Johnson, in "Remaking English Manhood in *Emma*," these "new" and "plain" characteristics were a "matter of national import" that supported the "*amiable*…true English style" and opposed the "*aimable*, the artificial, the courtly, the dissembling, the servile, and (as the tradition goes), the feminized French" (201, emphasis in original). Johnson's distinction of the words "amiable" and "aimable" illustrate the main differences between the display of manners in order to gather attention (aimable) and the practice of manners out of goodness and true regard (amiable)[37] that Austen powerfully illustrates in *Emma* and *Mansfield Park*. Yet, the two novels not only exemplify the opposition to insincere manners, they also present characters who fully embody truthful manly qualities, like Mr. Knightley, and characters who

---

[37] Note that the Canadian Oxford Dictionary defines the word "amiable" as follows: "friendly and pleasant in temperament…[Old French from Late Latin *amicabilis* amicable: confused with French *aimable* lovable]" (emphasis in original). Johnson draws attention to the difference between someone who behaves "in true goodness" (201) rather than in a "lovable" or attention-seeking manner, which, as the Dictionary definition shows, is rooted in French mannerisms and in language as well.

struggle in order to fully develop them, like Edmund Bertram. The first part of this chapter surveys the "gentleman" as a cultural artefact and his position in the social ladder in order to understand the basis of his instruction. This part takes you to Mr. Knightley as representative of what Connell refers to as "gentry masculinity" (*Masculinities* 190) as he is an active magistrate and member of the class for whom the masculine standards analyzed were formulated. The second part of this chapter is concerned with education and explores how Austen responds to the period's educational treatises written by John Locke, Thomas Secker, and Vicesimus Knox. The discussion turns to the weaknesses of the Bertrams' education to explore the emphasis on parental duty to instil discipline and humility. Although Austen addresses these values in relation to both men and women, these principles were also part of the new idealization of English manliness. The final part addresses the period's construction of manly virtue, which emphasized truthfulness, constancy, and the protection of women, qualities that were also attributed to middle class values. This section analyzes how Mr. Knightley fully embodies the new standards of virtuous masculinity, whereas Edmund, who has similar traits, antagonizes social manly expectations because he is manipulative and practices deceit. This chapter draws further attention to the malleability of masculine construction as shown in instruction manuals and institutions. Certainly, Austen's focus remains on the equal improvement of character; nevertheless, much is learned about Regency English masculine expectations in Edmund's emasculatory relationship with Mary Crawford and in Mr. Knightley's empowerment through his generous persona.

Jason D. Solinger, in *Becoming a Gentleman: British Literature and the Invention of Modern Masculinity, 1660-1815*, remarks that establishing what constituted a gentleman "haunted Britons in the years following the restoration of Charles Stuart, and throughout the

eighteenth century" (3). Evidently, different demands driven by revolution and industrialization, to name a few, enhanced the idealization of the gentleman as a symbol of masculine English identity. Solinger writes:

> In the wake of the English revolution, challenges to traditional authority and inherited wisdom were often expressed in cunning ways, in calibrated language that represented emergent categories of thought and new social arrangements as neither threatening nor new. Eighteenth century depictions of masculine gentility provide, in this way, a paradigmatic example of how cultures innovate and transform themselves through subterranean means…a deceptively familiar and conveniently fluid figure of the gentleman was renovated on the inside, enabling the emergence of an altogether new type of ruling class male. (2-3)

These "renovations" included the opposition to politeness and a revived interest in new "codes of honour" (Connell 190) that integrated sincerity as part of the refashioning of a gentleman's public persona. As a consequence, the gentleman became a symbol of "gentry masculinity" and his moral and scholarly education became crucial and of general concern. Solinger continues:

> The period that saw the unprecedented expansion of Britain's overseas commerce is, of course, the same period in which Britons began to revise their culture's notion of what it meant to be a gentleman. In male conduct books, educational tracts, periodical literature, poetic treatises and various prose forms, some of which we now recognize as the novel, we can see a culture in the process of rethinking some of its most basic assumptions about masculinity, gentility and governance. (95)

The "new type of ruling class male" that Solinger refers to, however, remained part of a privileged social position, regardless of the increasing interest in middle class values, because commerce continued to be regarded as a form of "cultural pollution" (99). Class mobility became a pressing anxiety for the gentry as members of the middle class climbed the social latter with money earned from trade and other commercial professions (McMaster 115). One

might recall Emma's indignation at the Coles' attempt to integrate with well-established genteel families[38]. As the new masculine "code of honour" was mostly practiced within the gentry's microcosm (Connell, *Masculinities* 190, 191) it is important to keep in mind that educational treatises addressed in this chapter were written for the gentry and the upper middle classes exclusively[39].

The term gentleman has class-oriented roots and is derived, according to Sir James Fitzjames Stephen in an article titled "Gentleman" published in March, 1862, from the French term "gentilhomme" (560) who was "a member of one of a certain set of families, or the holder of a certain definite official or professional rank…distinguished from the rest of the world by the degree in which he possessed particular qualities, physical, moral, and intellectual" (560). By the mid-Victorian period, the word "gentleman" was regarded as the "combination of a certain degree of social rank with a certain amount of the qualities which the possession of such rank ought to imply;" nevertheless, Stephen notes that a preference for the "the moral and less upon the social element of the word" transformed the definition of gentleman from a "conventional distinction" like rank, for example (560)[40]. Similarly, Alexis de Tocqueville, in *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, states that, eventually and

---

[38] Defoe argues that trade is "the readiest way for men to raise their fortunes and families; and therefore it is a field for men of figure and of good families to enter upon" ("Letter XXII, The Complete English Tradesman" 37). Furthermore, in "Of TRADE in General," which was published in *The Review* (Copley 55), Defoe opposes Emma's prejudiced view of families raised by trade: "I wonder sometimes at the Ignorance of those People and Nations, whose Gentry pretend to Despise Families rais'd by Trade; Why should that, which is the Wealth of the World, the Prosperity and Health of Kingdoms and Towns, be accounted Dishonorable?" (56).

[39] Locke states that his work is written specifically for the "English gentry" (*Some Thoughts Concerning Education* iv). Evidently, Austen advocates education as strongly as Locke, but when it comes to the fundamental social hierarchy of education, including the educational discrimination against women, she is at odds with him: "Give a girl an education, and introduce her properly into the world, and ten to one but she has the means of settling well, without farther expense to anybody" (*MP* 7).

[40] Sir James' perspective of the gentleman explains the mid-Victorian emphasis on the "moral rather than the social element of the word" (560); something that is already present in Austen's novels, but that populates the Victorian novel. Thus, the title of gentleman shifted from being a birth right with social precedence throughout the eighteenth century to idleness and emasculation by the mid nineteenth century (as portrayed by characters like Pip in Dickens' *Great Expectations* and Lord Fawn in Trollope's *The Eustace Diamonds)*.

inevitably, there is a shift in the denomination of the term "gentleman" to an extent that "the word *gentleman* has altogether changed its meaning in England" and is defined "somewhat lower in the social scale" (559, emphasis in original). For example, de Tocqueville continues, "[i]n America, the term "gentleman" is used to "designate every citizen indiscriminately" (559). It is clear that the definition of what meant to be a gentleman was contended and transformed during the eighteenth century. However, Austen's novels concern the "landowning country gentleman" (McMaster 117) [41], a figure that "dominated the North Atlantic world of the eighteenth century" (Connell 190) and who "leads a leisured existence" and "subsists on income from land and inheritance" (McMaster 118) [42].

As discussed in chapter one, the gentleman's manners were inevitably modelled after the French "gentilhomme" and new standards began to circulate in order to distance the English gentleman from the French "coquette" (Solinger 99). Formerly, a gentleman's education and the masculine ideal were concerned with "pursuit of knowledge" through literary study (Solinger 95). Yet, England's growing commercialization pressured "writers of educational tracts" to "gentrify humanist study" where the "aspiration to knowledge" and the "gentlemanly imperative to participate in the martial and civil affairs of the world" had to be "reconciled" (Solinger 95). Consequently, "industry" began to be incorporated into the

---

[41] McMaster divides the gentleman in Austen's fiction as follows: "the 'country gentleman' with landed property, like Mr. Knightley and Mr. Darcy, who possesses a long withstanding history of family wealth; the 'gentleman of leisure' like Mr. Bingley whose family money comes from trade and his time is spent making important connections and purchasing property, and the 'shabby-genteel' like the Bates' who possess the land, but no means to maintain it" (120-122).

[42] In *Food and Cooking in Victorian England*, Andrea Broomfield also addresses the conventional view of the English gentleman, she writes: "England's upper class included the nobility, or those who for generations had inherited thousand of acres of land along with a title (such as "Duke" or "Baron"). It also included the landed gentry who owned equally large tracts of land in some cases, but who did not have hereditary titles. They resembles the nobility in other aspects as well, including their social standing income derives from the land, and political power, particularly at the country level" (5).

gentleman's educational agenda as "gentry masculinity" became implicated "in capitalist economic relations" like the "production for the market" and "extraction of rents" (Connell 190). Mr. Knightley embodies a type of gentry masculinity because he is both a "magistrate" and a "farmer" (*E* 72). Mr. Knightley's management of his estate produces merchandise to sell and thus contribute to the nation's economy: "As a magistrate, he had generally some point of law to consult John about...as a farmer, as keeping in hand the home-farm at Donwell, he had to tell what every field was to bear next year...The plan of a drain, the change of a fence, the felling of a tree, and the destination of every acre for wheat, turnips, or spring corn" (*E* 72)[43]. As such, Mr. Knightley's application of landowning duty illustrates the growing association of work as a manly trait generated throughout the period: "The entrepreneurial culture and work places of commercial capitalism institutionalized a form of masculinity, creating and legitimating new forms of gendered work and power" (Connell 188). In comparison to Frank Churchill and Henry Crawford who only spend their time in leisure, Mr. Knightley's responsible management of his land and finances correspond to the growing association of masculinity with entrepreneurship and work.

Connell also draws attention to how the "institutionalization" of masculinity provided professional men with a masculine identity of their own. For example, as not all men born in gentry families were future heirs because land inheritance "depended heavily on the system of primogeniture…"(McMaster 119) characters like Edmund Bertram, a younger son, were expected to find a profession either in "the church, the army, the navy, the law, and medicine"

---

[43] Mr. Knightley's unison of labour as well as the connotation in the word "gentleman-farmer" (*E* 45) presents idleness as a fault in character rather than a trademark of the gentleman; a common theme is Austen's fiction.

(McMaster 121) [44]. Similar to Mr. Knightley, Edmund takes over the management of Mansfield in his father's absence:

> Tom Bertram had of late spent so little of his time at home, that he could be only nominally missed; and Lady Bertram was soon astonished to find how well they did even without his father, how well Edmund could supply his place in carving, talking to the steward, writing to the attorney, settling with the servants, and equally saving her from all possible fatigue or exertion in every particular….
>
> (26)

Edmund's masculinity, therefore, is equally centered on his vocation and on exertion of manly domestic responsibilities. Rank and status defined a gentleman; nevertheless, this thesis approaches masculinity in regards to work and character standards and contests social position as definite determinants of English manliness just like Austen strives to in her novels[45]. In short, "gentry masculinity" was structured around their capabilities as landlords and administrators, the management of their household, their professions, and their manners and virtues.

The growing regard of sincerity and utility illustrates a shift in masculine construction that no longer relies on politeness. As the demands for establishing an ideal of Englishness grew, appropriate instruction became a fundamental part of the development of English masculine character in a gentleman. Fritz-Wilhelm Neumann argues that a gentleman needed

---

[44] Entailment was the next option if the family that consisted of only women like the Bennett sisters in *Pride & Prejudice*—Longbourn was entailed to their cousin, Mr. Collins: "Mr. Bennet's property consisted almost entirely in an estate of two thousand a year, which, unfortunately for his daughters, was entailed in default of heirs male, on a distant relation…" (*PP* 19).

[45] It is important to remember that the remaining classes are deserving of attention as they highly contribute to the evolution and construction of English Masculinity. As the focus of this study is the gentleman, which was, unfortunately, only a member of the upper class, there is the inevitable necessity to focus on the education and dogma concerning the gentry. This, however, does not undervalue nor disregards the presence and study of important members of society without whom the maintenance and functioning of the country would not have been possible. McMaster also argues that the lower classes are worthy of attention for their contribution to the country's economy in his study of "Class" in *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen.*

to be "the product of education, which was part of the great religious as well as political design of "'Reformation' in Lockean lines" ("The New Man of the Tatlers" 229). Neumann also remarks that the work of educationalist like Defoe[46], Hume, Locke, and Knox, for example, provided guidelines of proper gentlemanly instruction (229). According to Richard Aldrich, in "John Locke," education enclosed a "hierarchy of values" that included "virtue, wisdom, breeding and learning" (80)[47]. Edmund Bertram needs to prepare for a profession and is not raised in idleness like Edward Ferrars in *Sense and Sensibility,* [48] nor in extravagance like his bother, Tom. Also, unlike Henry Crawford, Edmund has a stronger masculine and decorous parental figure in his father, Sir Thomas, who is very responsible of the management of his land and of his plantations in Antigua. Sir Thomas is also loyal to his wife and has great concern for the academic education of his children[49]. From an early age, the Bertram's educational agenda included science, languages, and manners: "How long ago it is, aunt, since

---

[46] Neumann surveys the "new man" in the *Tatler* in the early eighteenth century and argues that the "reformation of manners evolved along the Enlightenment lines of reason and benevolence, enforcing new standards of behaviour for the new nucleus of bourgeois society" (229). He divides the "new" "standards of male conduct" as follows: "restricted spending, sexual correctness…and polite conversation" (229). Neumann also notes that during this time "rakishness" and "foppish effeminacy" were associated with "decadence" and credits Daniel Defoe for his views and publications contending: "it was up to Defoe, who was able to come to terms with the modern world of enterprise, to consider this problem within the context of the economy" (229).

[47] It is worthy of attention that the refashioning of the English gentleman and the construction of English masculinity was also rooted in the concern for the ongoing and growing domestic violence against women between 1660 and 1725 (Shoemaker, "Reforming Male Manners" 134). Consequently, as men were characteristically identified as possessing a "propensity for aggressiveness," conduct books continuously began to preach virtuous values like "discretion, caution, prudence, and humility" in order to discourage male violent behaviour (Shoemaker, "Ideas about Gender" 25). As strict criminal rules were passed and with the popularity of instruction manuals increasing, by the eighteenth century, a man's "aggressiveness" fell out of favour and instead an emphasis on the practice of the virtues became the norm for both men and women (Shoemaker, "Reforming Male Manners"135).

[48] Edward excuses his imprudent engagement with Lucy Steele as a consequence of "foolish, idle inclination" and "ignorance of the world—and want of employment;" he continues, "Had my mother given me some active profession when I was removed at eighteen from the care of Mr. Pratt, I think—nay, I am sure, it would never had happened…I then had any pursuit, any object to engage my time and keep me at a distance from her for a few months…But instead of having anything to do, instead of having any profession chosen for me, or being allowed to chuse any myself, I returned home to be completely idle" (*SS* 365).

[49] Shoemaker, in *Gender in English Society 1650-1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres?*, argues that a father's role was "providing economic support, authority, and discipline, and in preparing their children for a career…they controlled all-important decisions affecting their children's future" (125).

we used to repeat the chronological order of the Kings of England, with the dates of their accession, and most of the principal events of their reigns" cry out the Bertram sisters to which their Aunt replies: "Yes," added the other; "and of the Roman emperors as low as Severus; besides a great deal of the Heathen Mythology, and all the Metals, Semi-Meals, Planets, and distinguished philosophers" (16)[50]. To all the Bertrams but Edmund, their private education provides them with appropriate knowledge useful only in conversation with other members of their elite circle. Edmund's private education, however, gives him a great advantage because he must use this knowledge in order to enter University and prepare for a career.

Women in Maria and Julia's social position could not leave their parent's house until they married (Shoemaker 134), but Edmund and Tom continue their education at Eton and Oxford[51]. Shoemaker remarks that "schooling exacerbated personality differences;" the domestic schooling of women involved "subservience and to combat vanity and pride" while public institutions encouraged manly traits like "self-control, endurance, striving, and athletic prowess" (131). Edmund and Tom are instructed equally, yet they develop very different sense of moral and manliness. Tom indulges in the luxury and vice that opposed English manliness, whereas Edmund exerts the forbearance and economy that distinguished the gentleman. Their differences draw attention to the ongoing debate regarding the learning of manliness, virtue,

---

[50] It is important to remark that female education commonly involved "domestic and finishing skills, or just reading and/or sewing" (Shoemaker 131); as such, the Bertram's ladies broad curriculum highlights Sir Bertram's high interest in the education of all of his children.
[51] Consider this account by Shoemaker:

> Schooling reinforced gender differences. Boys were more much likely to leave home to go to school (from the age of six or seven), while girls were usually trained at home, often by their mothers. Wealthy families often provided male tutors for their sons or sent them to all-male boarding schools, where they were virtually deprived of female company. The growing number of schools for girls during this period led to a significant improvement in female education, but it did not alter the fact that…the sexes were educated differently....
> (131)

and self-control through a private (home) or a public/institutionalized education (Cohen[52] 217). To Locke[53], a private education was the only place where virtue could be learned: "I am sure, he who is able to be at the charge of a tutor at home, may there give his son a more genteel carriage, more manly thoughts, and a sense of what is worthy and becoming, with a greater proficiency in learning into the bargain, and ripen him up sooner into a man, than any at school can do" (48). Locke states that full attention can only be given at home; therefore, a private education prepared a gentleman's mind and principle before they are let into the world. Thomas Secker, in *Fourteen Sermons Preached on Several Occasions*, also advocates this idea and emphasizes that parents must be responsible to "lead the Way of Life" through example and warns that sending their children "abroad into the School of the world" with instruction on "outward Accomplishments and Decencies of Behaviour" evidently leads to "Trifles and Follies" (4)[54]. Secker's warning is illustrated by the lack of discipline from Sir Thomas towards his irresponsible eldest son, Tom, "who feels born only for expense and enjoyment" (*MP* 15). To Locke, someone like Tom could only benefit from a private education. Nonetheless, Secker believes that, for some young men, "intellectual and moral Improvement"

---

[52] Please refer to Michéle Cohen's "Without Polish, the Rough Diamond Does Not Shine: Changing Ideals of Education and the Construction of the Gentleman in Eighteenth-Century England" for an insightful analysis of the debate concerning public and private education. The works by John Locke, Richard Aldrich, and Vicesimus Knox are also referenced in Cohen's work.

[53] This thesis expands on Locke's work, which is also analysed by Michéle Cohen in "Changing Ideals of Education and the Construction of the Gentleman in Eighteenth-Century England." Cohen argues that although the high regard for virtue had been long-standing it reached one of its highest points during the eighteenth-century (215). Also, the century's education agenda was highly influenced by John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (215) because the aim of education in England was to "shape a man's virtue" (215).

[54] In "Without Polish, the Rough Diamond Does Not Shine: Changing Ideals of Education and the Construction of the Gentleman in Eighteenth-Century England," Cohen argues that the debate about public versus private education was not only concerned with virtue, but with manliness as well (214) because the emphasis on travel and learning foreign manners threatened the ideal of Englishness that, as previously argued, disapproved of French mannerism because of their association with insincerity and effeminacy (220). This is evident in Secker's definition of the "follies" young men fall into when abroad which included "low Amusements of a false and effeminate Politeness" (*Fourteen Sermons Preached on Several Occasions* 4). Nevertheless, as with the study of politeness, the analysis of education continues to be in relationship to discipline and character rather than effeminacy.

taught at home is not enough and, therefore, a "particular and appropriated Institution" (3)

offered suitable instruction.

Vicesimus Knox's *Liberal Education* is known for its defence of the Universities

(Cohen 218)[55]. Yet, even Knox admits that in terms of curriculum, institutions provided

plenty; unfortunately, universities did not have the means to instruct young men on actual life

experience. He writes:

> As to the moral discipline, it is in many colleges totally neglected; in others
> only so far observed as to save appearances; and in none attended to in so
> constant and regular a manner as to preserve the young men from injuring
> themselves, in the most essential articles, whenever their inclinations lead them
> to be idle and vicious. There are no proper and efficient regulations in the
> colleges of Oxford, to restrain the expenses of young men from exorbitancy. So
> long as they appear at chapel, at lecture, and at dinner, they are allowed to
> enjoy, in all other respects, a state of liberty almost absolute. (184)

Tom's faults are not corrected at school, and Knox explains that young men who exhibit faults

like "Pride, vanity, and the love of pleasure" in University were "encouraged by mutual

example" from their parents and by the financial liberties they were provided with (*Liberal*

*Education* 110)[56]. As Tom Bertram's private instruction was faulty to begin with, no

institution could actually improve him in any way; on the contrary, financial freedom and

exposure to amusements only enable the faults of his character[57]. The scandal that unfolds

---

[55] From "Without Polish, the Rough Diamond Does Not Shine: Changing Ideals of Education and the Construction of the Gentleman in Eighteenth-Century England."

[56] "It was not to be wondered at, that so great a number of young men, just emancipated from school, and from a parent's authority, should break out into irregularities, when encouraged by mutual example. Their passions were strong, their reason immature, their experience defective. Pride, vanity, and the love of pleasure, urged them to any conduct that could either confer distinction, or afford gratification. Many had money at command" (Knox 110).

[57] Solinger remarks that periodicals also warned against the dangers of exposure to the liberties of public institutions, which included traveling abroad: "the periodical was quick to remind its own readers of the dangerously fine line between experience and idleness, a warning that seemed pointed at the aristocratic male whose abundant time and leisure afforded him ample opportunity to travel and see the world…Such men, the editors and writers of the periodical were wont to argue, wasted away their hours in amusements like gambling;

throughout the end of *Mansfield Park* illustrates the errors in the Bertram's parental education. Sir Bertram, as a father, "had meant them to be good, but his cares had been directed to the understanding of manners not the disposition; and of the necessity of self-denial and humility, he feared they had never heard from any lips that could profit them" (*MP* 314)[58]. Hence, the error is in the instruction of politeness and manners without simultaneous instruction of humility and moral virtue. For example, Sir Bertram regrets educating his children (the narrative refers to his daughters, but Tom and Edmund should also be considered) "expensively" and "theoretically in their religion" (314) but "never required to bring it into daily practice" (314) because he did not teach them "understanding of their first duties" (314) or to "properly…govern their inclinations and tempers, by that sense of duty which can only suffice" (314). This passage parallels Locke's reprimand over the lack of "rules and restraints of reason" as well as the insistence that a man must possess "the power to govern, and deny ourselves in them" (34). "The capacity for self-government," Peter Mandler writes, also became a "central feature of the English national character" (*The English National Character* 101).

Sir Bertram faces "anguish arising from the conviction of his own errors" (314) and becomes "[s]ick of ambitions and mercenary connections, prizing more and more the sterling good of principle and temper" (320). Austen's attention to Henry, Edmund, and Frank's public and private education reflects on how parental discipline[59] and exertion of virtue must be accompanied by life experience. Knox, Locke, and Secker also support these ideas even if

---

in their hands" (71).

[58] Consider this: "Analyzing the importance of practice for the cultivation of a virtuous disposition, Sir Thomas embodies the Aristotelian attitude toward the virtuous mean between excess and defect" (Emsley 128).
[59] Austen's regard of parental education is also present in *Pride & Prejudice* as Mr. Bennet is forced to face his "indolence" (*PP* 200) and parental neglect when Lydia elopes with Whickham.

their view regarding public and private education differs. And, to present characters with opposing educational backgrounds as equally vulnerable to decadence and weakness suggests that Austen neither agreed nor opposed public and private education. Edmund has a high level of moral understanding, but lacks any experience to apply it. It was Knox's belief that humans must learn from experience (184) and it is Edmund's involvement with Mary Crawford that actually teaches him to employ the instruction of Sir Bertram and from school. In other words, everything Edmund learns was literally on paper: all of his life he has known the difference between propriety and impropriety and knows how to conduct himself well in society; however, even as a second son, his privileged and isolated education does not provide him with the means to apply his theoretical knowledge when pressured with attraction and infatuation. Edmund's relationship with Fanny is rooted in dogma rather than real understanding of the world. Austen demonstrates that Edmund needs to approach real life decisions not just based on what he learns in school, books, or from tutors, but from recognizing and applying his own beliefs.

The emphasis on life experience also had a political meaning: national character required "individual liberty," which implied one's ability to govern oneself and to lead others (Mandler 53). In order to attain this form of governance, education's main concern turned to "furnish" a gentleman's "mind" with "direct virtue" (Locke 30). Consequently, it became essential to educationalists to redefine what constituted virtue as both manliness and Englishness. Interestingly, Reeser argues that the associations of virtue with manliness heavily rely on etymology because it conducts "cultural assumptions about what masculinity is, has been, or should be;" the word "virtue" has masculine associations because it "comes from the Latin word *vir*, meaning male (and not female)" (30, emphasis in original). In this way, Reeser

53

continues, "virtue" became a manly practice as its "etymology" reinforced the idea that "men were inherently more virtuous, and women less virtuous" (30). Nevertheless, these associations create a resistance to "ideas about masculinity changing over time" and their "linguistic connections being arbitrary and invented by culture at a certain linguistic moment" (30). The inconsistency and transformation of the definition of "virtue" throughout the Regency, therefore, cannot be dictated by a single set of traits because, as one has seen with politeness, the construction of virtue accommodates to specific public and national demands. One must keep in mind that masculinity is as much "unstable" (Reeser 15) as hegemony is "manufactured" (Kiernan 8) and "vulnerable"(Kiernan xv). Further, there were several other characteristics such as political, religious, and feminist movements that challenged and transformed the meaning of virtue (Grogan 9-10). The next part of this chapter studies how Austen exemplifies two important criteria of virtue that were attributed to manliness: virtue as a form of empowerment over women and the virtue of sincerity—including emotions, actions, and conversation.

The emphasis on the instruction of virtue as a manly trait was partly derived from the culture of sentimentalism, which according to Butler, "built up in the 1790's—when the apprentice Jane Austen formed her literary attitudes—" (23). In addition, Göbel, Schabio, and Windisch argue that the "interest in the man of feeling" became an essential tool to define and permeate gender roles ("Introduction" ix). Evidently, the definition of virtue varies from male to female and undergoes a transformation from being initially defined as "chastity" (Nünning 240) to incorporate a "discourse of masculinity" of the "new age sensitive man," which, "repositions masculinity as kindler, softer, and in touch with its feminine side" (Reeser 33). Nevertheless, Reeser points out that this new image produced "contradictory discursive

masculinities" (33) that threatened a man's manhood because pleasing or tending women even in the most noble of cases could lead to effeminacy and emasculation. Therefore, in order to maintain a masculine trait, manly virtues relied on regarding women as a weaker sex in need of protection and masculine supervision (Shoemaker 23). Connell argues that prior, during, and after the eighteenth century the regard of women as "inferior" or "incomplete" to men was of a "qualitative" nature "(for instance, having less of the faculty of reason)" (68); in other words, the belief that a man possessed higher attributes in comparison to a woman's positions him as caregiver without whom women's relatively lower "reason," for example, would only instigate mischief[60]. With this sense of "duty" in mind, the "new man" embodied "codes of honour" such as benevolence, "love for truth," "protection of women", and "sensitivity to those weaker than oneself" (Price 327).

Moreover, Göbel, Schabio, and Windisch note that "sensibility" incorporated philosophies by Kant, Hobbes, and Locke as sources of moral instruction ("Introduction" ix); in this way, the reconstruction of virtue continued to disseminate moral ideals present in philosophical works. Emsley[61] argues that Austen's "concept of the virtues is closely related to Aristotle's formulation of the virtuous mean" and that "[s]everal Austen critics have analyzed what she is known to have read, and whether she read Aristotle and other philosophers or

---

[60] Consider the following
> The female virtues mentioned most frequently by these commentators [conduct book writers] were chastity and purity; modesty, meekness, and patience; tenderness and charity; and piety and devotion. Although sexual continence was a virtue expected in both sexes, conduct manuals followed the prevailing 'double standard' in arguing that it was more important that women be chaste, because woman's infidelity had greater practical consequences…and because it was thought that, due to their meekness, once women acted immorally their passions would become uncontrollable. Indeed, since women were created subordinate to men and in order to serve their needs, sexual fidelity was the essential female virtue. (Shoemaker 23)

[61] Emsley's work in *Jane Austen and the Philosophy of the Virtues* has an entire chapter dedicated to a survey of fundamental philosophies by Socrates and Aristotle, which, she argues, were influential to Austen's body of work.

absorbed their ideas in a more direct way" (18). Similarly, David Gallop, in "Jane Austen and the Aristotelian Ethic," argues that Austen was moralist dedicated to the study of moral truth, virtue, and the human condition just as Aristotle and Plato. The morals embedded in her work, then, respond to philosophical works as well as to conduct books and public and private educational doctrine[62]. There were several moral attributes that remained essential to masculine construction, but no other virtue reflects more on English masculine identity than the regard for sincerity. According to Gerald Newman, in *The Rise of English Nationalism*, "sincerity" "*was* the English National Identity, the specific pattern of values articulated at the heart of the whole ideological movement" that began "around 1750" (127,128, emphasis in original). Sincerity, G. Newman resumes, "referred not only to moral character, the purity of the native self, but to the self's utterances…the word sincere meant 'honest' or 'truth-telling' or 'serious' in addition to 'pure' and 'innocent'" (130). As G. Newman points out, different forms of moral behaviour construct sincerity: speaking the truth and behaving in a truthful manner (a direct opposition to polite/gallant behaviour) to oneself and to others. Austen approaches the association of sincerity with "true-telling" and the "absence of artfulness and deception" (G. Newman 129) significantly in *Mansfield Park* as Edmund, who is not a gallant

---

[62] The association of character development through moral practice highlights not only Aristotelian ideas, as Emsley and Gallop point out, but also draws attention to the narrative's entrenchment with chivalric methodology: all of the characters, including the female characters, are tested in their moral and psychological strengths, also referred to as a quest, which was done "preferably in order to win the favour of a woman, to fulfill a task or to find out about his identity" (Fendler "From Knight to Gentleman" 267). Interestingly, the meaning of Edmund's name is associated with heroism and chivalry, which, as previously stated, are the roots of the modern definition of a gentleman as a man of dignity and self-sacrifice. Fanny says: "…there is nobleness in the name of Edmund. It is a name of heroism and renown—of kings, princes, and knights; and seems to breathe the spirit of chivalry and warm affections" (145). Indeed Fanny believes Edmund possesses all of the qualities embedded in his name and, ironically, just as in the English Romance as Fendler points out, he literary goes through a knight's quest. For instance, Edmund's journey helps him define not only his "identity" but also his masculinity and he is rewarded with a heroine who embraces the values he learns to exert. If one recalls, Frank Churchill, Henry Crawford, Mr. Darcy, Willoughby, and Edward Ferrars, are also presented with similar situations and end their journey according to their interests and ambitions.

man and genuinely cares for Fanny, lies and deceives himself and Fanny in order to accommodate his own desire.

Edmund Bertram is a very interesting character because he appears to embody the new ideal of manliness yet he constantly struggles to reconcile his moral principle and duty with his desire in the presence of Mary Crawford: "[Fanny] was a little surprised that he could spend so many hours with Miss Crawford, and not see more of the sort of fault which he had already observed" (*MP* 48). Edmund, thus, becomes manipulative and inconstant: the two traits that opposed the new hegemonic masculinity standards that a character like Mr. Knightley represents. When Edmund falls in love with Mary Crawford his "unbending" (*MP* 18) character becomes indulgent and indecisive. For example, Edmund initially opposes the performance of *Lover's Vows* because he knows that Sir Bertram's "sense of decorum is strict" and that he "would never wish his grown up daughters to be acting plays" (90). Edmund voices out his disapproval and tries to reason with Maria about the impropriety of a performance, but his determination falters when Miss Crawford agrees to act in the play: "Maria gave Edmund a glance, which meant, What say you now? Can we be wrong if Mary Crawford feels the same? And Edmund silenced, was obliged to acknowledge that the charm of acting might well carry fascination to the mind of genius and with the ingenuity of love" (92). Edmund's overlook of Miss Crawford's weaknesses in her presence makes him compliant with their execution and threatens his authority. As such, Edmund cannot expect respect from his siblings if he does not show constancy in his decisions. When Edmund decides to play Anhalt, Fanny feels "sorry to see" him "drawn in to do what" he "had resolved against, and what" is "known to think will be disagreeable" to Sir Thomas (108) and acknowledges his "unsteadiness" (111) in the imprudence of his decision: "After all his

objections...After all that she had heard him say, and seen him look, and known him to be feeling. Could it be possible? Edmund so inconsistent. Was he not deceiving himself? Was he not wrong?" (110). Fanny blames Miss Crawford for Edmund's altered persona; nonetheless, if Edmund was strong and determined he would not be so easily influenced nor would he overlook the impropriety of Maria and Henry's behaviour during rehearsals.

Davidson also regards Edmund's decision to join the play as "[o]ne show of inconsistency that draws a great deal of attention within the novel" (159) and critiques Fanny's resolution to never "openly change Edmund with insincerity and self-deception," which, in this case, is appropriate because Edmund's acts are "self-serving" (160). Before Mary arrives, the women at Mansfield do not question Edmund's authority and, as previously mentioned, he takes full responsibility of the management of his father's estate. Initially, Edmund's industry compliments his kindness towards Fanny without stripping him from his position as the man of the house. Nevertheless, his authority is compromised because he does not apply reason over his emotions; a discipline that educationalists encouraged in young men: "Authority and Reason must exert at once their joint Force. For Discipline without Instruction is mere Tyranny: and Instruction without Discipline, little better than useless Talk" (Secker 11). Moreover, the passage where Edmund politely induces Fanny to give up her horse so Miss Crawford can ride all day illustrates his practice of insincerity:

> ...whenever you are next inclined to stay home, I think Miss Crawford would be glad to have her for a longer time...But any morning will do for this. She would be extremely sorry to interfere with you. It would be very wrong if she did—She rides only for pleasure, you for health.
>
> "I shall not ride to-morrow, certainly," said Fanny; "I have been out very often lately, and would rather stay home...."
>
> *Edmund looked pleased, which must be Fanny's comfort....*

(51, my emphasis).

Austen addresses this kind of controlling behaviour initially as a flaw of Mrs. Norris's who always imposes her will through wordplay: "to have the pretence of being asked, of being given a choice, and at the same time addressed in such a way as to oblige one to do the very thing—whatever it be" (85). Edmund, does exactly the same, he, gently and in a brotherly-like manner, convinces Fanny to give up her horse on her own without asking her directly to do so.

Edmund's manipulation is not so different from Frank Churchill's because he is, in theory, lying[63], as he does not want to admit that he wants to spend more time alone with Miss Crawford (teaching her to ride gives him a gentlemanly-acceptable excuse to do so). Edmund's behaviour is incompatible with the ideal of Englishness[64] that regarded "honesty" and "self-reliance" as the "outlines of a heroic personality" that defined "National Identity itself" (G. Newman 133). Moreover, as previously argued, "self-government" was a defining trait to not only of English identity but to "manliness" as well (Mandler 103). Edmund's influence at Mansfield during his father's absence would be stronger if he practiced Mr. Knightley's dogma: "Respect for right conduct is felt by everybody. If he would act in this sort of manner, on principle, consistently, regularly, their little minds would bend to his" (*E* 104). Unfortunately, it takes Maria's adultery for Edmund to accept Miss Crawford's "faults of principle," "blunted delicacy," and her "corrupted, vitiated mind" (*MP* 310) and to develop true masculine traits needed in his profession and marriage to Fanny. In short, Edmund's behaviour in the presence of Mary Crawford exemplifies two different ideas: to Austen, it denotes the weakness of Edmund's character; to society, it demonstrates the dangers posed by

---

[63] Sir James Stephen argues that a lie is "ungentleman-like" because lying is "an ugly and displeasing vice" (561).
[64] Davidson similarly identifies the "concealment of emotions" as a form of "hypocrisy" (168); therefore, Edmund's actions also oppose the social masculine repudiation of insincere forms of politeness and flattery.

domesticity and exposure to female conversation as a source of emasculation[65] and the consequences of self-indulgence. Edmund's obliging conduct with Mary is not an opposition to masculinity standards of empowerment over women; on the contrary, his exertion of domestic control fails because his principles are flawed, not because he attempts to equalize power with the opposite sex. Edmund illustrates both the emphasis on moral growth and the insistence in creating a standard of masculinity that involved exertion of sincerity, self-discipline, and domestic regulation.

Mr. Knightley, in *Emma,* is clearly superior to Edmund in his embodiment of English manliness because he is "truthful" and "charitable" (W. Newman 571) in manners and application. Mr. Knightley believes in the importance of the meaning and "beauty of truth and sincerity" (*E* 325) and, without a doubt, he would disapprove of Edmund's behaviour as strongly as he scorns Frank Churchill's deception of his loved ones. Mr. Knightley's outspoken reprimand of Frank Churchill alludes to his sincerity because "sincerity meant a certain directness not only of speech and address but of opinion and action, logically based on a conception of behaviour consistently related to inward standards of purity and honesty" (G. Newman 131). The "purity" of Mr. Knightley's character is represented by his attentions to the Bates', which are not acts of gallantry or a form of manipulation, but a manifestation of his "very humane" traits: he is "really good-natured, useful, considerate, [and] benevolent" (*E* 155). Furthermore, even though Mr. Knightley disapproves of Harriet, he saves her from the "unpardonable rudeness" (227) and humiliation that the once "amiable," "obliging," and gentle" (225) Mr. Elton puts her through by publicly refusing to dance with her at the Crown

---

[65]"The danger of domesticity to true manliness applied not just to sons, but to the head of the household himself; the man who spent too much time in the company of wife and daughters might become effeminized, as the expense of both his manly vigour and his familial authority" (Tosh, The Old Adam and the New Man" 228).

Ball. Margaret Hunt, in *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender, and the Family in England, 1680-1780*, argues that by the "mid 1740s, [m]oral high-mindedness had itself come into fashion, and a new mood of disgust at upper-class artificiality and moral and political corruption was sweeping across England and Scotland, indeed, across much of Europe, not least among the upper classes themselves" (202). Unmistakeably, the traits of Mr. Knightley's character parallel the circulating ideals of "masculinity and Englishness" that aimed to instruct on the application of virtue through "plain speaking, usefulness, perseverance in the face of adversity, [and] rationality" (Hunt 71).

According to critics like Price and Fritzer, Mr. Knightley truly embodies the "new gentleman" as he "exudes a confident manliness, derived from both his easy authority over the women of his entourage and his difference from the young men who flit about them" (Price 327). Price's approach delineates Mr. Knightley's actions as part of the exertion of masculine power over women and those below him in character and situation. However, Austen highlights Mr. Knightley's intrusion in Emma's education as a response to Emma's rudeness and prejudice; it demonstrates that his principle is not weakened by his love for her. He knows that she has done wrong and it his duty not to overlook when someone is, in his own words, "acting wrong" without "remonstrance" (*E* 273). For this reason, Mr. Knightley's reprimand of Emma at Box Hill, "How could you be so insolent in your wit to a woman of her character, age, and situation?" (258), is done out of fundamental duty, for Emma is clearly mocking Miss Bates. This action does not emphasize his superiority over Emma as a man, but rather demonstrates he has better understanding of the duties of any person who must instruct as they see fit unlike Edmund Bertram who overlooks and excuses Mary Crawford's faults hoping that exposure to his better sense and morality will ultimately improve hers. Nevertheless, even

though the novel regards these virtuous traits as a collective practice, Mr. Knightley also embodies the social opposition to superficial manners in favour of the fashionable "manly virtues" that included exertion of domestic and social masculine regulator[66].

To recapitulate, as this chapter shows, the masculine identity of the English gentleman continued to reinforce gender stereotypes in order to assert "virtuous" authority over the supposed weaker sex. These virtues, advocated in manuals, educational institutions, and philosophy, regulated morality to accommodate an ideal of English national character and manliness that included self-government, honesty, and appropriate domestic control. It is important to remember, however, that: "manliness—just like any other category of identity— is a linguistic and cultural construct rather than an empirical reality and a fact of nature" (113) as Isabel Karreman reminds us in "Augustan Manliness and its Anxieties." Unmistakably, Austen shows awareness of the mutability in gender construction; her novels highlight the exertion of fundamental virtues as essential to the formation of male and female character rather than a characteristic that enhances gender differentiation. Also, her characters aim to educate one another without putting one gender as superior over the other. Nonetheless, the focus on influential components like flattery, virtue, and labour brings one closer to understanding the transformation of hegemonic English masculinity in Austen's and her contemporaries. The end of the eighteenth century continued to transform ideals of gentlemanliness in order to incorporate middle class mobility and heroism. As the next chapter shows sincerity and industry remain essential standards of virtue and Regency manliness, yet,

---

[66] Connell also sees this distinction in Austen's works and argues that "Gentry masculinity involved domestic authority over women, though the women were actively involved in making and maintaining the network alliances that tied the gentry together –the strategies lovingly dissected in Jane Austen's novels" (*Masculinities* 190).

the evolution of a polite—sincere—dexterous manliness illustrates that none of these ideals were absolute; in fact, the debate and refashioning of masculinity was far from over.

**Chapter three**

## Masculinity and National Heroism

> "[C]onnected as it all was with his profession, the fruit of its labours, the effect of its influence on his habits, the picture of repose and domestic happiness it presented, made it to her a something more, or less, than gratification…"
>
> (Jane Austen, *Persuasion*)

> "Cast in this light, Wentworth appears to be the most modern of Austen's men: a figure whose heroic stature, on as well as off the page, owes something to his meritocratic climb up the social ladder. What makes him so appealing a subject is the way his social rise so easily personifies larger changes in nineteenth-century English society"
>
> (Jason D. Solinger, *Becoming a Gentleman*)

Anne highly regards the "fruitful" life of a sailor, who, after years in battle and at sea, returns home with incomparable mental and physical fortitude, fortune, and with a guaranteed lifetime of domestic happiness. Anne is not alone in her sentiment and her story illustrates the beginning of a century-long endorsement of the value of self-merit and work as essential elements of masculine identity. As one might recall, the refashioning of the gentleman was influenced by different social anxieties and *Emma* and *Mansfield Park* illustrate initial historical instances responsible for generating the gentleman as masculine. The constant shift in masculine representations has to do with the fact that masculinities are, as Connell argues, "historical" and thus "come into existence at particular times and places, and are always subject to change" (*Masculinities* 185). Evidently, English masculinities are transformed to accommodate changes in the nation's social and political structure. Masculinity scholars regard these alterations as a common transition because, as Kiernan argues, "role norms are social facts, they can be changed by social processes" and they are influenced by society's

diffusion of "new expectations" (23). This final chapter is dedicated to the analysis of Austen's *Persuasion* in order to illustrate the "new [social] expectations" (Kiernan 23) that marked the transfiguration from gentlemanly to heroic hegemonic masculinities. In "The Old Adam and the New Man," Tosh studies the years between 1750 and 1850 and argues that English social structure and values undergoes major transformations during these years because of the transition between "genteel masculinity grounded in land ownership to a bourgeois masculinity attuned to the market" (219). The re-shaping of social structure and values was primarily influenced by early industrialization and the nation-wide feelings of ambiguity and distress during and after the Napoleonic wars (Bree 10)[67]. Nonetheless, just as with effeminacy[68], new arrangements had to be made in order to incorporate the new regard for national heroes along with the principles that these heroes learned and exerted during the war into the formation of English masculine character. This chapter explores how heroism, leadership, exertion of self-command, and national duty overshadow the former social emphasis on genteel education and manners as definers of masculine identity that characterized Austen's initial work. As such, these changes require broadening the discussion of the gentleman to study *Persuasion*'s gentleman-sailor.

---

[67] Linda Bree writes: "[*Persuasion*] ends just before the unexpected renewal of hostilities in Europe following the escape of the Emperor Napoleon from his first exile in Elba. The renewal of war turned out to be brief; it led very quickly to the Battle of Waterloo and Napoleon's final defeat; the navy was not re-mobilized, and by the time Austen wrote the novel it was hoped that a lasting peace had been re-established. But everyone must have been acutely aware that the earlier "lasting peace" had proved all too temporary; the present arrangement must have seemed potentially fragile; and "the dread of a future war," which faces Anne at the end of the novel, was no far-fetched fear" (10).

[68] Tosh also compares this shift with the anxiety over effeminacy, he argues: "The bourgeois character of this new configuration is neatly illustrated by the history of 'effeminacy'. In the eighteenth century one of the give-away symptoms of this condition was "luxury"—the unbridled desire to acquire and spend; by 1850 this meaning of effeminacy had disappeared, suggesting a much easier relationship between normative masculinity and the values of commercial society. According to this account, by the mid-nineteenth century, middle-class masculinity was firmly in the ascendant" ("Old Adam and the New Man" 220).

The return and validation of the navy's masculine prowess was in part possible because of social and political developments that occurred prior to Napoleon's defeat. Tim Fulford, in *Romanticism and Masculinity*, shows that shifts in perceptions of masculinity in England in the 1790's were initially influenced by a rejection of both French and English aristocratic sexual and moral misbehaviour [69] (4). Chapter two of this thesis studies how virtue was redefined in order to keep women under patriarchal rule and away from "political excess[es];" however, virtue was also used as a tool to distance English men and women from French libertinage and ridicule as a public response to the scandalous affair of the Prince Regent (Fulford 5). In a similar manner, the war with France created the need to render the homeland as masculine and pressured England to formulate a strong masculine identity. Reeser remarks that the gender of the homeland influences fundamental social constructions: "the gender of a nation is an important aspect of gender studies since those cultural codings affect everyone in a nationally based context" ("Masculinity and the Nation" 171). Thus if the gender of a nation's leader is analogous to that of the homeland, a heedless leader maximized the need to establish stricter standards for men as representatives and/or future leaders of the country. In other words, if the Prince Regent was known for his thoughtlessness and sexual unruliness[70], it was the nation's duty to impose virtues such as self-discipline, work, sacrifice, and mental strength to correct these faults[71]; strong aptitudes that military and/or the naval

---

[69] Fulford drives specific attention to Marie Antoinette's indiscretions and to the Duke of York's infamous affair, he writes: "In France it was a Queen's supposed whoredom that precipitated revolution. In Britain, it was Princes' sexual despotism that hastened reform" (*Romanticism and Masculinity* 6).

[70] The following passage from Douglas Murray's "Jane Austen's "passion for taking likenesses": Portraits of the Prince Regent in *Emma*" provides a description of the Prince Regent. The Prince's reckless personality was a cause for concern and it explains why it became necessary to impose new standards of masculine behaviour to eclipse the unruliness that threatened the nation's identity: "He was alternatively rebellious, surreptitious, charming, and groveling-much like Frank Churchill" (138).

[71] Recall Marilyn Butler's argument in "History, Politics, and Religion" already referred to in the introduction of this thesis: "[w]ithin the 1790's…[t]he upper and middle orders were given a coherent if idealized self-image,

professions provided. Consider this: "…the man who is able to dominate or to control the self, to remain moderate and to control his passions and desires has historically been considered able to transfer that same-rule to others. Simply put, the man who rules the self is justified in ruling the other" (Reeser 181). In short, if men were capable of self-control and their behaviour was derived from the discipline they learned at sea the country would be, undeniably, in good hands.

Austen responds to social anxieties correspondingly and this is possible because, as Jo Modert argues, Austen "imbued her novels with the natural rhythm of life itself" ("Chronology within the novels" 58). Therefore, Austen's previous novels focus on refashioning the gentleman and, subsequently, the shift of focus from the gentleman to the sailor in *Persuasion* corresponds to the rhythm of Austen's social environment. Virginia Woolf (*Women and Writing)* argues that *Persuasion* has a "peculiar beauty" and a "peculiar dullness" to "that which so often marks the transition stage between two different periods" (118). Furthermore, Butler remarks that *Persuasion* "share[s] society's growing seriousness of tone" (164) and that the "world of the last novel reflects the moral influence of the rising middle class, and is subtly different from the laxer, more permissive social atmosphere of the three novels Jane Austen began before 1800" (163). Woolf and Butler are right to consider *Persuasion* as more serious and less "permissive" than any of Austen's earlier novels; after all, the novel focuses on the integration of the returning sailor into a society of established gentry families coping with industrialization and class mobility. Bree, for example, also observes

---

which has been the basis of British Toryism ever since: a personal ideal compounded of independence, honor, decency, patriotism, public service, chivalry to women, and civility to inferiors" (196).

these differences and she encourages the reader to connect *Persuasion*'s variations with the

period's uncertainty:

> Readers who came to *Persuasion* after having enjoyed Austen's earlier
> published novels…would have recognized a similarity in the general theme of
> courtship and the focus on the world of the country gentry of the day. But they
> would have been surprised, too. *Persuasion* is in many ways very unlike
> Austen's previous novels. For the first time Austen, whose novels were notable
> for celebrating the vigorous renewal of the country gentry on the landed
> states…turned in *Persuasion* to a different, newer, less certain structure of
> values. (8)

Nevertheless, the diversity and ambivalence of these principles continue to have strong roots

in all the social practices and virtues like honour, truthfulness, and decorum already discussed

in previous chapters of this thesis. *Persuasion* is then both like and unlike previous ones

because the Regency is like and unlike previous and consequent periods.

A problem that most contemporary critics of *Persuasion* encounter has to do with the

text's temporal location in relation to historical developments. Some historians regard Austen

as an "accurate and dependable eye-witness to the naval matters of her time," yet, Southam

points out that some past and contemporary responses are "contradictory" because they either

depict Austen as a "war-novelist" or as "novelist of 'calm lives'" (*Jane Austen and the Navy*

10). Similarly, there are inconsistencies regarding the social view of the navy during Austen's

composition of *Persuasion*[72]. Southam's study shows the fluctuations in social opinion[73] and,

---

[72] For a detailed historical account of the English navy, their wins and loses, their role in Parliament, and the
public response please refer to Brian Southam's "*Persuasion*: The Righting and Re-Writing of History" in *Jane
Austen and the Navy*.

[73] Southam reads the period before and after *Persuasion* as possessing little naval pride and positions Austen's
text as an "enthusiastic" glorification of naval practice. Southam suggests that Austen writes *Persuasion* not as a
response to public appeal and naval national pride, but as a way to "repair" her brother's career (297). He states:

at times, contradicts Fulford and Harris's analysis of how "naval pride" influenced the narrative. It is important to acknowledge these differences, yet this thesis distances itself from this historical debate because Austen's main focus has always been with human character, not historical accuracy[74]. Nonetheless, this conflicting reading is not limited to Austen's novels; historians, as Nünning notes, also face this contention. For example, some historians "agree that virtue was being redefined during the eighteenth century, but they do not agree what this new redefinition entailed" (Nünning 240). Thus, once again, the history addressed in this chapter, just as with masculinity, is explored as part of *Persuasion*'s illustration of the hegemony circulating during its production. The concern for contradictory histories and their critical approaches to Austen's novels is not addressed at length in this thesis because the focus remains on Austen's own response to the changing times and how her novels engage in the overall re-evaluation of masculine discourses. As a consequence, one must allow the novel to dictate what histories correspond to Austen's portrayal of masculine construction.

To understand the aforementioned approach consider Kiernan's argument:

> …all ideologies represent in its necessarily imaginary distortion not the existing relations of production (and the other relations that derive from them), but

---

 Against this background of naval defeat and humiliation and, over a longer period, the decline in naval spirit, Jane Austen set out to write a determinedly morale-boosting novel, a story designed (with an eye on the sailor brothers) to show the Navy in its best light, recalling the great days of Trafalgar and St. Domingo, high points in the careers of Admiral Croft and Wentworth. Opening as it does in the summer of 1814—with Napoleon dispatched to Elba and the Navy scaling down—Persuasion was also designed to show the profession in peacetime. The return of naval men to civilian life in large numbers, after virtually twenty years of war, was a social phenomenon of some magnitude. (265)

[74] Woolf identified Austen as a writer with outstanding knowledge of the human condition. In *Women and Writing*, she praises Austen's literary contribution to the analysis and understanding of human consciousness: "Never did any novelist make more use of an impeccable sense of human values. It is against the disc of an unerring heart, an unfailing good taste, and almost stern morality, that she shows up those deviations from kindness, truth, and sincerity which are among the most delightful things in English Literature" (116).

above all the (imaginary) relationship of individuals to the relations of productions and the relations that derive from them. What is represented in ideology is therefore not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live. (18)

With this in mind, this chapter identifies the events in *Persuasion* that parallel different variations in social mentality and explores how Austen portrays these changes in her male characters in order to denote public reaction, content, discontent, and adjustment to aristocratic prejudice, monarchical scandal, the war with France, and the "domestication" of the navy[75] after Napoleon's defeat. It also studies the novel's portrayal of manhood and the navy's influence in refashioning the "new" ideal of manliness; one that involves heroism and the exertion of physical, mental, and emotional aptitude during a period of political and monarchical upheaval.

The beginning of *Persuasion* portrays how Anne and Wentworth's initial separation responds to the public opinion of the navy and to the continued aristocratic prejudice against the rising middle class[76]. Think of Sir Elliot's initial disapproval of the connection between Anne and Wentworth eight years before: "He thought it a very degrading alliance" (*P* 65) because Wentworth had "nothing but himself to recommend him…in the chances of a most uncertain profession" (*P* 66). The passage illustrates the unpopularity of the navy at the time

---

[75] The term "domestication of the navy" is borrowed from Monica F. Cohen's work in "Persuading the Navy home: Austen and Married Women's Professional Property." Her analysis focuses on the navy's adjustment into domestic life: "Persuasion, by telling the story of how the navy is domesticated in the post-Napoleonic years, also tells the story of how domesticity is professionalized: two lines of potential narrative development, the naval adventure and the domestic plot, merge" (348).

[76] Consider this: "Elevating personal merit to be the sole criterion for determining social rank threatened to destroy the very foundation and notion of a middle-class status: In more practical terms, it would have entailed, e.g., the acceptance of their own servants as their equals. And this was, of course, unthinkable in eighteenth-cetury Britain" (Nünning 241).

of Anne and Wentworth's engagement. Austen, nevertheless, begins to depict the navy as a respectable and honourable profession in *Mansfield Park* (think of Fanny's bother, William) even tough the navy's unsuccessful battles dispelled public interest (Southam 265). Despite the navy's reputation, Austen emphasizes the virtues of heroism and portrays the subsequent acceptance[77] of the navy as they return triumphant and prosperous, as Bree points out:

> The action of the novel begins in the summer of 1814, when the war between Britain and France had that been going on since 1793 ended at last, and the heoroes of the military forces—particularly the navy, whose wide-ranging excursions and stunning victories over the French had turned leading sailors into figures of enormous wealth and glamour—returned home. (10)

Consequently, the "wealth and glamour" of the returning sailor dissolves the opposition to Wentworth and Anne's relationship: "The truth was, that Elizabeth had been long enough in Bath to understand the importance of a man of such an air and appearance as his [Wentworth's]. The past was nothing. The present was that Captain Wentworth would move about well in her drawing room" (*P* 236). Against her own pride, Elizabeth learns to adapt and accept the new fashionable standards of the day in order to remain part of her social circle.

Fulford credits Horatio [Lord] Nelson's part in Napoleon's defeat as responsible for the nation's new obsession with service and duty. In Fulford's words:

> France became associated with the manly deeds and battles of its general, its government apparently freed from the wiles and intrigues on a feminised aristocracy…Britain wanted a hero to prove its power and manliness against the French…If the nation found in the princes only knightly pretentions and sexual self-indulgence, it discovered a hero in the navy in the figure of Horatio, Lord Nelson. Nelson was revered for defeating Napoleon, for his adherence to duty, for his gentlemanly conduct towards his men, and for his bravery. His

---

[77] Southam notes that only fifty years after *Persuasion* was published "anyone recognised that sailors compose a distinct social group" (299).

body…was proof of a manliness defined by the ability to command himself and others. (6)

Fulford's analysis indicates that regardless of the navy's actual reputation, Nelson's heroism influenced masculine construction and became the focus of several literary works that attempted to immortalize his bravery and service to the nation; it also inspired writers to create characters that possessed similar traits (7)[78]. Sir Walter Elliot's proud acknowledgement of the navy as "being the means of bringing persons of obscure birth into undue distinction" (*P* 59) is characteristic of the now publicly abhorred "knightly pretensions" (Fulford 6). In contrast, Anne's response to her father's arrogant views parallels the nation's regard for returning heroes who "have done so much for us" and who "have at least an equal claim with any other set of men, for all the comforts and all the privileges which any home can give. Sailors work hard enough for their comforts, we must all allow" (*P* 59). The values Nelson and hence the sailor represented, "courage, courtesy and defeat of foreign threat," became the new standards for manliness and overshadowed the "feminised man of sensibility" and the "ineffective" aristocracy (Fulford 7).

Several critics recognize the similarities between Lord Nelson and Captain Wentworth; for example, Jocelyn Harris, in "Domestic Virtues and National Importance," writes a comparison between Nelson and Wentworth and draws attention to fictional naval heroes who potentially influenced Austen's narrative[79]. Harris's analysis emphasizes Austen's awareness

---

[78] Consider this: "Dying to ensure victory, Nelson then became subject to a popular cult which immortalized him in monuments and mementoes. And his heroism was made available to all through the fictional heroes in the romances of Sir Walter Scott, heroes who resembled him in their courage, courtesy, and defeat of foreign invasion" (Fulford 7).

[79] Harris draws attention to literary inspirations for Wentworth's character:
> For Wentworth's contemptuous curl of the mouth and his bright, proud eye, Austen turned elsewhere, to the dashing villain-heroes of Byron's Oriental tales. Byron's admiration for Napoleon then so complicated the issue, however, that she had to clear away all taint of

to the "cult of naval heroism, which represented a new kind of masculinity and a new kind of Englishness" (181); and that, "although she denied reading any lives of Lord Nelson, she models Captain Wentworth" on "England's foremost naval hero" because Wentworth "enacts many of Nelson's most admirable qualities" (181). These qualities are admired by Anne and the Musgroves and aside from the heroic virtues aforementioned they are praised for their "friendliness," "brotherliness," "openness," "uprightness," and "warmth" (*P* 128). Wentworth returns ashore a man of fortune and with full naval recognition (107) with plans to marry anybody who could "tempt him" (95). Upon his arrival, he becomes a favourite among the Musgroves for his "charming manners" and lack of "shyness" and "reserve" (93). His account of the battles and his management and consequent success positions him as symbolic of the nation's heroic character. He becomes the most eligible bachelor in town, a position that, as one might recall, formerly belonged to characters like Mr. Knightley, Mr. Bingley or/and Mr. Darcy. Austen's famous opening quote in *Pride and Prejudice*, "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must in want of a wife" (43) remains true, but its reference is transposed from the established gentleman to the returning hero.

Thus far, Wentworth embodies absolute masculine competency; nevertheless, Wentworth is not the only character to display courageous qualities because Captain Harville also highlights a man's physical proficiency. To illustrate, Harville's ability to employ himself within the household, advocates the idea that a man's skill is not limited to just property

---

imperial tyranny and misogyny. As Austen considered what it meant to be a Napoleonic war hero, she may also have called upon Othello, the sailors' favourite, for Wentworth's pride of service and his jealousy, and on Antony for his [End Page 181] feminization. Finally, she seems to turn to Captain Cook, the very emblem of British manliness, for the most unimpeachable aspects of Wentworth's character. (181)

For a thorough comparison of Wentworth and his literary likenesses please refer to Harris' essay.

management and virtue. Evidently, Captain Harville's injury prevents him from engaging in strenuous activities; yet, his 'useful' and 'ingenious' mind "seemed to furnish him with constant employment within. He drew, he varnished, he carpentered, he glued; he made toys for the children, he fashioned new netting-needles and pins with improvements; and if everything else was done, sat down to his large fishing-net at one corner of the room" (128). Even though Captain Harville's return is not as privileged as Wentworth's, the situation does not prevent him from contributing to the betterment of his domestic life. Consider the chaos Fanny in *Mansfield Park* encounters when she visits her family: "It was the abode of noise, disorder, and impropriety. Nobody was in their right place, nothing was done as it ought to be…On her father…he was more negligent in his family, his habits were worse, and his manners coarser…He did not want abilities, but he had no curiosity, and no information beyond his profession; he read only the newspaper and the navy-list" (*MP* 265) and compare it to the stability and "hospitality" of the Harville household who "turn the actual space to the best possible account, to supply the deficiencies of lodging-house furniture" (*P* 127). Fanny's father is a former "disabled" "Lieutenant of Marines" (*MP* 4,5), but his lack of proper education and self-discipline prevents him from attempting to improve his financial and domestic situation in favour of "good liquor" (*MP* 6). These passages demonstrate that domestic comfort and order required effort and utility and that in this changing society, an injured sailor can also be a hero in the home through resourcefulness and ingenuity.

Austen presents the idea that a man in good health with or without financial advantages could certainly exercise productivity if determined to do so. Mr. Elliot's extravagant life-style consequently condemns him and his inutility deprives him from domestic comforts that a man of his situation is entitled to, as Austen writes: Sir Walter is

"…a foolish, spendthrift baronet, who had not had principle or sense enough to maintain himself in the situation in which Providence had placed him" (254). The novel and critics like Fulford and Harris demonstrate that utility became a standard of masculine character. Subsequently, the social regard for efficacy mocks and reprimands aristocratic idleness[80] and false chivalry, an idea illustrated throughout the novel and in several eighteenth-century texts like Oliver Goldsmith's "Of the Pride and Luxury of the Middling Class of People." In his essay, Goldsmith refers to luxury and ancestral pride as "ridiculous" and states: "Industry is the road to wealth, and honesty to happiness; and he who strenuously endeavours to pursue them both, may never fear the critic's lash, or the sharp cries of penury and want" (52)[81]. The luxurious life style of Sir Elliot opposes Goldsmith's emphasis on "industry" and excludes him from financial benefits he could generate if he had Harville's traits. It is important to point out that Austen cleverly anticipates the new anxieties of the period, which, according to Martin Danahay, in *Gender at Work in Victorian Culture*, become pivotal in the development of Victorian social values[82]. Thomas Carlyle and Smiles believed in the importance of work in the development of masculine character; however, as Austen's text was not influenced by

---

[80]Nünning argues the following: "The second problem related to the new image of the middling ranks is the degree to which they themselves subscribed to the 'progressive' ideology in which personal worth was separated from social rank. From their point of view, this ideology was self-serving in so far as it challenged the position of the aristocracy and provided the basis for developing a positive self-image of the middling ranks as being more virtuous and more important to the welfare of a society than the supposedly idle and extravagant members of the upper ranks" (241).
[81] Goldsmith's essay was published in *The Bee* in 1759 (Copley 51).
[82] Danahay argues that work "was a key tool of self-discipline for Victorian men. As one of the primary attributes of masculinity, the rejection of idleness in favour of work as 'industry' was the central topic for two figures most closely associated with the work ethic in the Victorian period, Thomas Carlyle and Samuel Smiles" (18).

either of these two Victorian writers[83], *Persuasion* becomes a bridge or transitional text between the Lockean instruction, the national hero, and the 'Gospel of Work[84]'.

Furthermore, the belief of life experience as the best method of instruction present in *Mansfield Park* takes precedence in *Persuasion*; what better way to learn and experience life than when facing actual threat? As previously argued, Edmund needs to practice the values he learns through his private and public education during his relationship with Mary Crawford; however, Wentworth strengthens his character in battle and learns to exert the leadership, determination, and self-control required for his and his crew's survival. Thus, the increasing popularity of the idea that life experience and social and national service was essential for the formulation of masculine character threatens the gentleman's masculinity because the presence of characters like Wentworth and Harville demands the gentleman to become an active member of society contributing to the economy, the household, and the nation. This idea, however, was neither new nor specific to the end of the century. Philosophers and educationalists throughout the eighteenth century were adamant in the instruction of public values in order to improve the nation, as Copley argues:

> …discussions of state policy and of the 'manners and principles' of the people
> are inseparable. In both areas a recognizable vocabulary of civic virtues (liberty
> valour, frugality, military prowess) is set against a vocabulary of vices that will

---

[83] Carlyle's social critique, *Past and Present*, was published in 1843 (Buckler 84); twenty-seven years after Austen began writing *Persuasion*.

[84] Danahay defines the 'Gospel of Work' as follows: "The 'Gospel of Work' is now used as a shorthand to characterize the dominant attitude toward labor in the Victorian period […] The conventional view of the 'Gospel of Work' defines it as a par of a rejection of the cultural and social authority of the ruling aristocratic classes in favor on emergent middle class agenda. The 'Gospel of Work' implied that the upper classes were indolent and that their parasitical position in the economy should be supplanted by self-disciplined, [and] hard working 'Captains of Industry' to use Carlyle's famous term" (23).

destroy the estate (luxury, effeminacy, cowardice, corruption) and the text offer exemplary advice to the members of the ruling establishment on the conduct of state policy and on the cultivation of the civic virtue of the population. (4)

The texts Copley refers to include conduct books, political propaganda, poetry, and the novel. Certainly the nation's main concern continued to be the formation of masculine identity because men were the sole rulers and representatives of the country. As women were confined to the domestic sphere and their instruction was "subordinate" to patriarchal rule (Connell 195)[85], eighteenth-century texts began to encourage an "improved" ideal of men that incorporated virtue with self-discipline and public service, as De Rose argues: "[t]raditional concepts—like the importance of self-knowledge and the repudiation of pride, of rational self-control, or patriarchal common sense, and of discipline, duty and sacrifice—are pervasive in these documents " (38).

Regardless of the new emphasis on service and national responsibility, manners and education continue to be essential in the instruction of English men; however, as Fulford and Harris point out, the increased public interest in heroism lessens the former principle that a gentlemanly education generated manliness. As most members of the monarchy and the aristocracy failed to embody the "new" manliness, Fulford argues that "chivalric manhood" was "relocated" to the rising middle class (9) and, among them, the sailor. Anne's defense of the navy thus contests the long social and economic precedence of the aristocratic classes, including the gentleman, in favour of the rising bourgeoisie class. In a similar manner, Tosh argues that "changes in the class structure of England" played an important part in the "changes in masculinity;" as such, *Persuasion* exemplifies the "rise to ascendancy of a

---

[85] Hitchcock and Cohen, in their Introduction to *English Masculinities 1660-1800*, also argue that "from the middle of the eighteenth century, women where increasingly restricted to a domestic and private sphere of the home while men monopolised the 'public' spheres of business and politics (18).

bourgeois masculinity which eclipsed—without ever entirely displacing—its aristocratic predecessor" ("The New Adam and the Old Man" 218). Evidently, the genteel families in the novel never lose their actual social primacy; nevertheless, they represent, as Bree argues, the "worst about the old values based on birth and hierarchy" (16). As such, the ongoing dislike for such values is represented by families like the Musgroves who are intolerant and resentful of "the Elliot pride": "I have no scruple of observing to *you*, how nonsensical some persons are about their place…but I wish any body could give Mary a hint that it would be a great deal better is she were not so very tenacious" (*P* 82, original emphasis). Clearly Sir Elliot and his daughter, Mary, openly mourn this displacement and the Musgrove's insolence is often opposed with exaggeration.

The novel mocks Sir Elliot's education and his false claim to status: "Sir Walter Elliot, of Kellynch Hall…never took up any book but the Baronetage, there he found occupation for an idle hour, and consolation in a distressed one" (45). This passage informs us that Sir Elliot does not spend his free time educating his mind and rather than employing himself he sits around worrying and mourning his decadence. As Baronets were not part of the nobility, yet a little above the gentry (Bree 45)[86], Sir Elliot's real concern is the complete eradication of his family name and status. Southam argues that Sir Elliot's disrespect for the navy is derived from his pride over ancestry (265), which is now overlooked by the "tide of naval honours…as a freak of the present day" (*P* 269). Sir Elliot shares the anxieties of many other members of the aristocracy, but his stubbornness prevents him from taking action to maintain his situation

---

[86]The information regarding Baronetage in England is credited to Bree's footnote from the Broadview Edition of *Persuasion*. It reads: "The rank of baronet, first instituted in 1611, occupies a marginal position between the gentry and the aristocracy which may help to explain Sir Walter's preoccupation with his precise status. As a hereditary title, it could be seen as part of the aristocracy; but baronets rank as commoners rather than lords in the formal hierarchy" (45).

and, consequently, ridicules his position and elevates the Harvilles' ability to cope. Sir Elliot's education was indulgent and superficial, and his character was formed to be full of vanity, conceit, idiocy, idleness, and pride. Because vanity was the "beginning and the end of Sir Walter Elliot's character; vanity of person and of situation" (*P* 47), gentlemanliness, therefore, was not part of Sir Elliot's educational agenda. As a consequence, he never learns to discipline himself and to administrate his land and money.

In the past, the Elliots were able to enjoy a life without financial distress when Lady Elliot was alive. She was an "excellent woman, sensible, and amiable" (47), was in charge of the finances, and "promoted his [Sir Elliot's] respectability" (47)[87]. During her marriage to him there had been "method, moderation, and economy;" however, after her death, Sir Elliot and his daughter, Elizabeth, begin to spend beyond their income in order to preserve the extravagant life-style they feel entitled to. Sit Elliot's debt is a consequence of his luxurious taste and irresponsible landownership. He is forced to rent Kellynch Hall because he can no longer afford to maintain it. Again, Lady Elliot's and Anne's role in the maintenance of the household suggests that Austen novels advocate the idea that "maintenance of the estate" is considered to be the duty of both genders (Copley 4)[88]. To summarize, as previously argued, the evolution of personal character is never confined to the male characters only and

---

[87] Edward Copeland, in "Jane Austen and the Consumer Revolution," argues that it became fashionable for women of the Regency period to take over the financial management of the household, he states: "In Persuasion, Austen focuses on women's role as managers of the family budget. It was a topic that had become more and more frequent in novels, in tracts on women's education, and in practical household guides. Good sense with money becomes the distinguishing characteristics of heroines in the novels of Hannah More, Margaret Cullen, Mary Brunton, Susan Ferrier and many others […] Women find their place in Austen's novel within the family economic unit" (89-90).

[88] Butler remarks that the disapproval of aristocratic practices and the emphasis on personal growth and community participation found in Austen's later novels have roots in the Evangelical movement; nevertheless, it also shows Austen's conservative alignments (165). In her own words: "The Evangelical colouring of her Christianity in the later novels blends imperceptibly with her earlier conservatism, since the goal of Evangelicalism was generally to fortify middle-class life by arming it from within" (285).

*Persuasion* is yet another example of such ideology. For example, Lady Russell shares some of the Elliot pride and although sensible and "good bred" she is prejudiced "on their side of the ancestry" and overvalues "rank and consequence" (*P* 53). She is interested in preserving Anne's lineage and disregards a hardworking sailor because he had "no fortune" but "had been lucky in his profession" (66). She fears that Anne would suffer shame, but disregards that Sir Elliot and Elizabeth, with their titles and all, are already on the way to leaving the family in ruin.

When their estranged cousin, Mr. Elliot, begins to pay his attentions to Anne, Lady Russell is the first to rejoice in the advantage of the connection: "I own that to be able to regard you as the future mistress of Kellynch, the future Lady Elliot—to look forward and see you occupying your dear mother's place, succeeding to all of her rights, and all her popularity" (179). Without a doubt, Lady Russell loves and cares for Anne; however, she has yet to learn, just like Emma, that fortune and position are not enough to formulate respectable and manly character. Mr. Elliot's composure and manners are undeniably decorous; he is described as "sensible," "elegant," and his "tone, his expressions, his choice of subject, is knowing where to stop—it was all the operation of a sensible discerning mind" (165). He commits the error of marrying for fortune the first time and neglects the duty to his family. Nevertheless, as he grows older and as a widower, he recognizes the value of a title and is ready to make amends for the past. He tells Anne: "Good company requires only birth, education, and manners…Birth and good manners are essential; but a little learning is by no means a dangerous thing in good company" (171). Unfortunately, Mr. Elliot places birth above education, honesty, and moral and physical dexterity. When his attentions are withdrawn from the family after Anne's engagement to Wentworth is announced, Lady

Russell must accept that she "had been mistaken with regard to both [Wentworth and Mr. Elliot]; that she had been unfairly influenced by appearances in each" (255). The discovery that Mr. Elliot's is a "disingenuous, artificial, worldly man, who has never had any better principle to guide him than selfishness" (221) teaches Lady Russell to appreciate Wentworth's "regulated mind" (255).

Austen, however, shows that there are gentlemen who deserve as much recognition for their good character as Wentworth: Charles Hayter is a gentleman of "superior cultivation and manners" (106). Hayter has a deeper learning experience than his cousins or than the Elliots and the Darlymples who do not possess any "superiority of manner, accomplishment, or understanding" (171). Although Mary sees him as just a "country curate" and an improper match for a "Miss Musgrove, of Uppercross" (108), his superiority of manner and understanding is a perfect match for the free-spirited Henrietta. In contrast, Mr. and Mrs. Musgrove, who possess a "liberal mind" (229), have learned to adapt to the changing times and are welcoming and content with Hayter's superior manners. The elevation of Hayter's position reminds the reader that what remains of great importance to Austen is adequate education, how the person conducts himself, and how they contribute to their environment. Mr. Elliot's errors in youth and adulthood along with Sir Elliot's unfortunate situation prove that, as every other rogue or villain in Austen's fiction, inadequate education remains the culprit of adult misconduct. Still, the novel does not attempt to position one genteel family below or above the other; one must remember that the Musgroves possess weaknesses of their own. Mr. and Mrs. Musgrove are described as "friendly and hospitable" but lacking "elegance" and "education" (78). The absence of an adequate education provides their children with "modern minds and manners" (78), which, despite the advantages of creating

humble and nurturing youth, also perpetuate recklessness, unruliness, and undisciplined minds. The education of the Miss Musgroves involved travel and enjoyment rather than the arts, sciences, and social decorum. The lack of discipline in Dick Musgrove's childhood made him irresponsible, "troublesome", and "hopeless" (86); the disadvantages of his character do not aid in his survival at sea. Lastly, their eldest son, Charles Musgrove, is less troublesome than his younger brother, but he is idle and needs "understanding, rationality, and elegance to his habits and pursuits…without the benefit from books, or anything else" (80). Charles's only enjoyment is in sport, not knowledge.

Moreover, Louisa's reckless behaviour almost takes her life and she is forced to learn the judiciousness that education and a life of self-discipline would have provided. She falls because she is childish and does not stop to think that the strong wind and the slippery stairs should be taken "quietly and carefully" as the others do. Instead, Louisa "must be jumped down them by Captain Wentworth" because it was a delight to her (137). Unfortunately, her wilful determination (137) proves tragic and the painful recovery from her accident leaves her nervous: "she is altered: there is no running or jumping about, no laughing or dancing; it is quite different. If one happens only to shut the door a little hard, she starts and wriggles like a young dab chick in the water" (230). Louisa's paranoia seems extreme, but it is nothing compared to other serious damage she could have suffered because of her recklessness. The accidents in the novel highlight how the Musgroves and the Elliot's disregard for education clearly instigate disasters.  Another example is found in little Charles's dislocation of his collarbone when he falls from a tree. As little Charles is very young, the incident proves that his parents, Mary and Charles, do not instruct caution or reasonableness. This is also true for his younger brother, Walter, who is equally hyperactive. The children's misbehaviour is a

constant cause of contention as Mrs. Musgrove points out to Anne: "Oh Miss Anne, I cannot help wishing Mrs. Charles had a little of your method with those children. They are quite different creatures with you! But to be sure, in general they are so spoilt! It is a pity you cannot put your sister in the way of managing them[…]it is very bad to have children with one, that one is obliged to be checking every moment, 'don't do this, and don't do that" (81). Evidently, none of the Musgroves are known for possessing moderation and their children are affected by that deficiency. In this way, Wentworth's assistance when Walter is adamantly hanging on Anne's back is symbolic because, unlike Hayter who only commands, Wentworth takes action. Hayter later regrets that "Captain Wentworth should do what he ought to have done himself" (112); consequently, Hayter's inactivity positions Wentworth's determination as masculine and superior.

Austen's critique of the ill-educated and unruly upper classes is reminiscent of *Emma* and *Mansfield Park*. However, unlike Frank Churchill and Henry Crawford, whose gentlemanly education fails to prevent the practice of selfish gallantry, "heroic manliness" opens the door for the rising middle class to set new masculinity standards; standards that, as one has seen, corresponded to the nation's sentiment: "Another aspect of this changing conception of man in society was both a rethinking of the social hierarchy, in which the middling ranks took precedence…the middling station was regarded as the cradle of virtue" (Nünning 240)[89]. Austen shows, however, that heroism does not exclude one from experiencing equal amounts of distress. After all, all humans are prone to weakness and their ability to accept and correct misbehaviour is what truly deserves credit. Wentworth's naval

---

[89] Nevertheless, Solinger disagrees with critics who identify the construction of gentlemanly virtue with middle class standards for he sees that "the signs and symbols of aristocratic culture provided the very building blocks of middle-class culture and identity (94).

merits alone are not enough to guarantee him a life without hardship and his arduous temperament almost costs him his felicity with Anne. Wentworth confuses social pride with propriety; his open manner towards the Miss Musgroves is indecorous because they are courteous and inviting just like Frank Churchill's attentions towards Emma. It is evident that Charles Hayter recognizes Wentworth's impropriety and consequently treats him in a cold manner. Luckily, after the initial enchantment, Henrietta's attentions return to Hayter, but Wentworth continues to selfishly attempt to "attach himself to Louisa" because he follows his "angry pride" (249).

It is only when Wentworth arrives to Lyme that the results of his behaviour are known to him: "I was considered by Harville an engaged man! That neither Harville nor his wife entertained a doubt of our mutual attachment. I was startled and shocked. To a degree, I could contradict this instantly; but when I began to reflect that others might have felt the same—her own family, nay, perhaps herself" (250). He then realizes that he "was no longer at [his] own disposal" (250). Wentworth admits he "had been unguarded" and, at the time, he disregarded the seriousness of how his "excessive intimacy must have its danger of ill consequence in many ways;" of the selfishness of "trying whether I could attach myself to either of the girls," and "the risk of raising even an unpleasant report, were there no other ill effects" (250). One must recall that Frank Churchill also faces the same risk and that Mr. Knightley is determined to reprimand him for it. Still, Wentworth's self-realization and determination to fulfill his duty should Louisa demand it, "I was hers in honour if she wished it" (250), highlights the superiority of his character and emphasizes his background as a leader rather than a gallant

gentleman[90]. Furthermore, Louisa's accident allows Wentworth to realize that prudence is an important value in daily life, not just during war. "Oh God! That I had not given way to her at the fatal moment! Had I done as I ought![…] She would not have been obstinate if I had not been weak" (143,200). His naval training taught him to reprimand any reckless resolution, and during his time at sea such allowances were unthinkable. For example, Southam points out that "fortunately" for "duffers, dunderheads and ne'er-do-wells" like Dick Musgrove, there were "Captains as responsible and good-hearted as Wentworth to care for the youngsters in their charge" (271). In short, Wentworth possessed enough experience to turn unruliness into self-discipline and overlooking Louisa's only intensifies his own self-disappointment.

Wentworth suffers greatly because he disregards his better sense and his resentment towards Anne creates a false admiration of Louisa's "unyielding" (117) character. His initial "cold politeness" (105) towards Anne is a consequence of his stubborn temper and of his failure to recognize Anne's determination to fulfill her duty as a daughter. He believes Anne's mind to be fickle, but Louisa's accident induces Wentworth to value the "advantage of firmness of character" and to consider how "like all other qualities of the mind, it should have its proportions and limits" as "a persuadable temper might sometimes be as much in favour of happiness, as a very resolute character" (143-144). Butler also concludes that Wentworth's admiration of Louisa's character not only suggests he is an "intelligent, attractive, witty man, of high moral aspirations," but also he "is in the grip of a strongly subjective frame of mind," which is a "personal bias that perverts judgment" (278). Tragedy teaches Wentworth that Anne's decision was not a sign of "weakness" or "cold-hearted prudence" but "principle and

---

[90] Recall how Frank Churchill excuses his behaviour by convincing himself that Emma was impartial and aware of the reasons behind his flattery as discussed in chapter one of this thesis.

fortitude" (*P* 276). Evidently, the narrative locates Anne's sense, social propriety, and education along with Wentworth's mental and physical self-discipline as the "new" set of values that are to be practiced. Butler also recognizes the novel's embedded morality and states that Jane Austen's "plots express a typical conservative middle-class ethic of the day. When her principal characters experience an inward reform—as, in each of the novels, some of them do—it is so that they can see their way to a marriage promising continued self-discipline and a higher commitment than ever before to service to the community" (285)[91]. The increased interest in self-discipline and service proves pivotal in masculine construction.

Moreover, professions like trade, the law, commerce, and agriculture were continuously defended and promoted by philosophers like Daniel Defoe, David Hume, and Josiah Tucker because their practice contributed to the nation's economy. Connell argues that with the "spread of industrial economies and the growth of bureaucratic states…the economic and political power of the landowning gentry declined" (192). Formerly, a gentleman derived his income from his land; however, the rise of the professional classes displaced perceptions of masculinity among the gentry (Connell 196). If manhood was defined through merit and labour, established gentlemen had to assert their masculinity in the domestic sphere. Tosh argues that the social displacement did not eradicate the "fundamental requirement" of a man

---

[91] Nonetheless, Butler, like many other critics, read Austen's novels as advocates of "middle-class duty" (286). Yet, even though most instances are in favour of the middle-class, one cannot restrict Austen's interest to a specific social class. For example, one cannot but disagree with Butler because the novel shows that any person regardless of rank and status share the necessity to learn and practice good principles in order to fulfill their responsibility to society. The reformation of members of the upper class like Mr. Darcy, Frank Churchill, Lady Russell and Louisa indicate that the instruction targeted males and females of any class. Yes, Sir Elliot and Lady Darlymple are mocked, but the mockery targets their character and lack of proper education. The emphasis seems to be to the middle-classes because the nation was experiencing social unrest; characters like Lady Elliot are a reminder of every individual's ability to learn sense and practice responsibility.

forming a household, maintaining it, protecting it, and controlling it" (223). Consequently, the only way for a gentleman to assert his manhood was through his service to the community and, unfortunately, by compensating this displacement through the imposition of patriarchal control. Inevitably, patriarchal dominance continued to be on the rise because regardless of the "shifting relationship between class and gender during this period, masculinity remained deeply wedded to the exercise of private patriarchy" (Tosh 224). In *Persuasion*, Austen does not present characters who assert their dominance through tyranny or violence in the household; however, she illustrates the gentleman's struggle and dislocation through other outlets like hunting. Charles Musgrove is unable to control his household; more than once he goes against his own decisions and gives into his wife's "unreasonableness" (80). Also, rather than confronting Mary himself he turns to Anne for help: "I wish you could persuade Mary not to be always fancying herself ill" (81). Unmistakably, Wentworth's presence is only a reminder of the masculine proficiency he lacks; thus, hunting, which was an "inferior test of manhood" (Tosh 222), compensates his feelings of emasculation. As hunting was a socially acceptable disguise for idleness, Charles spends most of his time shooting and hounding and opens the invitation to anybody who would take it. His time at home is limited and the neglect of his household proves disastrous.

Hunting also proves to be an activity Charles admires in other men, specially the ones that are to marry his sisters. It is true that Charles likes Hayter, but he expresses his disappointment in Hayter's lack of interest in hunting: "[He is] too cool about sporting. That's the worst of him" (229). Charles also likes Benwick because he "has fought as well as read" and is "a brave fellow" (230). Charles's opinion of Benwick is, however, elevated because of their rat-hunting experience and not necessarily for his bravery during the war: "We had a

famous set-to at rat-hunting all the morning…I have liked him the better ever since" (230).

Furthermore, hunting was considered a manly activity by educationalists like Knox who

writes: "The elder boys are to be encouraged in manly sports, for other and more important

reasons. At the age of seventeen or eighteen, they should be indulged, even for a moral

purpose, in fishing, shooting, hunting, tennis, cricket, and all other diversions consistent with

safety, good company, health, and economy (4, emphasis in original). However, the view of

hunting is also considered an "inferior" manly activity because, as Daniel Pool argues, it was

considered the "only exercise many country gentleman ever got" as it mostly involved

galloping "across [the] country at top speed and have a whale of a good time splashing

through rivers and dashing across fields in pursuit of the hounds and the fox without breaking

your neck" (*What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew* 172). The possibility of danger

was the trill and served as a necessary boost to a man like Charles Musgrove's ego. As

perceptions of masculinity continued to be challenged and reinvented throughout the period

and as the landed gentry continued to face displacement; unsurprisingly, such activities did not

prevent the inevitable dominance assertion in the domestic sphere that governed Victorian

society and texts[92].

This chapter shows how the presence of the navy transformed society's expectations of

masculine character taking into consideration the new regard for heroism, self-control, and

handiness. It is important to note that as the transition affected other classes nationwide and

women and children alike, this particular type of hegemonic masculinity in response to

---

[92] Danahay writes about the Victorian gender differentiation and denotes the segregation of women to the domestic sphere: "The Victorian period registered the most extreme form of gender segregation yet seen in an industrialized nation. This gender segregation was articulated and reinforced by images and texts that either implicitly or explicitly argued that work was 'manly' and therefore inappropriate for women" (2)

national heroism is only one important piece in the masculinity studies puzzle. The analysis of the gentleman and the sailor illustrate what Connell defines as "exemplary masculinities," which attempt to identify socio-political developments and their influence in masculine construction. The study of the displacement of the Regency gentleman caused by heroic idealizations, public response and expectations, and the actual source of the new order is essential to understanding contemporary masculine perceptions. In Connell's words:

> …the imagery of masculine heroism is not *culturally* irrelevant…Part of the struggle for hegemony in the gender order is the use of culture for such disciplinary purposes: setting standards, claiming popular assent and discrediting those who fall short. The production of exemplary masculinities is thus integral to the politics of hegemonic masculinity. (214, emphasis in original)

Austen's work naturally follows these standards, ascensions, and discretization that the period demanded. Her work is multidimensional because it identifies, transforms, and critiques popular conceptions of masculine identity. The gentleman's popularity in contemporary culture is derived from the stereotypical chivalric and heroic imagery embedded in this figure and for the public's nostalgia over manners and courtship. As depictions and definitions of masculinity and femininity continue to move back and forth between virtue, politeness, and heroism, one can be certain that the gentleman in Austen's novels will continue to be adapted and appropriated for generations to come.

**Conclusion**

      The refashioning of gentry masculinity over the eighteenth century is a clear indicator of how gender ideals are fragmented, reused, and transformed over time. Jane Austen successfully integrates hegemonic ideologies into her text and addresses the malleability of gender differentiation through day-to-day scenarios. Connell argues that "[c]ommon-sense knowledge of gender is by no means fixed. It is rather, the rationale of the changing practices through which gender is 'done' or 'accomplished' in every day life" (6). Austen addresses complicated subjects such as gender construction and differentiation through her illustrations of daily communal life. Kiernan remarks that our "ideas, our values, our acts, even our emotions, are, like our nervous system itself, cultural products- products manufactured, indeed, out of tendencies, capacities, and dispositions with which we were born, but manufactured nonetheless" (8). For example, the gentleman, just as the gentlewoman, was born into certain values that he disseminated throughout his lifetime. This thesis builds on the work of historians like Cohen and Shoemaker and studies conduct books that were influential in the Regency period to explore how these doctrines reflect on Regency ideology and influence the construction of hegemonic English manliness. It also studies how this educational hegemony is illustrated in Austen's work. Overall, this thesis exposes and approaches gender standards for what they really are, cultural constructs: "Becoming human is becoming individual, and we become individual under the guidance of cultural patterns" (Kiernan 9). Austen's success is derived from her ability to identify what to be human is and what culture does to modify and segregate individuals.

One cannot approach masculinity like an equation inserting values that correspond to *x* and *y* at indefinite moments. Connell and Reeser agree that masculinity is "more complicated than we might first believe" (Reeser 2). The transition of politeness—sincerity—industry/heroism already proved problematic in this analysis of gentry masculinity because of the numerous historical and political developments that influenced eighteenth-century ideals. The difficulty in constructing politeness, sincerity, and heroism as Regency masculine traits only increased with further industrialization and commercial expansion (Solinger 94). Because education played such an important role in the construction of the Regency gentleman (Neumann 229), pivotal to this study were educational doctrines that were distributed in conduct books. Critics like De Rose have noticed the presence of conduct book ideals in Austen's novels. De Rose writes that "the moral principles embodied in *Mansfield Park*, as in all of Jane Austen's novels, are consonant with orthodox eighteenth-century English Christianity, exemplified in such diverse sources as the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*, the *Tatler* and *Spectator* periodicals, and innumerable conduct books and sermons written throughout the century" (38). Similarly, Jacqueline Reid-Walsh, in ""She Learned Romance as She Grew Older": From Conduct Book Propriety to Romance in *Persuasion*," argues that Austen's "characterizations of her heroines are often considered to be final variations on conduct book ideals" (216). Like Emsley and Fritzer, Reid-Walsh studies instruction books in relation to Austen's heroines. Nevertheless, this thesis demonstrates how these manuals were also the basis of masculine depictions in the novel throughout the eighteenth century. Also, a library search shows that there were numerous anonymous entries concerning the instruction

of the gentleman around the same time Austen's novels were either being written or being read[93].

Evidently, the role of conduct books in instructing, constructing, and disseminating standards of gender differentiation continue to impact our own construction of femininity and masculinity. Solinger argues that the gentleman appears in "various literary incarnations" because "visions of the ruling-class male" throughout the centuries are derived from the initial preoccupation of defining what a gentleman was and the values he must embody (3). This continues to be the case as the increasing popularity of gentlemanly qualities readapts Austen's illustration of English hegemony into a twentieth-century version of conduct books in order to define its 'ruling-class male'. Research shows that over the last decade, books of instruction on gentlemanly practice continue to be produced and circulated in print and online. These include: Phineas Mollod and Jason Tesauro's *The Modern Gentleman: A Guide to Essential Manners Savy, and Vice* (2002); Peter Post's *Essential Manners for Men: What to do, When to do it, and Why* (2003), Brett McKay and Kate Mckay's *The Art of Manliness: Classic Skills and Manners for the Modern Man* (2009); John Bridges' *How to be a Gentleman Revised and Updated: A Contemporary Guide to Common Courtesy* (2012). All of these books claim to instruct on the same standards—virtue, chivalry, politeness, and sincerity—that the eighteenth-century gentleman was exposed to[94]. It is clear that modern

---

[93] Works with titles such as: **"**An essay upon education, intended to shew that the common method is defective, in religion, morality, our own language, history, geography: ... By a gentleman of Bristol; "A letter from a minister in the country, to a gentleman in London, with a project for the promoting of reformation of manners. Humbly proposed to the convocation now sitting, that it may be moved in the Honourable House of Commons"; "The sentimental traveller, or a descriptive tour through life, figuratively as a trip to Melasge, in which is included the adventures of a gentleman in the East-Indies: the whole forming a system of education, with instructions to a young gentleman, entering into life. In two volumes"—are one of many works available regarding the instruction of the gentleman.
[94] The gentleman is also adapted in the work of Matthew Zorpas *London 100, A Gentleman's Guide* (2013) whose photographs instruct English men on how to wear gentlemanly-appropriate attire.

instruction books like those mentioned above are contemporary adaptations of Locke, Knox, and Secker's work. The titles of these modern books resemble titles of seventeenth and eighteenth-century instruction books because, as Davidson remarks, the "history of manners is to a great extent the history of the conduct book, as this prescriptive genre is where manners leave their most obvious traces" (7). Writers, artists, musicians, critics, and/or performers continuously rely on the Internet to publish and access information; therefore, it is not a surprise that the culture of gentlemanliness is also perpetuated online. Websites like the *moderngentlemanmagazine.com* revisit the same virtues explored in this thesis in order to instruct the "modern" man about proper decorum, dress, and conversation. Consider the mission statement from the creator and editor of *moderngentlemanmagazine.com*, Nikola Mileta:

> In today's modern world where true style, manners and taste have lost its place, and are replaced by kitsch, snobbery, tasteless fashion and insensitive behavior between man and woman, Modern Gentleman will do its best to promote and reinstall these virtues where they belong, and that is at the top of every man's list…I believe that every man should be a gentleman. First thing that turns man into gentleman is his manners and his behavior towards other people. This is the foundation on which you can build and create your personal style according to your taste. (ModernGentlemanMagazine.com)

Hence, as eighteenth-century conduct book ideals were popular and aimed to educate on gentlemanly virtue and behaviour, it is likely for modern society to attempt to propagate their own ideals in the same way.

This thesis highlights Mr. Elton's insensitivity towards Harriet, Frank Churchill's lies and impropriety towards Emma, Henry Crawford's cruel seductive methods, and Edmund's manipulation towards Fanny. The actions of these characters relate to Mileta's opposition to "insensitive behaviour between man and woman" (ModernGentlemanMagazine.com).

93

Austen's novels oppose superficial and selfish manners like gallantry as a response to corresponding Regency social anxieties. Mileta uses terms as "kitsch, snobbery, insensitive behaviour" terms that, as Davidson argues, are analogous to insincerity, gallantry, and hypocrisy. Similarly, John Bridges claims that his series *How to be a Gentleman*[95] "bring civility to the world at large" to "make life easier for other people" by being "honestly and sincerely" a "nice guy" who practices " noble virtues" like "camaraderie, dependability, and unswerving loyalty…"("Introduction"1-2). Clearly, these contemporary works' concern with manners is directly related to society's need to formulate an ideal masculine identity. Modern conduct books instruct of proper behaviour; nevertheless, this behaviour is rooted on idealizations of manliness that the gentleman portrayed. In other words, Mileta and Bridges, for example, do not only instruct men on sincerity, they also advocate that sincerity is masculine and that masculinity is defined by polite manners, honesty, and personal style just as the work of Locke, Secker, and Chesterfield does.

Bridges attributes the popularity of the gentleman to the continuity of "certain rules" and to the "persistent" "desire for gentlemanliness" (1), an idea that supports Solinger's view of the gentleman as an "omnipresent form" (3). As the gentleman embodies the hegemonic

---

[95] Bridges has published twelve books that instruct men on "gentlemanly" manners and etiquette from day-to-day conversations to dates, weddings, parties, and business meetings. His works include: *How to be a Gentleman: A timely Guide to Timeless Manners*; *How to Be a Gentleman: A Contemporary Guide to Common Courtesy*; *As a Gentleman Would Say: "A gentleman knows how to begin a conversation…"*; *50 Thing Every Young Gentleman Should Know, A Gentleman Entertains: A Guide to Making Memorable Occasions*; *A Gentleman Gets Dressed Up: What to Wear, When to Wear it, How to Wear it*; *A Gentleman Pens A Note: A Concise, Contemporary Guide to Personal Correspondence*; *Toasts & Tributes: A Gentleman's Guide to Personal Correspondence and the Noble Tradition of the Toast*; *A Gentleman at the Table: A Concise, Contemporary Guide to Table Manners*; *A Gentleman Walks Down the Aisle: A Complete Guide to the Perfect Wedding Day*; *A Gentleman Abroad: A Concise Guide to Travelling with Confidence, Courtesy and Style*. If one pays attention to the titles of Bridges' books, he instructs on travel, noble traits, conversation, attire, letter writing, and pleasing the opposite sex, which replicates exact conduct book ideals of the gentleman's "Grand Tour," letter composition (a common eighteenth century practice—think of Miss Bingley's reference to Mr. Darcy's letter writing in *Pride and Prejudice*), and manners like politeness, sincerity, and industry; manners studied in this thesis.

English "masculine ideal promoted across a spectrum of writing…essayists, critics and male conduct writers as well as the ideal husband imagined by authors of heroine-centered domestic fiction" throughout the eighteenth century (Solinger 3), the presence of the gentleman in Austen's work illustrates this high regard and anxiety over a figure that represented an ideal of hegemonic English manliness. In a similar manner, the use of the gentleman as a model for manly modern decorum highlights the social interest in creating an image of man who is serviceable but composed; polite and gallant, yet, sincere; industrious but fashionable. The continual reference to the gentleman does not mean that society considers English hegemonic manliness as a model, but demonstrates how there is a consistent and common social preoccupation regarding manhood: one that involves patriarchal dominance (interpreted as the protection of women), honesty, physical prowess, and proper social skills. Reeser explains that the relationship between definitions of masculinity across time and space are part of the "complicated" subject of masculinity. Therefore, Reeser continues, masculinity "can be studied not as a single definition, but as variety and complexity" because "[s]uch cross-cultural or cross-temporal differences makes us aware of masculinity as particularly relative, since we come to see that what is taken for granted is not at all a given, but a fabrication or a construct of a given historical and cultural context" (2). As modern definitions of manhood continue to be transformed and challenged and are constantly dependant on time and space, Mileta and Bridges's remarks prove that our society faces similar preoccupations regarding gender relations and masculine formulation so familiar to Austen and her contemporaries.

Austen's ideals of gentlemanliness reflect upon a changing society that constantly challenged ideals about masculine construction. One has only to look at her initial work to notice the transformation of politeness from a manly and sensible trait to the effeminate and

indecorous associations found in her later work and illustrated by characters like Mr. Elton, Frank Churchill, and Henry Crawford. *Emma* and *Mansfield Park* provide a glimpse of the social transgression that superficial manners like gallantry generated. The work on gallantry and politeness by Davidson and Cohen highlights the vulnerability of masculine identity as dependant on hegemony and as pray to the fashionable decorum of the day. The popularity of contemporary instruction manuals on gentlemanly behaviour proves that, once again, there is a need to redefine what constitutes masculine identity and challenges a nation's own standards of manhood. In other words, society in North America turns to Regency English masculinity to re-define their own perception of what a man should be and how he should behave even though standards have already been set through institutions, vocations, and media. Connell's work in *Masculinities* identifies what constitutes the modern man and comes to the same conclusion: "Since the role norms are social facts, they can be changed by social processes. This will happen whenever the agencies of socialization- family, school, mass media, etc.- transmit new expectations" (23). All three chapters of this thesis study, correspondingly, how the eighteenth-century gentleman faced similar, to use Connell's term, "social processes": the impropriety of the Prince Regent, the French revolution, Napoleon's defeat, social mobility derived from professions like trade, and the return of naval heroes after the end of the war. The consequences of such social and political transitions pressed the public to demand an archetype of manliness that incorporated characteristics such as trust, strength, determination, and virility as symbolic and relative to Englishness.

Chapter one analyzes how politeness loses popularity by the mid-eighteenth century and forces educationalists to re-define what constitutes virtue and manliness within the domestic and social spheres, and, at the same time, formulates English manliness in relation to

nationalism. Also, it explores how the emphasis on politeness was rooted in French manners that promoted the idea that good conversation and suitable social interaction was achieved through a performance of gallant manners, as Cohen argues in *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century*: "As important as polite phrases are the polite gestures and demeanour that define the gentleman: how to come into a room full of company 'with a graceful and proper assurance…and without embarrassment', how to eat, how not to be encumbered by one's body" (45). The instruction of these performance-like manners is evident in the work of Chesterfield in *Letters to his Son* [96] (the works of Mileta and Bridges is also reminiscent of Chesterfield's work). Nevertheless, Henry Crawford, Mr. Elton, and Frank Churchill exploit the advantages type of "social performance" provided in order to move through social circles, to charm, and to deceit. "French politeness is born out of deception, subjection, and emasculation, and functions to perpetuate them," (50) writes Cohen; then, English manliness began to be regarded as the opposite: to speak and act in a straightforward and truthful manner. Mr. Kightley embodies the hegemonic gentry masculinity that formerly belonged to the gallants, as explored in chapter two. As gallantry provided a form of masculine empowerment in seduction, virtue offered an alternative to maintain idealizations of manhood through female subjugation. In other words, a virtuous and manly man was a protector of and benefactor for women, as Mr. Knightley is to the Bates. In Chapter two, nationalism and virtue is revisited through the analysis of Edmund Bertram and Mr. Knightley, who embody mid-eighteenth-century traits like household and property management to accommodate to the growing forms of "industrialized forms of masculinity"

---

[96] Please refer to Cohen's work, *Refashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century*, which thoroughly surveys the origins of politeness in France and their influence in the construction of English manners throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

(Connell 188)[97]. Education, thus, aimed to instruct males from genteel families to embody a reconstructed form of virtue that advocated sincere manners, generosity, and "domestic patriarchy" (Connell 196) as English manliness. The emphasis on personal growth and the development of manliness depended upon young men experiencing life and facing difficulties with composure, self-discipline, and truthfulness. Edmund learns that his masculinity is dependent neither on his patriarchal dominance nor on compliance, but in constancy and self-discipline.

Mr. Knightley embodies these masculine qualities to the letter, however, as the social preoccupations and expectations are transformed with the end of the Napoleonic wars, as explored in chapter three, so are the idealizations of English manhood. Ideals of masculinity started to regard "wage-earning capacity" and "mechanical skills" (Connell 196) and a "growing ascendancy of a cluster of masculine attributes that corresponded to the requirements of an urbanized, market-led, and increasingly industrialized society" (Tosh 331) so present in characters like Wentworth in *Persuasion*. English masculinity included not only patriarchal control over women and land management, but also the active contribution to the economy of the household either through money earning and/or domestic optimization (recall the analysis of how Captain Harville's dexterity opposes Sir Elliot's irresponsibility and ruin). Nonetheless, the end of the war and industrial expansion strips Mr. Knightley from his former glory to accommodate heroism into the manliness equation. The unification of Wentworth's

---

[97] "During the period 1800–1914, Britain was first and foremost an industrializing society; it was also, with growing conviction, an imperialist country; and it was a society characterized by increasingly sharp category distinctions of gender and sexuality" (Tosh, "Masculinities in an Industrializing Society: Britain, 1800–1914" 330)

masculine prowess and Harville's crafty industry with Mr. Knightley's gentlemanliness was regarded as a new form of masculinity[98]. To summarize, what Regency hegemonic masculinity was and needed to be still looked back at the gentleman for reference. As a consequence, conduct books were continuously transformed in order to meet public demands.

The identification and isolation of these forms of English masculinities—politeness, sincerity, and heroism—in Austen's works demonstrates the importance of literature and history in the study of masculinity. Connell remarks that the "history of institutions and of economic social identity" is responsible for how one approaches and defines masculinity. The relationship between social history and manliness is, therefore, an entanglement (29). Nonetheless, to "study changes in those social relations" allows one to "understand masculinity historically" (Connell 29). Thus, the relationship between the social contention with politeness and gallantry must be studied in order to understand later forms of masculinity in which characters like Mr. Knightley and Wentworth eclipse the former masculinity of Mr. Elton and Henry Crawford. Masculinity studies benefit from revisiting Austen's novels because "fictional" and "nonfictional" "constructions of masculinity can help to shed new light on the close connection between identity construction, sexuality, language, and literature" (Horlarcher 13). Inevitably, additional study of Austen's works is needed in order to understand how these eighteenth-century anxieties continue to be present in our own society. It is clear that Austen's men have equal importance in her novels as do her heroines

---

[98] Nonetheless, Solinger argues that there is nothing "new" about Wentworth because his character is a reconstitution of gentlemanly values that needed "heroism" or "middling class virtues" in order to accommodate the gentleman to the changing industrialized ideology (93). Solinger strongly believes that Wentworth becomes the "new masculine ideal" because he firstly embodies "traditional gentlemanly traits" (9) then he exerts the highly new attention to heroic traits. In short, Wentworth "exemplifies what is means to be a hero as well as a gentleman" (Solinger 93). Please refer to "Austen's Fiction in the Age of Commerce" in *Becoming a Gentleman* for an insightful analysis of *Persuasion* and its response to commerce and gentlemanliness.

because modern discourses of masculinity continue to reference Regency hegemonic ideals of manliness to revive the same idealization the formulated gentlemanly values in the first place. Unmistakably, our own definitions of masculinity continue to struggle with re-current social idealizations of manliness.

**Works Cited**

Aldrich, Richard. "John Locke." *Prospects: the Quarterly Review of Education*. 24.1/2 (1994).

61-76. *Unesco: International Bureau of Education, 1999*.Web. 12.Apr.2012

"Amiable." *The Canadian Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd Ed. New York: Oxford University

Press, 2004. Print.

Austen, Jane. *Emma*. Ed. George Justice. 4th ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2012.

Print.

---. *Mansfield Park*. Ed. Claudia Johnson. New York: WW. Norton & Company, 1998.

Print.

---. *Persuasion*. Ed. Linda Bree. Peterborough: Broadview Literary Texts, 1998. Print.

---. *Sense and Sensibility*. Ed. Kathleen James-Cavan. Peterborough: Broadview Literary

Texts, 2001. Print.

---. *Pride & Prejudice*. Ed. Donald Gray. New York: W.W.Norton & Company, 2001. Print.

---. *Northanger Abbey*. 2nd edition. Ed. Claire Grogan. Peterborough: Broadview Literary

Texts, 2002. Print. 7-24.

Austen, Henry. "The Biographical Notice, 1817." *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage*. Ed.

B.C. Southam. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968. 73. Print.

Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. 2nd Ed.

Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002. Print.

Brown, Julia Prewitt. *A Reader's Guide to the Nineteenth-century English Novel*. New York:

Macmillan Publishing Company, 1985. 53-59. Print.

Butler, Marilyn. *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.

    Print.

---. "History, Politics, and Religion." *The Jane Austen Handbook with a Dictionary of Jane*

    *Austen's Life and Works*. Ed. J. David Grey. London: The Athlone Press, 1986. 190-

    208. Print.

Bour, Isabelle. "Locke, Richardson, Austen: or How to Become a Gentleman." *Persuasions.*

    30 (2008). 159-170. Web. 21.Mar.2012.

Bree, Linda. "Introduction." *Persuasion*. Ed. Linda Bree. Toronto: Broadview Literary Texts,

    2004. Print.

Bridges, John. "Introduction." *How to be a Gentleman Revised and Updated: A Contemporary*

    *Guide to Common Courtesy*. 3$^{rd}$ Edition. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2012. 1-2.

    Print.

Brod, Harry. "The Construction of the Construction of Masculinities." *Constructions of*

    *Masculinity in British Literature from the Middle Ages to the Present*. Ed. Stefan

    Horlacher. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011. 19-32. Print.

Bromfield, Andrea. *Food and Cooking in Victorian England: A History*. Westport: Praeger

    Publishers, 2007. Print.

Cohen, Michéle. "Without Polish, the Rough Diamond Does Not Shine: Changing Ideals of

    Education and the Construction of the Gentleman in Eighteenth-Century England."

    *Engendering Images of Man in the Long Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Walter Göbel et al.

    Trier: WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2001. 213-226. Print.

---. "'Manners' Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-  1830." *Journal of British Studies* 44.2 (2005): 312-329.01.Oct.2011.Web.

---. "Manliness, Effeminacy and the French: Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth-Century England." *English Masculinities 1660-1800.* Ed. Tim Hitchcock and Michele Cohen. New York: Lengman, 1999.41-61. Print.

--. *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century*. New York: Routledge, 1996. Print.

Cohen, Monica F. "Persuading the Navy Home: Austen and Married Women's Professional Property." *A Forum on Fiction*. 29.3 (1996). 346-366. 30. Aug. 2013. Web.

Connell, R.W., and Messerschmidt, James W. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." *Gender and Society*. 19.6 (2005). 829-859. 09.Apr.2012. Web.

Connell, R.W. *Masculinities*. 2ed. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005. Print.

Copley, Stephen. "Introduction." *Literature and the Social Order in Eighteenth-Century England*. Ed. Stephen Copley. London: Croom Helm, 1984. 1-21. Print.

Danahay, Martin A. "Working Definitions." *Gender at Work in Victorian Culture: Literature, Art and Masculinity*. Hants: Ashgate, 2005. Print.

Davidson, Jenny. *Hypocrisy and the Politics of Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Print.

Defoe, Daniel. "*The Compleat English Gentleman*, Introduction." *Literature and the Social Order in Eighteenth-Century England*. Ed. Stephen Copley. London: Croom Helm, 1984. 41-42. Print.

---. "Letter XXII, *The Compleat English Tradesman*, 1726." *Literature and the Social*

      *Order in Eighteenth-Century England*. Ed. Stephen Copley. London: Croom Helm,

      1984. 36-40. Print.

---. "'Of TRADE in General', *The Review*, Vol.III, No.2.3 January 1706." *Literature and*

      *the Social Order in Eighteenth-Century England*. Ed. Stephen Copley. London:

      Croom Helm, 1984.  55-59. Print.

De Rose, Peter L. "Hardship, Recollection, and Discipline: Three Lessons in *Mansfield Park*."

      *Jane Austen and Samuel Johnson*. Washington: University Press of America, 1980. 37-

      64. Print.

Emsley, Sarah. Jane Austen's Philosophy of the Virtues. New York: Palgrave McMillan,

      2005.Print.

De Tocqueville, Alexis. "The Old Regime and the French Revolution." *Great Expectations*.

      Ed.Graham Law and Adrian J. Pinnington. Toronto: Broadview Literary Texts, 2002.

      551-594. Print.

Fritzier, Penelope Joan. *Jane Austen and Eighteenth-Century Courtesy Books*. Westport:

         Greenwood Press, 1997. Print.

Fulford, Tim. *Romanticism and Masculinity: Gender, Politics, and Poetics in the Writings of*

      *Burke, Coleridge, Cobbett, Wordsworth, De Quincey, and Hazlitt*. New York: St.

      Martin's Press, 1999. Print.

Gallop, David. "Jane Austen and the Aristotelian Ethic." *Philosophy and Literature* 23.1

      (1999) 96-109. Web. 08.Apr.2012.

Göbel, Walter et al. "Introduction." *Engendering Images of Man in the Long Eighteenth Century*. Trier : WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2001. Print.

Goldsmith, Oliver. "'Of the Pride of Luxury of the Middling Class of People', The Bee, 1759." *Literature and the Social Order in Eighteenth-Century England*. Ed. Stephen Copley. London: Croom Helm, 1984. 51-53. Print.

Graham, Peter W. "Falling for the Crawfords: Character, Contingency, and Narrative." *ELH*. 77.4 (2010). 27.Mar.2012. Web.

Grey, David J. "Topography." *The Jane Austen Handbook with A Dictionary of Jane Austen's Life and Works*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1986. Print.

Grogan, Claire. "Introduction." *Northanger Abbey*. 2nd edition. Ed. Claire Grogan. Peterborough: Broadview Literary Texts, 2002. 7-24. Print.

Harris, Jocelyn. "Domestic Virtues and National Importance": Lord Nelson, Captain Wentworth, and the English Napoleonic War Hero." *Eighteenth Century Fiction*. 19.1 ( 2006).181-205. Web. 30.Aug.2013

Horlacher, Stefan. "Charting Masculinity Studies." *Constructions of Masculinity in British Literature from the Middle Ages to the Present*. Ed. Stefan Horlacher. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011. 1-8. Print.

Hunt, Margaret R. *The middling sort: commerce, gender, and the family in England, 1680-1780.* Berkeley: University of California Press, c1996. PDF File. Web. 5 Oct. 2013

Johnson, Claudia L. ""Not At All What a Man Should Be": Remaking English Manhood in

    Emma." *Equivocal Means: Politics, Gender, and Sentimentality in the 1790's.*

    Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1995. Print.

Justice, George. "Introduction." *Emma*. Ed. George Justice. 4th ed. New York: W.W. Norton &

    Company, 2012.  Print.

Karreman, Isabel. "Augustan Manliness and Its Anxieties: Shaftesbury and Shift."

    *Constructions of Masculinity in British Literature from the Middle Ages to the Present.*

    Ed. Stefan Horlacher. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011. 1-8. Print.

Kiernan, Ryan. *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism: A Reader.*  Ed. Kiernan Ryan.

    London: Arnold, 1996. Print.

Klein, Lawrence E. *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness: Moral Discourse and Cultural*

    *Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University

    Press, 2004.  Print.

Knox, Vicesimus. *Liberal Education: Or, a Practical Treatise on the Methods of Acquiring*

    *Useful and Polite Learning*, Volume 2. 7th Ed. C. Dilly, 1785. Google ebooks.

Mackie, Erin. *Rakes, Highwaymen, and Pirates: The Making of the Modern Gentleman in the*

    *Eighteenth Century*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009. Print.

Mandler, Peter. The English National Character: *The History of an Idea from Edmund Burke*

    *to Tony Blair*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006. Print.

McMaster, Juliet. "Class." *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*. Ed. Edward Copeland

    and Juliet McMaster. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.115-130. Print.

Min, Byoung Chun. "What Manners Mean in Jane Austen's Emma: A Study of the

    Conceptual and Historical Significance of Manners." *Nineteenth Century Literature in*

    *English*. 14:2(2010).155-174.Print.

Miller, Jane. *Women Writing About Men*. London: Virago Press, 1986. Print.

Mileta, Nikola. "About Us." *ModernGentlemanMagazine.com*. N.p., Web. Oct. 18. 2013

"'Miss Austen': *English Woman's Domestic Magazine*. 3.1 (1866)." *Jane Austen: The*

    *Critical Heritage*. Ed. B.C. Southam. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968. 200.

    Print.

Modert, Jo. "Chronology within the Novels." *The Jane Austen Handbook with a Dictionary of*

    *Jane Austen's Life and Works*. Ed. J. David Grey. London: The Athlone Press, 1986.

    53-59. Print.

Morgan, Susan. "Intelligence in *Pride and Prejudice*." *Modern Philology*. 73.2 (1974). 54-

    68.Web. 12.April.2012.

Morrison, Sarah R. "Of Woman Borne: Male Experience and Feminine Truth in Jane Austen's

    Novels." *Studies in the Novel*. 26.4 (1994). Web. 5.Apr.2012.

Murray, Douglas. "Jane Austen's "passion for taking likenesses": Portraits of the Prince

    Regent in  *Emma*." *Persuasions*. Cleveland: 29 (2007). 132-145. Web. 21. March.

    2012.

Nardine, Jane. *Those Elegant Decorums: The Concept of Propriety in Jane Austen's Novels*.

    New  York: State University of New York Press Albany, 1973. Print

Neumann, Birgit. "Towards a Cultural and Historical Imagology." *European Journal of English Studies*, 13:3, 275-291. Web. Oct.4.2013.

Newman, Gerald. *The Rise of English Nationalism: A cultural History 1740-1830*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987. Print.

Newman, J.H. "Liberal Knowledge Viewed in Relation to Religion." *Great Expectations*. Ed. Graham Law and Adrian J. Pinnington. Toronto: Broadview Literary Texts, 2002. 551-594. Print.

Nünning, Vera "Human Nature and Social Class in Two English Novels of the 1750's: Henry Fielding's *Amelia and Eliza* Haywood's *History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*." *Engeendering Images of Man in the Long Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Walter Göbel et al. Trier : WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2001. Print.

Lewes, G.H. "The Great Appraisal, 1859 from Unsigned article, 'The novels of Jane Austen', Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine (July 1859), lxxxvi, 99-133." *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage*. Ed. B.C. Southam. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968. 148-166. Print.

---. "Jane Austen the 'Artist'." *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage*. Ed. B.C. Southam. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968. 141. Print.

Locke, John. "Some Thoughts Concerning Education." *The Works, vol.8 (Some Thoughts Concerning Education, Posthumous Works, Familiar Letters [1690]*. Rpt. *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes*. Vol. 8. London: Rivington, 1824. 12th ed. *Online Library of Liberty*. Web. 1.Apr.2012.

Pool, Daniel. *What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knews: From Fox Hunting to Whist-The Facts of Daily Life in 19<sup>th</sup>- Century England.* New York: Touchstone Simon & Schuster Inc., 1993. Print.

Price, Martin. "Manners, Morals, and Jane Austen." *Nineteenth Century Fiction.* 20:3 (1975): 261-280. 1.Oct.2011. Print.

Reeser, Todd W. *Masculinities in Theory: An Introduction.* Pondicherry: Wiley-Blackwell A John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Publication, 2010. Print.

Reid-Walsh, Jacqueline. "She Learned Romance as She Grew Older": From Conduct Book Propriety to Romance in *Persuasion." Persuasions: Papers from the Lake House Louise Conference.* 15 (1993). Aug.10.2013. Web.

Secker, Thomas. *Fourteen Sermons Preached on Several Ocassions.* J. and F. Rivington and B. White, 1771. Google ebook.

Scott, Walter. "On Jane Austen". *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage.* Ed. B.C. Southam. London,  Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968. 106. Print.

Shoemaker B., Robert. *Gender in English Society 1650-1850: The Emergence of Separate Speheres?.* London: Longman,1998. 15-58. Print.

Stanhope, Philip (4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Chesterfield). "Letters to His Son: On the Fine Art of Becoming a Man of the World and a Gentleman". *The PG Edition of Chesterfield's Letters to His Son (2004).* EPEG File. Web.

Stephen, Sir James Fitzjames. "Gentleman." *Great Expectations*. Ed. Graham Law and Adrian

       J. Pinnington. Toronto: Broadview Literary Texts, 2002. 551-594. Print.

Solinger, Jason D. *Becoming the Gentleman: British Literature and the Invention of Modern*

       *Masculinity, 1660-1815*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. PDF file. Web.

Southam, Brian C. *Jane Austen and the Navy*. London: Hambledon and London, 2000. Print.

Tarpley, Joyce Kerr. *Constancy & the Ethics of Jane Austen's Mansfield Park*. Washington:

       The Catholic University of America Press, 2010. Print.

Tosh, John. "The Old Adam and the New Man: Emerging Themes in the History of English

       Masculinities, 1750-1850." *English Masculinities 1660-1800.* Ed. Tim  Hitchcock and

       Michéle Cohen. New York: Lengman, 1999. 217-238. Print.

---."Masculinities in an Industrializing Society: Britain, 1800–1914." *Journal of British*

       *Studies*. 44:2 (2005). 330-342. Web. Oct.4.2011.

"Unsigned review, Critical Review: March 1813, 4th series, iii, 318-24." *Jane Austen: The*

       *Critical Heritage*. Ed. B.C. Southam. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul,1968. 43-47.

       Print.

Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977. Print.

Woolf, Virginia. "Jane Austen Praciticing." *Women and Writing*. Ed Michele Barret. New

       York:  Harcourt Brace Jovanich, 1979. Print.

Young, Iris Marion. "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference."

    *Feminism/Postmodernism*. Ed. Linda Nicholson. New York: Routledge, 1990. 300-23.

    Print.