

Transmedia Storytelling

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*Pemberley Digital's Adaptations
of Jane Austen and Mary Shelley*

By

Jennifer Camden
and Kate Faber Oestreich

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To our families:
Eric, Emma, and Teddy
Joe, Beckett, and Ellie

Deepest gratitude for carving out the time and space so we could travel,
collaborate, and write this book.

“We are unfashioned creatures, but half made up.”¹

“I shall commit my thoughts to paper, it is true; but that is a poor medium for the communication of feeling. I desire the company of a man who could sympathize with me, whose eyes would reply to mine.”²

—Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus*

“Transmedia storytelling (also known as transmedia narrative or multiplatform storytelling) is the technique of telling a single story or story experience across multiple platforms and formats using current digital technologies, not to be confused with traditional cross-platform media franchises, sequels, or adaptations.”³

—Wikipedia

¹ Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, edited by Johanna M Smith (Boston: Bedford St. Martins, 2000), 38.

² Shelley, *Frankenstein*, 31.

³ We cite quotations from both *Frankenstein* and Wikipedia for our epigraph to highlight this current moment when transmedia storytelling as a term has been around for over a decade, yet the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the first major crowd-sourced project in English, does not yet have an entry regarding its etymology. Instead, Wikipedia—the current, and by some derided, outlet of engaged users’ crowd-sourced information—fills in that gap. *Frankenstein*, of course, is a frame narrative built from multiple persons’ written tales, similar to the monster, who is the unified whole of multiple bodies, and thus also to transmedia storytelling, which disperses the narrative across multiple platforms, requiring the viewer to piece together the narrative whole.

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One of the perils of working on digital transmedia adaptations is the timeliness of the medium: while we have made every effort to provide accurate citations and to acknowledge the breadth of resources—scholarly, journalistic, amateur—available, we are also keenly aware of the Internet's rapid rate of change.

One of the pleasures of working in this field is the opportunity to seek input from the content creators: we are grateful to Bernie Su, his assistant Danny Rivkin, and costume designer Kristy Benjamin for taking the time to communicate with us.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CA (*Classic Alice*)
E&MTB (*Elinor and Marianne Take Barton*)
EA (*Emma Approved*)
FMD (*Frankenstein MD*)
LBD (*The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*)
LiA (*Lost in Austen*)
MFL (*March Family Letters*)
P&P (*Pride and Prejudice*, book)
WtS (*Welcome to Sanditon*)

INTRODUCTION

“AND OF THIS PLACE I MIGHT HAVE BEEN MISTRESS”: ADAPTATIONS OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY NOVELS IN FILM AND TRANSMEDIA

“To acquire the habit of reading is to construct for yourself a refuge from almost all the miseries of life.”¹

—W. Somerset Maugham

“But it wasn’t until the BBC put a face on the story that those gentlemen in tight breeches had stepped out of her reader’s imagination and into her nonfiction hopes.”²

—Shannon Hale

“If words are insufficient in representing our ideas, the affordances of new media technologies allow for more comprehensive representation of thought.”³

—Viola Lasmana

“‘And of this place,’ thought she, ‘I might have been mistress! With these rooms I might now have been familiarly acquainted! Instead of viewing them as a stranger, I might have rejoiced in them as my own and welcomed to them as visitors my uncle and aunt.—But no,’—recollecting herself,—‘that could never be: my uncle and aunt would have been lost to me: I should not have been allowed to invite them.’ This was a lucky recollection—it saved her from something like regret.”⁴

—Jane Austen

¹ William Somerset Maugham, *Books and You*. (New York City: Arno Press, 1977), Google Books, 29.

² Shannon Hale, *Austenland: A Novel* (New York: Bloomsbury USA, 2007), 2.

³ Viola Lasmana, “‘A Time of Opening’: Literary Practices in the Age of New Media and Digital Textuality,” *Interdisciplinary Humanities* 27, no. 1 (2010): 73, Academic Search Complete, doi: 52895756.

⁴ Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, eds. Claudia Johnson and Susan Wolfson (New York: Longman, 2003), 209.

Our first three epigraphs span the various types of reading that we will be discussing in this book as we explore adaptations of a traditional print codex into film and, then, most importantly, into digital transmedia narratives. *Transmedia Storytelling: Pemberley Digital's Adaptations of Jane Austen and Mary Shelley*, therefore, focuses not so much on the authors themselves but rather on the twenty-first century obsession with modernizing nineteenth-century works, evident in the success of the digital transmedia adaptations produced by Pemberley Digital.⁵ Our final epigraph will be familiar to Janeites: the quotation is from Jane Austen's well-known novel *Pride and Prejudice* (hereafter *P&P*). Elizabeth's emotions on viewing Fitzwilliam Darcy's Pemberley estate are perhaps similar to the experiences of present-day readers and viewers of Austen and Austen adaptations⁶ and help to explain Austen's enduring appeal: we can imagine ourselves in her world even as we are insurmountably distant from it. Recent Austen film adaptations that feature a protagonist who participates in Austen's world are extensions of and responses to this unfulfilled desire, which digital transmedia adaptations seek to fill by enabling viewers to engage with modernized versions of the narratives' worlds. This final epigraph is also relevant for Elizabeth's attention in *P&P* to gender, wealth, and power. After imagining herself elevated to the "mistress" of Pemberley and envisioning her authority over that estate, she "recollect[s] herself," remembering the limitations placed on even a wealthy wife's autonomy: "I should not have been allowed." In this introduction and the chapters that follow, we interrogate the ways in which digital transmedia adaptations of Austen and other nineteenth-century authors address modernized intersections of gender, wealth, and power.

We focus primarily on Pemberley Digital's oeuvre as a significant case study for the emerging field of transmedia storytelling. Pemberley Digital did not exist as a company when they started producing the series *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* (2012-2013, hereafter *LBD*), which was originally funded by co-creator Hank Green (one half of the influential Vlogbrothers)

⁵ Pemberley Digital is "an innovative web video production company that specializes in the adaptation of classic works onto the new media format. The company utilizes not only YouTube but other social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Pinterest, LinkedIn, LOOKBOOK, and others to tell an enriched and immersive story that transcends across multiple formats." "About," *Pemberley Digital*, accessed October 15, 2017, <http://www.pemberleydigital.com/about/>.

⁶ It is telling that an online community of Janeites terms itself "The Republic of Pemberley." "About Us," *The Republic of Pemberley*, accessed January 2, 2018, https://pemberley.com/?page_id=11874.

and a Kickstarter campaign, raising six hundred and seventy percent more than their original goal of \$60,000.⁷ Free from the legal and financial restrictions imposed by copyright—and supported by the accessibility of digital media platforms—adaptations have, as Linda Hutcheon quipped, “run amok.”⁸ Pemberley Digital’s influence has been particularly notable. Green divulged that he selected *P&P* for Pemberley Digital’s first transmedia adaptation at the urging of his wife and because it was in the public domain,⁹ highlighting how both men and women are eager to capitalize strategically on women’s fantasies about this bygone era.

The success of *LBD* led to both a partnership with the women-focused multi-channel network digital media company DECA¹⁰ part-way through *LBD*’s filming as well as the creation of the Pemberley Digital production company, named after the company owned by Darcy in *LBD*.¹¹ Pemberley Digital’s gamble proved successful, and *LBD* won an Emmy award in 2012. The following year they created their second transmedia adaptation of an Austen novel, *Welcome to Sanditon* (2013, hereafter *WtS*), taking license to incorporate characters from *LBD*, as they, and viewers, modernized, adapted, and completed Austen’s last, unfinished novel. Next, Pemberley Digital tackled Austen’s *Emma* in *Emma Approved* (2013-14, hereafter *EA*). For their—as of now—final adaption, they switched authors, adapting Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818) into *Frankenstein MD* (2014, hereafter *FMD*) in partnership with PBS Digital. The final series released on the Pemberley Digital website and channel is *The March Family Letters* (2014-15, hereafter *MFL*), an adaptation of Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women* (1868-1869), initially produced by the Canadian start-up Cherrydale Productions.

Importantly, Pemberley Digital also built an infrastructure to support and promote all of their transmedia series. At a grassroots level, Green recruited his followers, the self-proclaimed “Nerdfighters,” to follow *LBD*

⁷ Philiana Ng, “Starz Digital Media Repackaging Popular Web Series ‘Lizzie Bennet Diaries’ (Exclusive),” *The Hollywood Reporter*, last modified June 19, 2014, accessed June 1, 2017, <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/lizzie-bennet-diaries-web-series-713123>.

⁸ Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (New York: Routledge, 2013), xi.

⁹ Liz Shannon Miller, “Hank Green and Bernie Su’s Lizzie Bennet Diaries celebrates #darcyday,” last modified November 4, 2012, accessed January 2, 2018, <https://gigaom.com/2012/11/04/lizzie-bennet-diaries-hank-green-bernie-su/>.

¹⁰ DECA was established in 2007, creates and syndicates video content, and owns DECA Studios.

¹¹ Miller, “Hank Green and Bernie Su’s Lizzie Bennet Diaries celebrates #darcyday.”

when the series first launched, guaranteeing an initial audience for the show and the kind of cross-platform promotion that enables a series to “go viral.” Green also established a corporate franchise infrastructure. In 2010, he and his brother, the bestselling author John Green, cofounded VidCon (also located in Southern California) to promote and discuss the emerging world of online video. As explained on VidCon’s “About” page: “we believe that online video is the most important cultural force since the motion picture. We are in the very early, defining moments of an extremely powerful global force. VidCon is and strives to continue to be the physical center of that revolution.”¹² In *LBD* and *WtS*, the protagonists attend VidCon. Lizzie Bennet coyly asks: “Who came up with that?”¹³ Comments on the episode reveal that fans were in on the joke: the series effectively promotes VidCon and vice versa.

Green also created, with a partner, the website “DFTBA.com,” which stands for “Don’t Forget to Be Awesome,” a catchphrase coined by the Vlogbrothers; the site provides a venue to sell merchandise related to the series. DFTBA’s mission statement explains,

We felt like people wanted merchandise from YouTube creators, but we were unsatisfied with the quality of products and support other companies were offering. We wanted to help creators create full time, and we wanted to make sure that fans and communities could get high quality, cool stuff without any hassle or confusion. . . . We’ve helped dozens of creators fund their productions and go full time with their work. We’ve also paid out over \$400,000 to fan-art creators who designed products for our creators without anyone ever asking them to.¹⁴

The “Merchandise” links on the Pemberley Digital YouTube channel funnel viewers to DFTBA. Green’s company curates new pieces by asking creators to tag their products “DFTBA Records” in the hopes of having their handiwork selected by DFTBA; these tags also work to promote DFTBA itself. Cherrydale Productions cited this kind of marketing infrastructure as the central reason they relocated their web series from their own website to Pemberley Digital’s.¹⁵

¹² VidCon, “About,” accessed January 8, 2018, <http://vidcon.com/about/>.

¹³ The Lizzie Bennet Diaries, “Jane is Back and Mom Isn’t Happy—Ep. 24,” video, 3:20, June 28, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rv8BDVgICVw>.

¹⁴ Hank Green, “Mission Statement,” *Don’t Forget to be Awesome*, accessed December 15, 2017, <https://store.dftba.com/pages/mission-statement>.

¹⁵ “FAQ,” *Pemberley Digital*, <http://www.pemberleydigital.com/the-march-family-letters/faq/>.

In the chapters that follow, we chart the evolution of Pemberley Digital through close readings of each of their digital transmedia adaptations in order to interrogate the challenges to traditional adaptation theory posed by transmedia storytelling as well as the relationship between transmedia storytelling and consumer culture. The definition of transmedia storytelling is itself still a subject of critical debate, particularly in the context of adaptation. As Eckart Voigts notes, “scholars of transmedia storytelling . . . tend to dismiss or disregard adaptations,”¹⁶ and, in turn, as Voigts and Pascal Niklas argue, adaptation studies is still developing theoretical and critical approaches to transmedia storytelling.¹⁷ In part, the tension between adaptation and transmedia storytelling may register discomfort with the “literature to film” model that dominates much scholarship in adaptation studies. Although Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan suggest the “literary/screen nexus” is “the heart of adaptation studies,”¹⁸ they nonetheless broaden the study of adaptation from its earlier focus on the unidirectional remediation of literature into film into a more comprehensive “nexus.”¹⁹ In her influential *Theory of Adaptation*, Linda Hutcheon also shifts the terms of the debate by focusing on the enduring popularity of adaptations as a counterweight to the tendency to denigrate adaptations as inferior to the original text (which, as Hutcheon notes, may itself already be an adaptation of an earlier text).²⁰ Similarly, Timothy Corrigan suggests that instead of viewing adaptation as solely a process or a product, scholars are increasingly understanding it “as an act of reception in which the reading or viewing of that work is actively adapted as a specific form of enjoyment and understanding.”²¹ More baldly, Voigts claims, “adaptation studies must focus on what people do with texts, rather than how they process or interpret texts,”²² while Julie Sanders posits, “we need, perhaps, to effect a paramount shift away from the idea of authorial originality towards a more collaborative and societal understanding of the

¹⁶ Eckart Voigts, “Memes and Recombinant Appropriation: Remix, Mashup, Parody,” in *Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies* ed. Thomas Leitch (Oxford: Oxford UP 2017), 294.

¹⁷ Eckart Voigts and Pascal Nicklas, “Introduction: Adaptation, Transmedia Storytelling and Participatory Culture,” *Adaptation* 6, no. 2 (June 2013): 140.

¹⁸ Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan, *Screen Adaptation: Impure Cinema* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 12.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, xxvi-xxvii.

²¹ Timothy Corrigan, “Defining Adaptation,” in *Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies* ed. Thomas Leitch (Oxford: Oxford UP 2017), 23.

²² Voigts, “Memes,” 294.

production of art and the production of meaning.”²³ Thus, recent work in adaptation studies has broadened our understanding of what constitutes an adaptation in ways particularly relevant for transmedia storytelling, and especially for understanding Pemberley Digital’s shaping role in this emerging genre.

Scholarly attention to the reception of adaptations and what Henry Jenkins has influentially termed “convergence culture”²⁴ has raised compelling questions about the entire industry,²⁵ both in terms of the means of production and the role of consumers. These questions are further compounded by digital technologies, prompting Costas Constandinides to call for a theory of “post-celuloid adaptation,” which he defines as “the transition of familiar media content from a traditional medium—print, film, and television—to a new media object or a set of new media objects that embrace the concept of the main end product.”²⁶ Constandinides’s definition bridges traditional adaptation and transmedia storytelling, but focuses primarily on blockbuster films and their media paratexts:

The term post-celuloid adaptation itself coincides with certain strategies of cinematic events, mainly the promotion and distribution of blockbusters and of their collaborative media texts, which promote incompleteness and a financially driven collaborative authorship with the viewer/user, which is realized through the consuming of products that complete the seemingly elliptical narrative of the main product . . . a process that is a system of the cultural logic of convergence culture.²⁷

Much of the recent scholarship on transmedia storytelling similarly focuses on what Clare Parody has termed “franchise adaptation.”²⁸ As Voigts observes, “In spite of all the anthill rhetorics, crowdfunding multitudes and swarm intelligence, the dominant framework of production in popular culture is currently the franchise.”²⁹ For scholars of transmedia storytelling, these franchises are particularly compelling for the ways in which they collapse the hierarchy of original and copy, hypotext, hypertext, and

²³ Julie Sanders, *Adaptation and Appropriation* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 149.

²⁴ Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture* (New York: New York UP, 2006).

²⁵ See, for example, Simone Murray, *The Adaptation Industry: The Cultural Economy of Contemporary Literary Adaptation* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

²⁶ Costas Constandinides, *From Film Adaptation to Post-Celuloid Adaptation: Rethinking the Transition of Popular Narrative and Characters across Old and New Media* (New York: Continuum, 2010), 24.

²⁷ Constandinides, 24-25.

²⁸ Clare Parody, “Franchising/Adaptation,” *Adaptation*. 4.2 (2011): 210-18.

²⁹ Voigts “Memes,” 295.

paratext. Constantine Verevis suggests, “in the new millennium one can no longer claim an absolute distinction between feature film and other media forms,”³⁰ citing *Robocop* and *King Kong* as compelling examples of non-hierarchical transmedia storytelling. Yet, as Constandinides’s definition of post-celuloid adaptation makes clear, transmedia operates to engage the consumer in the franchise for the purposes of profit. Indeed, Marie-Laure Ryan suggests, “many of the phenomena regarded as instances of transmedia storytelling are more or less disguised forms of product placement.”³¹ The evolution of Pemberley Digital provides a productive site for exploring the tension between corporate franchise adaptation and fan-produced and -supported participatory culture.

If, on the one hand, corporate transmedia storytelling seeks to market the franchise through multiple media, it also proffers the opportunity for viewers to engage with the storyworld. While Jenkins and Lawrence Lessig offer optimistic visions of participatory culture and the Read/Write Literacy afforded by digital technology,³² Trebor Scholz offers a grimly Marxist reading of participatory culture: “social life on the internet has become the ‘standing reserve,’ the site for the creation of value through ever more inscrutable channels of commercial surveillance [F]ans produce fan fiction and give their creative work away for free in exchange for being ignored by the corporation that owns the original content.”³³ In contrast, Ryan joins Lynn Zubernis and Katherine Larsen in questioning the impact of fan content on transmedia systems: “far from mutually implying each other, participatory culture and the spreading of narratives across multiple media are really two distinct phenomena. They tend to be confused because the cult narratives that generate transmedia franchises also tend to inspire intense fan activity. Moreover, both have benefited tremendously from digital technology.”³⁴ In charting types of interaction in transmedia storytelling, Ryan distinguishes between “transient interactivity” and those that “create permanent, and consequently publicly available

³⁰ Constantine Verevis, “Remakes, Sequels, Prequels,” in *Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies* ed. Thomas Leitch (Oxford: Oxford UP 2017), 270.

³¹ Marie-Laure Ryan, “Transmedia Storytelling as Narrative Practice,” in *Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies* ed. Thomas Leitch (Oxford: Oxford UP 2017), 537.

³² Lawrence Lessig, *Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2008).

³³ Trebor Scholz, *Digital Labor: The Internet as Playground and Factory* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

³⁴ Ryan, 533. Zubernis and Larsen qtd in Voigts, 296.

content”³⁵ but ultimately concludes that “transmedia is no more hospitable to collective creation than single-medium projects.”³⁶ As Ryan’s taxonomy reveals, transient interactivity, such as playing a video game, leaves no trace in the transmedia system, but, in the service of narrative coherence, fan activity that leaves permanent traces in the system must remain parallel or subordinate to the “mothership,” or dominant narrative.

Despite Ryan’s pessimistic view of fan engagement, her taxonomy remains consistent with Henry Jenkins’s influential definition of transmedia storytelling, which requires not only multiple narratives across multiple media, but also suggests that each narrative should be independently coherent:

Transmedia storytelling represents a process where integral elements of a fiction get *dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels* for the purpose of creating *a unified and coordinated entertainment experience*. Ideally each medium makes its own *unique contribution* to the unfolding of the story.³⁷

As Ryan explains, “story arcs do not lend themselves easily to fragmentation and dispersion into multiple documents. . . . Transmedia can avoid this pitfall by telling a variety of autonomous stories or episodes, held together by the fact that they take place in the same storyworld. People are willing to look for information across multiple platforms because they are so in love with a given storyworld that they cannot get enough information about it.”³⁸ Ryan suggests that the prevalence of science-fiction and fantasy in transmedia storytelling may be attributed to the complexity of the storyworlds in such narratives.³⁹ For Ryan, viewer/users want to remain in science-fiction and fantasy storyworlds as a sort of return on the investment they have made in learning about the world, which is increased in that the world is significantly different from the viewer/user’s reality.

Drawing on Julie Sanders’s explanation of the appeal of canonical texts for traditional literature-to-film adaptations, we suggest that canonical nineteenth-century novels provide another compelling opportunity for transmedia storytelling because of the pleasures of remaining in and expanding the storyworld of a familiar novel, like Austen’s *Pride and*

³⁵ Ryan, 534.

³⁶ Ryan, 535.

³⁷ Henry Jenkins, “Transmedia Storytelling 101,” *Confessions of an ACA Fan*, Last modified March 21 2007, accessed July 31, 2017, http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2007/03/transmedia_storytelling_101.html.

³⁸ Ryan, 529.

³⁹ See, for example, Jenkins, Constandinides, and Verevis.

Prejudice. Austen, in particular, provides a built-in audience of fans (Janeites), thus addressing Vervesis's observation that "the number-one fact of the new low-budget (digital) cinema is that it is no longer impossible to get a film financed; instead, because of the sheer volume of work that gets made, it is increasingly difficult to get anyone to see it."⁴⁰ In an early Vlogbrothers post "Introducing Lizzie Bennet," Green raised this concern: would anyone watch *LBD*?⁴¹ But, as the use of the Vlogbrothers' YouTube channel indicates, Green was able to mobilize an existing fan-base to watch and promote the show. His partner Bernie Su later revealed that they had been approached by a corporate studio offering financial backing, but elected to pursue crowdfunding to retain creative control; their subsequent partnership with DECA was contingent on DECA's "hands-off" approach to the series, which, by that point, had already proven its success.⁴² Su's comments underscore the confidence he and Green felt about the potential of the series to generate viewers and thus revenue, which enabled them to reject corporate funding. Ironically, as we have suggested above, Pemberley Digital ultimately created a model very similar to the corporate franchise model they originally rejected.

We follow recent scholarship in adaptation studies⁴³ by seeing value in adaptation as autonomous but also, paradoxically, interdependent with the source text as well as with earlier adaptations. Transmedia adaptation is further complicated by concepts of remuneration both for the original author and the teams of individuals creating digital content within an uncharted and uncertain financial market. It is our contention that Pemberley Digital's emphasis on strong female protagonists reflects these paradigm shifts. In other words, even though Pemberley Digital's transmedia adaptations of Austen's and Shelley's novels appear feminist in their focus on female protagonists, the larger narratives expose a subtext of anxiety about unstable gender roles, financial vulnerability, and the undervaluation of career-specific skill sets that Donna Haraway predicted in "A Cyborg Manifesto." Nevertheless, as each adaptation is of a female-

⁴⁰ 276.

⁴¹ Vlog Brothers, "Introducing Lizzie Bennet," video, 3:43, April 12, 2012, accessed August 10, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEC27KwxmAE>.

⁴² Bernie Su (berniesu), "Lizzie Bennet BTS: Darcy Day," reply to "rachel kiley.tumblr.com: "somebody that you used to know: Zach Braff, Kickstarter, and the Lizzie Bennet Diaries," Bernie Tumbles, Tumblr post, accessed January 3, 2018, <https://berniesu.tumblr.com/post/34852494975/lizzie-bennet-bts-darcy-day>.

⁴³ See Thomas Leitch for a helpful overview of the history of adaptation studies: "Introduction," in *Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies* ed. Thomas Leitch (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2017), 1-22.

authored text, features female protagonists, and reaches a ninety percent female demographic,⁴⁴ our chapters take a feminist approach to the modernization and adaptation of these texts for the twenty-first century, acknowledging the complexity of the conversation while still celebrating the revolutionary spotlight on female professionals. After all, each of the Pemberley Digital adaptations passes the Bechdel Test,⁴⁵ yet each is also tasked with modernizing novels in which women's agency is limited. Hutcheon's concept of "complicitous critique"⁴⁶ is particularly useful for examining the ways in which Pemberley Digital's avowedly feminist intentions can be undercut by the conventions of the source material. As Robert Stam suggests,

Adaptations, in this sense, inevitably translate the competing languages and discourses typical of the past of the source text into the competing languages and discourses typical of the present of the adaptation... But this process does not have a predetermined political valence. On the one hand, as Julie Sanders puts it, adaptations can 'respond or write back to an informing original from a new or revised political and cultural position...' On the other hand, adaptations can reinscribe nostalgia for empire and patriarchy. What is certain is that stasis is impossible.⁴⁷

In the chapters that follow, we trace the tension between complicity and critique in Pemberley Digital's digital transmedia adaptations of Austen and Shelley.

In Chapter One: "Austenland and *Lost in Austen*: Plunging into Adaptations, Immersion, and Desire," we examine two adaptations of Austen that, we suggest, anticipate Pemberley Digital in their representation of the possibility of immersing oneself in Austen's world. Both adaptations feature a female protagonist who wants to escape the present and retreat to the Austen fantasy, to literally inhabit the Regency Era. We

⁴⁴ Bernie Su, quoted in Myles McNutt, "Cultural Interview: PBS Digital Studios' Frankenstein M.D. [Part One]," *Cultural Learnings*, last modified August 18, 2014, accessed January 15, 2018,

<https://cultural-learnings.com/2014/08/18/interview-frankenstein-md-bernie-su-anna-lore-pbs-digital-studios/>.

⁴⁵ "Bechdel Test." English, *Oxford Living Dictionaries*. Oxford University Press, accessed January 15, 2018.

https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/bechdel_test.

⁴⁶ Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of PostModernism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 22.

⁴⁷ Robert Stam, "Revisionist Adaptation: Transtextuality, Cross-Cultural Dialogism and Performative Infidelities," in *Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies* ed. Thomas Leitch (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2017), 247.

also attend to the significance of medium as we interrogate the differences between *Austenland* the novel and *Austenland* the film, and the methods by which all three texts adapt and remediate portions of Austen's source material to explore the power of the Austen fantasy. In different ways, the protagonists experience what Pemberley Digital promises its viewers: the opportunity to interact directly with Austen's characters, to comply with and thus prosper in a fictional yet interactive storyworld. While *Austenland* and *Lost in Austen* (hereafter *LiA*) contrast the past with the present, Pemberley Digital's transmedia adaptations of Austen's texts grant access to a modernized version of Austen's world via twenty-first-century media. The multiple online platforms do not require users to travel back in time, but instead afford opportunities to engage in the storyworld with their fellow users as well as the actors, both in and out of their roles.

Chapter Two: "*The Lizzie Bennet Diaries: (Ad)ressing and Monetizing Secrecy in Transmedia Storytelling*," focuses on Pemberley Digital's modern retelling of Austen's 1813 novel, *P&P*. The series contrasts analog and digital media to raise questions about privacy in the digital era. By distributing the narrative content across multiple platforms, the series expands the storyworld to include the perspectives of minor characters, most notably Lydia Bennet, but also to call viewers' attention to the ways in which editing and mise-en-scène shape our perception of characters. Finally, by recasting the marriage proposals as job offers and foregrounding the financial concerns facing digital media entrepreneurs, the series engages in a complicitous critique of Austen's source text that reveals the parallels between the challenges women faced in the nineteenth-century and those they are still confronted with in the present day.

Chapter Three: "*Welcome to Sanditon: Engaging Fans in Collaborative Writing*" explores how the real-time aspects of transmedia storytelling in Pemberley Digital's *WiS* affect the way audiences will experience Pemberley Digital's 2013 narrative in 2018 and beyond. Originally, *WiS* launched a Kickstarter campaign award in which fans (primarily female) could submit videos of themselves that were allegedly edited by Domino and then integrated into the main web series. Now, the web page contains broken links, the Kickstarter campaign is long over, and fans can no longer contribute videos nor interact with the actors. This example exposes one of transmedia storytelling's major limitations: the impermanence of immersive stories that require active and real time participation from fans. The series' laudable attempt to level the hierarchy between fan-generated and professionally-produced content ultimately reinforces this divide.

Pemberley Digital's modernized adaptation of Jane Austen's *Emma* is the focus of our fourth chapter, "*Emma Approved: Capitalizing on*

‘Woman’s Usual Occupations.’” *EA*’s Emma is a wealthy socialite whose “employment” is a start-up lifestyle coaching company financed by her father, with Knightley as her business partner. Despite the series’ progressive focus on female entrepreneurs, women-owned businesses are presented as poorly-run hobbies financed by male-helmed corporations, and the female protagonists are repeatedly asked to prioritize personal relationships over their careers. Paradoxically, while Emma’s lifestyle company is in financial peril, “Emma Approved” fashion generated significant revenue for Pemberley Digital through marketing partnerships.

Pemberley Digital’s first non-Austen adaptation, *FMD* is the subject of Chapter Five, “*Frankenstein MD: Mothering the Monster, Or Feminism and Bioethics.*” While Austen’s novels have remained consistently ripe for adaptation—*P&P* alone has been adapted for film at least once a decade since the 1940s and at least ten times in the last fifteen years—Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818) is perhaps the only other Romantic novel to rival Austen’s in frequency of adaptation. Yet while the web series rehearses the plot points and character relationships of Shelley’s novel, it simultaneously inverts almost every binary posed by the original: for example, *FMD* reverses the gender of most of the principal characters, which completely changes the gender politics of the text, both sexual and maternal. Without question, *FMD*’s Victoria is self-centered, but by refracting her egoism through gender, Pemberley Digital’s adaptation highlights the challenges faced by ambitious women, especially in male-dominated fields. By the end of the series, Victoria asks for social media to take an active instead of passive role that she initially imagined for her audience; however, the conclusion suggests ambivalence about whether or not this kind of non-patriarchal community responsibility is possible.

Our Conclusion, “The Future of Digital Storytelling: After Pemberley Digital” examines some of the most compelling transmedia adaptations of nineteenth-century British literature to follow the model set forth by Pemberley Digital. We focus on *Elinor and Marianne Take Barton*, *March Family Letters*, and *Classic Alice* as case studies with three different outcomes. Created and produced by university students, *Elinor and Marianne Take Barton* is a compelling adaptation of Austen’s *Sense and Sensibility* that demonstrates the democratizing possibilities of digital transmedia adaptations. Our reading of the *March Family Letters* examines how Pemberley Digital’s support in merchandise and marketing was a key factor in *MFL*’s decision to release the series through Pemberley Digital, while also citing their tradition of producing adaptations with “strong female leads,” a designation we have interrogated in the previous

chapters. Finally, we turn to *Classic Alice* to examine the use of the same immersive, metanarrative strategies used in *Austenland* and *LiA*. Taken together, these examples chart both the potential of and the challenges facing transmedia adaptations of “classic literature.”

In her influential “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” Laura Mulvey lays down a gauntlet: “It has been said that analyzing pleasure, or beauty, destroys it. That is the intention of this article.”⁴⁸ In analyzing the pleasure afforded by these digital transmedia adaptations, we do not seek to destroy it, nor to join the ranks of what Su tentatively describes as the “mean fandom”⁴⁹; however, we do seek to call attention to the more troubling paradoxes of complicitous critique, both in the adaptations themselves and in the means of production. Pemberley Digital has not produced a digital transmedia adaptation since *FMD* ended in 2014, but their model has been widely imitated, including their attention to nineteenth-century novels. Such adaptations have the potential to bring new audiences to nineteenth-century works and, at their best, offer illuminating new readings that expose the ideological limitations of the source text. Yet, as we argue in this book, they can also reinforce troubling models of gender, wealth, and power. Thus, we lay down a different gauntlet, a challenge that we hope Pemberley Digital and other producers of digital transmedia adaptations, professional and amateur, will take up: to use this emerging medium as a means to challenge, rather than reinforce, the limitations of nineteenth-century narrative forms and ideologies.

⁴⁸ Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” in *Feminisms REDUX: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, eds. Robyn Warhol-Down and Diane Price Herndl (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2009), 434.

⁴⁹ Katie Buenneke, “Why *Emma Approved* Didn’t Work as Well as *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* Did,” *LA Weekly*, April 7, 2014, <http://www.laweekly.com/arts/why-emma-approved-didnt-work-as-well-as-the-lizzie-bennet-diaries-did-4499200>.

CHAPTER ONE

AUSTENLAND AND *LOST IN AUSTEN* : PLUNGING INTO ADAPTATIONS, IMMERSION, AND DESIRE

Before turning to the digital transmedia adaptations produced by Pemberley Digital, we posit in this chapter an intermediary point between traditional literature-to-film adaptation and digital transmedia adaptations of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (hereafter *P&P*). We turn first to *Austenland*, examining both Shannon Hale's novel¹ and the film adaptation² as productive sites for thinking through the role of Austen in the lives of female viewers and readers, and how that role is mediated by adaptations, especially the 1995 BBC/A&E television miniseries starring Colin Firth as Mr. Darcy.³ Firth's Darcy also looms large in *Lost in Austen* (hereafter *LiA*),⁴ when the protagonist, having magically entered the world of the novel, asks Darcy to immerse himself in a pond: as he emerges, attired very similarly to Firth's Darcy, she quips, "I'm having a bit of a strange postmodern moment."⁵ Darcy's plunge in the pond is, of course, a scene invented for the 1995 film. It does not exist in *P&P* the novel,⁶ yet it has become central to the way contemporary readers and viewers think about

¹ Shannon Hale, *Austenland: A Novel* (New York City: Bloomsbury USA, 2007).

² *Austenland*, directed by Jerusha Hess, (2013; New York City: Fickle Fish Films/Moxie Pictures, Sony Pictures Classics/Stage 6 Films, 2014), DVD.

³ Lisa Hopkins and others have examined the female gaze as it operates in the 1995 *Pride and Prejudice*'s famous "wet shirt" Darcy scene. Lisa Hopkins, "Mr. Darcy's Body: Privileging the Female Gaze," in *Jane Austen and Hollywood* ed. Linda Troost and Sayre Greenfield (Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 1998), 11-21.

⁴ *Lost in Austen*, directed by Dan Zeff, (2008; UK: ITV/Image Entertainment, 2009), DVD.

⁵ *Lost in Austen*, "An Invitation to Pemberley," 01:56:20.

⁶ See, for example, Devoney Looser, "The Cult of *Pride and Prejudice* and Its Author," in *The Cambridge Companion to Pride and Prejudice* ed. Janet Todd (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), 174-85.

Mr. Darcy.⁷ In an interview with NPR, Shannon Hale explained why she dedicated *Austenland* to Firth:

It's really Colin Firth that this is all about. Because Jane Austen's books are fabulous, I mean, I really think probably *Pride and Prejudice* is the greatest novel ever written. But what changed was when that BBC version came out—that movie came out starring Colin Firth—and by taking away the narrator and just having the story, it became this most luscious romance and Colin Firth became Mr. Darcy. And he's embodied this romantic desire of so many women over the last decade.⁸

Firth's Darcy thus operates as a touchstone or shorthand for the Austen fantasy as it appeals to a female fandom. Hale's protagonist Jane Hayes reveals the gender divide at work here: "I don't think I could explain it to a man. If you were a woman, all I'd have to say is Colin Firth in a wet shirt, and you'd say 'Ahhh!'"⁹ Readers who identify with the female protagonist—who would reply "Ahhh!"—are afforded the opportunity to enter Austen's storyworld. Although neither *Austenland* nor *LiA* are direct adaptations of *P&P*, for the reader/viewer part of the pleasure is in recognizing the parallels between each adaptation's female protagonist and Elizabeth Bennet; by extension, we anticipate her eventual union with each stand-in Darcy character. Yet both adaptations also interrogate the power of the Austen fantasy for female readers and viewers by staging the contemporary Janeite protagonist's encounter with Austen's storyworld. Hale's novel and both films ask: What happens when Janeites get what they think they most desire, the opportunity to live in a Jane Austen novel?

In each of the works we examine in this chapter, the protagonist is given the opportunity to escape the twenty-first century and immerse herself in Austen's England. Each heroine's twenty-first-century life is

⁷ See Henriette-Juliane Seeliger for a compelling discussion of why Firth's Darcy was so successful: "Looking for Mr. Darcy: The Role of the Viewer in Creating a Cultural Icon," *POL* 37, no. 1 (Winter 2016), <http://www.jasna.org/publications/persuasions-online/vol37no1/seeliger/>.

⁸ Linda Wertheimer, "Flirting with Fiction and Fantasy in 'Austenland,'" *NPR Books*, June 23, 2007,

<http://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=11259913>.

⁹ Hale, *Austenland*, 77.

represented as profoundly unsatisfying,¹⁰ whereas Austen novels and Austen film adaptations, and especially *P&P*, provide an imagined space in which her unmet romantic desires could be fulfilled. Nevertheless, the pleasures of reading Austen or viewing a film adaptation are represented as insufficient compared to the opportunity to literally inhabit Austen's world. In *Austenland*, Jane Hayes books a trip to Pembroke Park, a Georgian country house turned hotel that offers its guests the opportunity to live as Austen's characters did, replete with period-appropriate food, clothing, and leisure activities, as well as male actors to dutifully assume the roles of Austen's archetypal men.¹¹ In *LiA*, Amanda Price steps through a magical doorway in her bathroom and finds herself in the middle of the plot of *P&P*, which is no longer fictional, but transpires in real time with real people. The tension between Austen's narrative, which is fixed in print and unchanging, and the protagonists' experience of these "Austenlands," Austen's storyworld made real and thus changeable, operates to critique the Austen fantasy.

We draw a line between Austen texts and the Austen fantasy, which we define as the reappropriation of Austen's works and their adaptations as signifiers of unmet desires. Suzanne Pucci and James Thompson, Devoney Looser, Claudia Johnson, Rachel Brownstein, and Juliette Wells¹² have all examined Jane Austen's enduring place in popular culture, and the ways in which the Austen fantasy can sometimes overwhelm the novels themselves. As Hale notes, the remediation of novel to film poses particular problems given Austen's use of free indirect

¹⁰ Both protagonists express dissatisfaction with their love lives. Both are also represented as working acceptable but uninspiring jobs—Jane Hayes is in a nondescript office cubicle; Amanda Price's workspace is less isolated, but the film suggests that her work is not intellectually engaging by showing her smiling and conversing with clients while her real thoughts, which have nothing to do with her job, are shared via voice over.

¹¹ It is worth noting that the characters do not assume the names of actual Austen characters: Henry Nobley may be like Darcy, but he is never called Darcy. In this way, *Austenland* seems less interested in Austen novels themselves, but rather in their cultural power as a signifier of unmet desire.

¹² Suzanne R. Pucci and James Thompson, eds. *Jane Austen and Co.: Remaking the Past in Contemporary Culture*. (Albany: SUNY P, 2003.); Devoney Looser, *The Making of Jane Austen* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2017); Claudia Johnson, *Jane Austen: Cults and Cultures* (Chicago, U Chicago P, 2012); Rachel Brownstein, *Why Jane Austen?* (New York: Columbia UP, 2011); Juliette Wells, *Everybody's Jane: Austen in the Popular Imagination* (New York: Continuum, 2011). See also Deborah Yaffe's *Among the Janeites: A Journey Through the World of Jane Austen Fandom* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013).

discourse: The flattening of perspective necessitated by the shift in medium turns Austen's often ironic perspective into "luscious romance."¹³ Deborah Cartmell similarly suggests that adaptations of *P&P* tend to elide Jane Austen and Elizabeth Bennet, turning the protagonist into a mouthpiece for Austen's narrator and sometimes for Austen herself. For Cartmell, this is one indication of *P&P* as a blueprint for "[a]daptation the genre, [which] self-consciously appeals primarily to women."¹⁴ George Bluestone's claim that *Pride and Prejudice* offers a template for Hollywood romantic comedies can be read more broadly as evidence of *P&P* as a pattern for media aimed at female audiences. Tania Modleski has similarly noted Austen's importance as a model for romance novels and "chick lit," observing that Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001), often considered the first work of "chick lit," is also, of course, a re-telling of *P&P*.¹⁵ Fielding's fabulously successful novel spawned sequels and a film franchise, suggesting the modern commercial power of the Austen fantasy. The film adaptation of *Bridget Jones's Diary* features Colin Firth as "Mark Darcy." Yet, in the film adaptation of *Bridget Jones's Diary*, Bridget is ignorant of both Austen's *P&P* and Firth's performance as Darcy in the 1995 BBC/A&E adaptation. The viewers' extradiegetic pleasure in drawing parallels is unavailable to Bridget herself, which in turn reinforces the divide between diegetic and non-diegetic pleasures in the Firth-as-Darcy trope. In contrast, *Austenland* and *LiA* collapse the distance between the reader/viewer and the female protagonist by establishing a shared knowledge of Austen's *P&P* and Firth's Darcy. The experience of the reader/viewer thus mirrors that of the protagonist as both recognize the ways in which the diegetic world maps onto or departs from Austen's source text. In this sense, both novel and film adaptations anticipate transmedia adaptations by blurring the lines between Austen texts, the Austen fantasy, and the lives of the protagonists.

¹³ Wertheimer, "Flirting with Fiction."

¹⁴ Deborah Cartmell, "Pride and Prejudice and the Adaption Genre," *Journal of Adaption in Film & Performance* 3, no. 3 (2010): 227. doi: 10.1386/jafp.3.3.227_1.

¹⁵ Tania Modleski, *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women* (Hamden: Archon Books/Shoe String Press, 1982), xxi.

***Austenland*: Adapting Written into Audiovisual Medium**

Shannon Hale's *Austenland*¹⁶ makes full use of its print medium to call attention to the ways the act of narration necessarily mediates that which is being narrated. In imitation of Austen, Hale interjects her own "funny, insightful, biting narrator"¹⁷ to prevent the reader from becoming too immersed in Jane Hayes's point of view.¹⁸ The chapter titles remind the reader of the gap between the representation of events and the events themselves by calling attention to the passage of time, marking the amount of time left until the narrative catches up to the present day.¹⁹ The preceding vignettes recount Jane's previous "boyfriends,"²⁰ underscoring to readers that Jane's perspective on romance is flawed. Jane's great aunt and her best friend share their courtship narratives with Jane, providing "real" counterparts to her Darcy fantasy. Jane also reconsiders her own point of view by reexamining previous events as she tries to distinguish reality from fantasy. Thus, the novel stages the tension between the present and the past, doubling Jane's romantic history impinging on the present with the Austen fantasy clashing with twenty-first century reality.

The prologue of Hale's novel revises the well-known opening salvos of Austen's *P&P* and *Emma*, but it is unclear whether we are reading Jane's perspective of herself or the narrator's perspective of Jane; the effect is to leave it ambiguous whether readers should be imagining Jane as an Elizabeth Bennet- or Emma-like figure, or whether Jane mistakenly imagines herself this way. Sometimes the reader is included in an all-encompassing "we"; for example, the narrator describes Jennifer Ehle as

¹⁶ Hale's title certainly evokes the "Disneyland" quality of Pembroke Park, but may also allude to Ellen and Constance Hills' use of the term. See Claudia Johnson, *Jane Austen's Cults and Cultures*, 74-5 and Devoney Looser's *The Making of Jane Austen*, 8-9, 237, for further readings of the Hills' use of this term.

¹⁷ Hale, *Austenland*, 1.

¹⁸ In a lovely metafictional moment, after the narrator has summarized Jane's conversation with Miss Heartwright in a series of brief parentheses—"They chitchatted—weather (breezy and damp)," etc.—we shift to Jane's perspective: "Jane thought she understood why Austen often left these conversations up to the narrator and spared the reader the grotesquerie of having to follow it word-by-word." Hale, *Austenland*, 93.

¹⁹ The first few chapters are entitled "1 year ago," "6 months ago," "3 weeks and 1 day ago, until progressing into the narrative's present, with each chapter preceded by a short vignette about an ex-boyfriend, for example, "First love: Alex Ripley, age four/day 1."

²⁰ Jane's best friend questions this term by noting that Jane refers to anyone she has ever been on a date with as a "boyfriend."

“the Elizabeth Bennet *we* had imagined all along”²¹ (emphasis ours) or directly addresses the reader: “You know, the BBC double DVD version.”²² At other moments, the narrator’s and Jane’s perspectives are decidedly separate. The narrator insists, “that pesky movie version was the culprit,” and distinguishes Austen’s novel from the BBC adaptation: “Stripped of Austen’s funny, insightful, biting narrator, the movie became a pure romance.”²³ Here, the *Austenland* narrator’s ability to criticize the 1995 adaptation differentiates her perspective from Jane’s. Jane is too enmeshed in the romance of the film to realize the danger of losing the Austen narrator’s mediating perspective.

In the beginning of *Austenland*, Jane reflects that her obsession with the fictional Darcy can be traced back to her desire to insulate herself from the reality that relationships can be fleeting or end unpleasantly. Jane confesses, “I channel all of my hope into an idea. To someone who can’t reject me because he isn’t real.”²⁴ In a complex layering of perspectives, the narrator reports that Jane had been to a therapist, briefly, a few years ago, and “come out of it understanding one thing about herself: At a very young age, she had learned how to love out of Austen. And according to her immature understanding at the time, in Austen’s world there were no such thing as a fling. Every romance was intended to lead to marriage.”²⁵ While Jane claims that she understands this “one thing about herself,”²⁶ she feels powerless to change it, despite the concerns of her mother, her great aunt, and her best friend. Jane appears to want to go back in time not only chronologically but also emotionally, to be the young woman who is rescued by a man both economically and romantically. Jane is seeking a romantic, heteronormative relationship that matches her understanding of Austen’s fictional paradigm. She went to Pembroke Park not only “to find out if she could let her fantasy of Mr. Darcy die at last,”²⁷ but also because “I’ve only been half myself lately, and I thought coming here would let me work this part out of me so I could be me again.”²⁸ Giving up the Austen fantasy may return Jane to herself and allow her to recognize that “fantasy is not practice for what is real—fantasy is the opiate of women.”²⁹

²¹ Hale, *Austenland*, 1.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Hale, *Austenland*, 2

²⁴ Hale, *Austenland*, 14.

²⁵ Hale, *Austenland*, 18.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Hale, *Austenland*, 179.

²⁸ Hale, *Austenland*, 52.

²⁹ Hale, *Austenland*, 180.

Paradoxically, only by living the Austen fantasy is Jane able to accept: “Real or not, Martin had showed her that contented spinsterhood was not an option. And real or not, Mr. Nobley had helped her say no to Mr. Darcy.”³⁰ Jane’s immersion experience released her from holding onto fictional illusions.

In contrast to the solitary experience of watching the 1995 *P&P* adaptation and fantasizing about Colin Firth in the “tight little breeches that had driven Jane’s imagination mad on many an uneventful Tuesday night,”³¹ Jane’s time at Pembroke Park requires she interact with others. In doing so, Jane realizes the limitations of fantasy. While she is initially delighted to see men in Regency costume and hopes to find herself immersed in an Austen plot by dressing up in Regency clothing, thinking, “Be the dress. . . . Be the bonnet,”³² Jane is almost immediately reminded of the gap between fantasy and reality. After catching sight of herself in the mirror dressed in her Regency clothes, Jane thinks, “What a crackpot.”³³ Note that the dress is not the problem, it is herself—“the ‘crackpot’—the person who desires to reenact a bygone era, and a fictional version of it at that. During her initial dance lesson with the undergardener, a similar moment of self-awareness occurs. After commenting that the very nature of the dance would have allowed Darcy and Elizabeth time to converse, Jane realizes her error: “Blunder, Jane thought, glancing at her partner. What must he think of her? A woman who memorized Austen books and played dress-up? She’d enjoyed a bit of flirting as they danced, but she was too embarrassed to meet his eyes again.”³⁴ The “flirting” she describes is limited to her partner smiling at her and touching her as required by the dance itself, thus highlighting the ways in which Jane has interpreted her partner’s mandated behavior as suggestive. Importantly, however, she does recognize that her “blunder” is social: exposing her Austen knowledge reminds him of the roles they are playing. It is unlikely that the undergardener would forget that she is a customer at Pembroke Park³⁵; subsequently, we suggest that the undergardener, like the mirror, forces her to recognize her fantasy *as* fantasy. She revisits the encounter in her room that evening: “She grimaced as she thought about the dance, remembering how fun it had been until she’d spoiled it at the end. She

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Hale, *Austenland*, 39.

³² Hale, *Austenland*, 53.

³³ Hale, *Austenland*, 62.

³⁴ Hale, *Austenland*, 30.

³⁵ Indeed, many of her later conversations with the undergardener are focused on the rules of the resort.