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'Rears' and 'Vices' in Mansfield Park

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Before the First World War Winston Churchill, then serving in Asquith's Government as First Lord of the Admiralty, was criticised by a senior officer for one of his radical reforms. The officer's objection was that Churchill's proposal ran counter to 'naval tradition'. 'Don't talk to me about naval tradition', Churchill replied, 'It's nothing but rum, sodomy and the lash'.[1] The first and last of these traditions come directly into *Mansfield Park*, in the language of Lieutenant Price. Whether Jane Austen also refers to 'sodomy' is another matter. The evidence, for what it is, comes in Chapter 6 of Volume I, when Mary Crawford speaks of her home in London with her uncle and guardian, Admiral Crawford, a household in which she became 'acquainted with a circle of admirals. Of *Rears*, and *Vices*, I saw enough. Now, do not be suspecting me of a pun, I entreat'[2] – a pun based on the ranking of Admirals, with Rear-Admirals and Vice-Admirals.

The '*Rears'* pun was a familiar joke in naval families. A very similar joke comes in one of Jane Austen's letters to Cassandra. At a whist party in Bath, she noticed a Miss Langley, 'like any other short girl with a broad nose & wide mouth, fashionable dress, & exposed bosom'; and sitting next to Miss Langley was Henry Stanhope, a distant cousin of the Austens, recently promoted *Rear*-Admiral: 'a gentlemanlike Man', Jane Austen writes, 'but then his legs are too short, & his tail too long'.[3] The pun here is on the Admiral's 'tail', this being his prominent backside and his naval queue or pig-tail, sported by sailors of the old school. Jane Austen permitted herself this joke because she was writing a personal letter meant only for her sister and not for family consumption. Mary Crawford's offence is one of bad taste, not only in passing a similar '*Rears'* joke about the naval acquaintance of Admiral Crawford but making it in public, in the company of Edmund Bertram and Fanny Price, with whom she is only recently acquainted. Just as much in bad taste is the reference to '*Vices'*, which can be understood as pointing to the state of the Admiral's adulterous household – an insider's view, it might be said, since Mary had been brought up there, the Admiral's niece and ward.

However, a number of critics and biographers, beginning with Bridget Brophy in 1968, have taken '*Rears*, and *Vices'* to be a reference to sodomy, a line followed by Park Honan in his 1987 biography of Jane Austen, reprinted in 1996. In 1994, Joseph Lew called Mary's 'pun' a 'shamelessly open reference to homosexual sodomy'; his essay was subsequently reprinted in the Norton Critical Edition of *Mansfield Park*, 1998; and a student readership was also addressed in the 1996 Penguin Classics edition of the novel: this 'rather filthy joke draws attention to the Royal Navy's wartime reputation for homosexual activity'. To squash any uncertainty in this matter, an article in the December 2000 issue of *Nineteenth-Century Studies*

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declared that ‘Mary really does mean sodomy’, an assertion picked up by *The Chronicle of Higher Education* for 17 August 2001, where it remains available on the *Chronicle* web-site, rephrased as ‘Miss Crawford clearly alludes to sodomy’, and picked up again by the web-site of the *Independent Woman’s Forum* a few days later.[4]

But is the allusion so inescapable, the reference so certain? My argument is that Mary Crawford’s ‘pun’ means nothing of the sort. Not that Jane Austen was necessarily averse to joking about sodomy. In the privacy of her letters to Cassandra, of which only a fraction have come down to us, she was capable of joking freely on unpleasant subjects of all kinds: from bad breath and blindness to pregnancy, still birth, abortion and death. However, my objection to the ‘sodomy’ interpretation has nothing to do with Jane Austen’s sensibilities or her sense of humour, and everything to do with the social and literary culture and conventions within which she was writing and within which *Mansfield Park* was read when the novel came out in the Summer of 1814. By this time, the broad humour of Fielding, Smollett and Sterne was no longer acceptable in polite society; and polite society, otherwise the gentry, was the social-cultural grouping to which Jane Austen and her readers belonged, and which she took as her subject-matter. Its culture and conventions allowed no place for joking about sodomy. This taboo prevailed even in the best-known comic novel of the period – a naval novel, as it happens, *The Post-Captain* by John Davis, published anonymously in 1805 and much reprinted. Standing in the robust tradition of Smollett, Davis makes great play with the sexual *double-entendre* latent in naval slang and terminology; but within this coarseness, the social and literary niceties are observed. No risqué jokes are placed in the mouths of women and throughout the book there is not a hint of homosexuality. For this, of all, was the forbidden topic and was not to be found even in the trashiest novels of the period. Other than in clandestine pornography, mild titillation and comic indecency were the limit.

The genre in which Jane Austen was writing was remote from the comic tradition of *The Post-Captain*. Jane Austen’s was the Woman’s Novel: fiction written by women, primarily for women, about the woman’s world, domestic in focus, its repeated story the heroine’s path to marriage. No prospective reader was left in any doubt. That *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) provided morally safe and sanitary reading was guaranteed by the ethical phrasing of its title, which signalled its sub-genre: the romantic education of a heroine or heroines. A further guarantee was provided by the title-page announcement that this was ‘A NOVEL’ ‘BY A LADY’. *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) built on this, with the title-page announcement: ‘BY THE AUTHOR OF “SENSE AND SENSIBILITY”’. In turn, *Mansfield Park* (1814) was doubly certified. Carrying the names of both the earlier novels, its character was established within this particular tradition. Although some male writers sailed under female colours, by 1811 a novel announced as the work of ‘A LADY’ could be counted on to be ladylike in its freedom from indecent humour. How successfully Jane Austen answered these expectations is shown in the comments of contemporary reviewers: *Sense and Sensibility* with its ‘excellent lesson’ and ‘useful moral’, its ‘sober and salutary maxims for the conduct of life’; *Pride and Prejudice*, with its ‘very unexceptionable tendency’; *Emma*, ‘amusing, inoffensive and well principled’, its ‘language … chaste and correct’, a novel offering ‘harmless amusement’; Richard Whately, the future Archbishop of Dublin, was delighted to be able to commend a novelist ‘so evidently a Christian writer’, with some of her ‘best moral lessons’ to be found in *Mansfield Park*; and in 1818 it was *Blackwood’s Magazine* which congratulated Jane Austen on her ‘fine sense … delicate humour … and a tone of gentleness and purity that are almost unequalled’ (in this review, her ‘purity’ is mentioned more than once), while the *British Critic* could ‘safely recommend’ *Northanger Abbey*.[5]

These were issues particularly sensitive in the early years of the nineteenth century. The boundaries of the mentionable were becoming more tightly drawn, partly as a reaction from the freedoms of the eighteenth century, partly under Evangelical pressure, partly as a distancing from the excesses of the Prince of Wales and his circle. The 'March of Modesty' (as Southey called it) made rapid progress[6]. A milestone along the way was Bowdlerisation in the form of the *Family Shakespeare* of 1807. Designed by Harriet, the sister of Thomas Bowdler, for reading aloud in the family circle, its four volumes provided a text of twenty 'of the most unexceptionable plays', now freed from blasphemy, swearing and 'all indecent expressions'. The plays were rendered fit for the 'innocent mind'. All traces of the 'indelicate' were removed, those many speeches in which Shakespeare had been tempted 'to purchase laughter at the price of decency'.[7]

Observers such as Coleridge and Byron watched the 'March of Modesty' with concern. By 1811, Coleridge thought that 'the greater purity of morality' had been 'carried to excess', and he wondered how many heads of household would now

> venture to read a number of the Spectator, or of the Tatler,
> to his wife and daughters, without first examining it to make
> sure that it contains no word which might, in our day,
> offend the delicacy of female ears, and shock feminine
> susceptibility?[8]

In the same year, Byron met this rising tide of puritanical correctness with a joke:

> In such an age, when all aspire to taste;
> The dirty language, and the noisome jest,
> Which pleased in Swift of yore, we now detest.[9]

Yet, even for Byron, it was a moment for caution. He judged it wise to cover his tracks, to change the direction of his affections in Cantos One and Two of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, published in 1812. Looking back on his schooldays at Harrow, he chose to remove all reference to his 'beloved playmate' and the 'boyish minions of unhallowed love'.[10]

Fiction, too, was subject to the same pressures. The objections were of long standing. Voiced in the late 1790s, they held a particularly sexual slant. The young female reader of novels was at risk: 'Her mind will be soon debauched by licentious descriptions, and lascivious images … her mind will become a magazine of trifles and follies, of rather impure and wanton ideas'.[11] Early in the nineteenth century, this brand of reading matter found a subject ready to hand in the antics of the Royal Family. The Prince and Princess of Wales lived apart and their separate lives generated a scandalising literature. One group of novels focused on the Prince, his Court, and his mistresses; a second, on the 'delicate investigation', the Secret Commission of Enquiry set up in 1806 to look into the alleged *in*delicate behaviour of the Princess with her raffish circle at Montague House, Blackheath. Immediately following the Enquiry, which found the Princess innocent yet imprudent, there came a second spate of novels treating the scandals of high society, the *amours* of the *beau monde* served up for popular consumption. The conservative backlash was swift, the substance of its case neatly conveyed by the novelist Mary Ann Hanway in the Preface to *Falconbridge Abbey* (1809):

> under the seductive title of fashionable novels, are produced licentious
> and profligate publications, fraught with the most vivid descriptions of
> love, and its effects on our conduct, exemplified by baneful examples,
> pourtrayed in language warm, flowing, and dangerous as the lava of

> Vesuvius, that, in its destructive course, sweeps away alike the humble
> cottage and the stately palace …[12]

Elsewhere, the conservative reaction took the form of moral and moralising fiction. According to its 'seductive' title – and titles were heavily coded[13] – the *Tales of Fashionable Life* (1809), by Maria Edgeworth, seemed to promise yet more high-society scandal. But the tales themselves are decidedly moral tales, attacking the follies of 'fashionable life' and conveying principled advice. It was in this new tradition of recognisably superior, moral and polite entertainment that Jane Austen was so warmly welcomed by her contemporary readers and reviewers.

Nonetheless, even Jane Austen could lag behind in the 'March of Morality'. In the space of two years, between the first and second editions of *Sense and Sensibility* in 1811 and 1813, either Jane Austen herself, or the publisher Thomas Egerton, removed the mildest of jokes about 'a natural daughter'.[14] Egerton also published *Mansfield Park*, praising the novel in particular for its 'Morality';[15] and on commercial grounds, if no other, he would never have permitted such an outrageous joke as a sodomy pun to see the light of day. Nor would John Murray II, who brought out the second edition of *Mansfield Park* in February 1816. Murray was jealous of his reputation as a literary publisher. He took a firm line against indecency, and would not have hesitated to remove Mary's pun if it had carried the faintest whisper of salaciousness. Moreover, quite apart from his own feelings, Murray was an official publisher to the Admiralty, a position of responsibility and profit which he would not have jeopardised with material so directly offensive to his naval patrons. Under the Articles of War, the Navy's disciplinary and penal code, sodomy was an extreme offence, one of the few for which the punishment was death. It was also regarded as unmentionable. Our prime authority for this is Blackstone. In his *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765-69), he excuses himself, for his own sake and the reader's, from dwelling

> any longer on a subject, the very mention of which is a disgrace to
> human nature. It will become more eligible to imitate in this respect
> the delicacy of our English law, which treats it, in its (*sic*) very
> indictments, as a crime not fit to be named …[16]

Reporting a court martial in 1807, the Navy's professional journal, the *Naval Chronicle* – which circulated amongst naval families as well - made a point of avoiding the word itself, echoing Blackstone in calling it that 'horrid and abominable crime which decency forbids us to name'[17]. All this casts doubt on Park Honan's suggestion that, in this particular, Jane Austen's brother Francis 'helped her to know the naval mind in its discussable aspects'[18]. This, of all the possible 'aspects', represented the notably *un*discussable.

Fortunately, we have an accurate measure of the point at which the Austens themselves drew the line. In January 1807, Mrs Austen, Jane and their companion Martha Lloyd (later to become Francis Austen's second wife), were together reading *Alphonsine, ou la Tendresse maternelle*, a novel by Mme de Genlis, published both in French and English the previous year. The first twenty pages were enough to put them off. It was not just the 'bad translation'. What left the household 'disgusted', as Jane reported to Cassandra, were the novel's 'indelicacies'[19]. The 'indelicacies' of the story were not those of physical or graphic detail but of the circumstances set out in the opening chapter: the refusal of Don Pedro's fifteen-year-old bride to consummate the marriage and his discovery some months later, the marriage still unconsummated despite his renewed attempts, of his girl-wife sleeping in the arms of her eighteen-year-old page. If these 'indelicacies' were sufficiently offensive to leave the Austens

‘disgusted’, can we believe that, several years later, in a colder climate, Jane Austen would go on not only to perpetrate a homosexual joke but to allow it to pass the lips of a woman?

In the crucial scene in *Mansfield Park* Edmund Bertram and Fanny Price conduct a *post mortem* on Mary Crawford’s ‘pun’. Edmund finds it indecorous and tasteless, but he detects nothing gross, nothing outrageous. Both of them catch a lurking indelicacy in Mary’s language, yet neither react as if some unspeakable indecency has struck their ears. It could be argued that Fanny is simply unaware, protected by her innocence. But Edmund, aged 24, a product of Eton and Oxford, cannot be supposed to share his cousin’s ignorance of the world. However, when Edmund and Fanny discuss Mary’s disclosure of her uncle’s way of life in London, Edmund goes no further than to find it ‘not quite right’ and ‘very indecorous’, while Fanny’s astonishment, like Edmund’s, is not at Mary’s ‘pun’ but at her speaking so freely of the Admiral’s private life. The ‘impropriety’, as Edmund comments, is in ‘making’ her ‘opinions public.’[20]

The issue here is one of what Jane Austen would describe as ‘propriety’, or ‘decorum’: of social, cultural and literary decorum. None of these give us the freedom to interpret the ‘*Rears’* and ‘*Vices’* pun as signifying sodomy. The point is worth contesting, because the ‘Rears’ and ‘Vices’ pun has become caught up in something much larger and more damaging than a matter of purely local interpretation; it has become involved in a wider campaign to promote the idea of a bawdy or dirty-joke Jane Austen. In December 2000, Jill Heydt-Stevenson claimed to have discovered a layer of ‘erotically charged allusions, puns and *double entendres* throughout’ Jane Austen’s ‘novels and Juvenilia’,[21] a sub-stratum of humour which draws upon innuendo and the vulgarisms of contemporary slang, all of it sexually inflected. To illustrate her case, she heads her essay with two such examples:

> In Pride and Prejudice (1813) Caroline tries to engage Darcy with a powerful metonymy of phallic power: ‘I am afraid you do not like your pen. Let me mend it for you. I mend pens remarkably well.’ Apparently recognising the significance of her sexual allusion, Darcy playfully invokes auto-eroticism when he answers, ‘Thank you – but I always mend my own.’ Mrs Clay, in Persuasion (1818), exclaims: ‘I have known a good deal of the [navy]; and besides their liberality, they are so neat and careful in all their ways!’22

(The italicisation of *known* is the critic’s.)

In interpreting these quotations – the first from chapter 10 of *Pride and Prejudice*, the second from chapter 3 of *Persuasion* – Professor Heydt-Stevenson employs a novel method, glossing Jane Austen’s vocabulary with the *double entendres* of low-life slang. According to Partridge, ‘pen’ for penis was a joke dating from the late sixteenth-century and current into the early twentieth-century.[23] Its appearance in literature is probably most familiar from the last act of the *Merchant of Venice*. Here, Shakespeare treats his audience to a virtuoso display of sexual punning, a joke underlined by the presence on stage of Portia and Nerissa in male disguise. Hence, Gratiano’s threat to ‘mar the young clerk’s pen’ (v.i.207), i.e. Nerissa’s. Was Jane Austen likely to have introduced this style of theatrical, groundling humour, in which sexuality plays such a prominent part, into a work set so firmly in the category of polite fiction? That the phallic pen does not belong here is a discrimination amply borne out by the scene at the White Hart, towards the end of *Persuasion*. This provides a highly suggestive sequence of ‘pen’ events. First, Anne Elliot feels a ‘nervous thrill all over her’ as she sees that ‘Captain Wentworth’s pen’ has ‘ceased to move’ (p. 231). A few minutes later, her attention is caught

by the ‘slight noise’ of his ‘pen’ falling down (p. 233); and, almost immediately afterwards, she joins Captain Harville in discussing the advantages of authorship enjoyed by men: ‘the pen has been in their hands’, she declares (p. 234). To use Heydt-Stevenson’s terminology, can there be a further ‘powerful metonymy of phallic power’ in the novel’s last chapter, where Sir Walter Elliot prepares his ‘pen’ for an ‘insertion’, the entry of Anne’s and Wentworth’s marriage in ‘the volume of honour’ (p. 249)? The answer is no. The succession of ‘pens’ at the White Hart has as little to do with phallic metonymy as the pen with which Darcy writes the letter to his sister. The sole example of metonymy in all this is Anne’s reference to the ‘pen’ as having been in the ‘hands’ of men. The metonymy here is not of ‘phallic power’ but gender power.

Heydt-Stevenson’s second example is ‘known’, rendered in a sexual sense. Once again, the familiar literary occurrences are in Shakespeare, notably the Duke’s cross-examination of Mariana in the last act of *Measure for Measure*, where Mariana constructs an elaborate and evasive riddle around the sexual and non-sexual meanings of ‘know’, confessing that ‘I have known my husband yet my husband knows not/That ever he knew me’ (v.i.182-3). Heydt-Stevenson’s sexual ‘known’ gives Mrs Clay the identity of a superior naval prostitute, presumably catering for ‘neat and careful’ officers. But anyone who goes beyond this instance faces a bewildering task. In all the novels, plus *Lady Susan*, *The Watsons* and *Sanditon*, there are no fewer than 332 more uses of ‘known’ to be tested, not to speak of the cognates ‘know’, ‘knows’ and ‘knowledge’, amounting to a further 1700. What happens if we try the Heydt-Stevenson method on *Pride and Prejudice*? From a small selection, it appears that Jane Bennet has been sleeping with Bingley from the moment of their first meeting (p. 22); that Mr Collins has been sleeping with Lady Catherine de Bourgh (p. 83); that Caroline Bingley is bi-sexual and hoping ‘to enjoy many returns of the delightful intimacy’ she has ‘known’ with Jane Bennet (p. 116); that a lesbian network exists, involving both Bingley sisters, Jane Bennet and Georgina Darcy (p. 137); that Mrs Gardiner was once the mistress of Darcy’s father (p. 143). And in *Persuasion* it appears that Anne Elliot and Mrs Smith share William Walter Elliot’s bed (pp. 146, 196, 198); that bi-sexual Mrs Smith was also intimate with Mr Elliot’s first wife (p. 200), a plurality of relationships at which Anne rejoices (p. 235).

Professor Heydt-Stevenson is not the originator of the bawdy Jane Austen. This characterisation can be traced back at least to 1975, to an article by Alice Chandler entitled ‘"A Pair of Fine Eyes”: Jane Austen’s Treatment of Sex’. Dr Chandler writes interestingly about an erotic element in the experience of the heroines, but other parts of her argument are conducted at a level which would be laughable if they were not so destructive. For example, Dr Chandler notes that the name Fanny Price was used by Crabbe in *The Parish Register*, published in 1807, four years before Jane Austen began *Mansfield Park*. Having explained the vulgar meaning of the word ‘Fanny’, Dr Chandler then asks, rhetorically, ‘What, for example, were she and Crabbe thinking about when they named their heroine "Fanny Price”?’.[24] The intent of this question is to suggest, in tones of mock horror and surprise, that both Crabbe and Jane Austen were conjuring with a dirty joke, the joke itself being left unexplained, since presumably no explanation is needed. But instead of joining Dr Chandler in this game of insinuation, we can pose a counter-question: what was Jane’s brother Edward up to, in 1793, when he named his first child Frances, to be known as Fanny? The answer is not that he was indulging in some strange and vulgar joke, but that he was following custom in giving his eldest daughter a family name inherited from his in-laws, the Bridges. Edward Austen was acting as innocently and naturally as his brother Charles, who married Fanny Palmer and named his third daughter accordingly, just as naturally and innocently as Jane Austen addressed Fanny Knight, her favourite niece, as ‘my dearest Fanny’.[25] Just as straightforwardly, Jane Austen named the

heroine of *Mansfield Park* after the girl's mother, Frances Ward, the third and youngest daughter of Mr Ward, the lawyer of Huntingdon; all these details of name and family are set out carefully on the novel's opening page. This is nicely balanced at the beginning of the novel's final chapter by Jane Austen's declared 'satisfaction' at knowing that 'My Fanny … must have been happy' (p. 461). The vulgarism that Dr Chandler finds in the name "Fanny" Price is not a linguistic joke that Jane Austen shared with Crabbe – who described his heroine as 'lovely' and 'chaste – but a tasteless and nonsensical projection of Dr Chandler's own importing.

As D W Harding wrote in his famous essay 'Regulated Hatred', Jane Austen's novels are full of 'unexpected astringencies'. 'Gentle Jane' turns out to be most ungentle, a subversive; in Harding's words, 'a literary classic of the society which attitudes like hers, held widely enough, would undermine'[26]. Her effects, however, are achieved by the slightest adjustments in style and tone, and these do not include a sub-stratum of sexual punning or *double entendre*. The power of the novels is achieved strictly within the terms of polite fiction, and one way of describing Jane Austen's greatness is to say that she wrote the novels she wanted to without transgressing its literary and social decorum. It is this recognition which directs our attention to the misinterpretation of the '*Rears'* and '*Vices'* pun and to the invention of a bawdy Jane Austen.

This is to reject the case on the evidence of literary and cultural history. But, at rock bottom, my objection to the bawdy Jane Austen is personal. It is not that I object to bawdiness, which certainly has its place in Chaucer and Shakespeare, for example. But in my experience of reading Jane Austen, the suggestion of bawdiness comes as something totally bizarre. I can only conclude that Dr Chandler, Professor Heydt-Stevenson and their followers have been reading a novelist altogether different from the one I know.

Notes

[1] Peter Gretton, *Former Naval Person: Winston Churchill and the Royal Navy* (1968), p. 2.

[2] *Mansfield Park*, p. 60.

[3] Letter dated 12-13 May 1801 (*Jane Austen's Letters* (edn. 1995), ed. Deirdre Le Faye, p. 86).

[4] In support of their case, both Brophy and Nokes referred to the 'sharade' in Jane Austen's 'History of England' (written 1791), where the friendship between James I and Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, gives the answer *carpet*. John Peck, in *Maritime Fiction: Sailors and the Sea in British and American Novels*, 1719-1917 (2001), leaves it as an open issue: 'This might or might not be an astonishingly dirty joke about homosexuality in the navy' (p. 40). Bridget Brophy, in Brian Southam ed. *Critical Essays on Jane Austen* (1968), p. 25; Park Honan, *Jane Austen: Her Life* (1987, 1996), p. 160; Lew in *History, Gender and Eighteenth-Century Literature* (1994), ed. B F Tobin, p. 294, and *Mansfield Park* (1998), ed. Claudia L Johnson; ed. Kathryn Sutherland, p. 396; Jill Heydt-Stevenson, '"Slipping into the Ha-Ha": Bawdy Humor and Body Politics in Jane Austen's Novels', *Nineteenth-Century Studies* (December 2000), vol. 55, no.3, p. 315; chronicle.com colloquy; *Independent Women's Forum*, 22.8.01, www.iwf.org/news/010822.shtml.

[5] *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage* 1812-1870 (1968), pp. 35, 40, 41, 70, 71, 72, 83, 95, 99, 267-68.

[6] *The Doctor* (1838), v.144.

[7] Preface, pp. vi-ix.

[8] 'Lectures on Shakespeare and Milton (1811-12)' in ed. R A Foakes, *Lectures 1808-1819 on Literature* (1987), ii.464 (in *Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*).

[9] 'Hints from Horace', lines 393-95.

[10] Byron, *Complete Poetical Works* (1980) ed. Jerome J. McGann, ii.15,63.

[11] Rev. Joseph Robertson, *An Essay on the Education of Young Ladies, Addressed to a Person of Distinction* (1798), p. 44.

[12] Preface, i.xii. For this quotation, and this brief reference to the scandal novel I am deeply indebted to 'The English Novel in the Romantic Era' by Peter Garside, in Peter Garside and Rainer Schőwerling, *The English Novel 1770-1829: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles: Volume II 1800-1829* (2000), pp. 42-44.

[13] For example, *Adventures* often announced bawdy material; Sentimental Tale, romantic melodrama; *A Tale of the Times*, 'a dashing sketch of the fashionable world, a few anecdotes of private scandal thinly veiled' – Walter Scott further elaborates on this scheme of indicative titles in his 'Introductory' chapter to *Waverley* (1814).

[14] *Sense and Sensibility*, p. 384, note to page 66.

[15] 'Opinions of *Mansfield Park'*, *Minor Works*, p. 433.

[16] Blackstone, *Commentaries* (1769), iv.215-16.

[17] *Naval Chronicle* (1807), xviii.342

[18] *Jane Austen* (1987, 1996), p. 160.

[19] Letter dated 7 January 1807 (*Letters*, p.115).

[20] *Mansfield Park*, p. 63.

[21] Jill Heydt-Stevenson, '"Slipping into the Ha-Ha": Bawdy Humor and Body Politics in Jane Austen's Novels', *Nineteenth Century Literature*, vol. 55, no.3 (December 2000), pp.309-339.

[22] Ibid., p. 309

[23] Eric Partridge, *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, 8th edn., 1984, ed Paul Beale, p. 867.

[24] *Studies in the Novel* (Spring 1975), vol 7, p. 92

[25] As she does in five of her surviving letters to Fanny, *Letters*, p. 278, etc.

[26] 'Regulated Hatred: an aspect of the work of Jane Austen', *Scrutiny* (March 1940), viii.
346-62.