

Trinity University

## Digital Commons @ Trinity

---

The Expositor: A Journal of Undergraduate  
Research in the Humanities

English Department

---

2019

### Jane Austen's Artful Buildings: Embodying the *Bildungsroman*

Natalie Carrier

Trinity University, ncarrier@trinity.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.trinity.edu/eng\\_expositor](https://digitalcommons.trinity.edu/eng_expositor)

---

#### Repository Citation

Carrier, N. (2019). Jane Austen's artful buildings: Embodying the *Bildungsroman*. *The Expositor: A Journal of Undergraduate Research in the Humanities*, 14, 13-24.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the English Department at Digital Commons @ Trinity. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Expositor: A Journal of Undergraduate Research in the Humanities by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Trinity. For more information, please contact [jcostanz@trinity.edu](mailto:jcostanz@trinity.edu).

- 21 *Ibid.*, 125.  
 22 *Ibid.*, 135.  
 23 Here “choir” refers to a section of the church; later in the text it describes a group of singers.  
 24 This is a reference to *Litania Sanctorum* (“Litany of Saints”), for which see *Pontifical*, ed. Wilson, 97–98.  
 25 Isaiah 26:20–27:4.  
 26 Luke 10:38, presumably intending to describe the reading of this entire biblical episode, ending at 10:42.  
 27 A medieval hymn attributed to Hrabanus Maurus.  
 28 Psalm 118:116  
 29 In this context, “mass” refers specifically to the liturgy of the eucharist, rather than the entire service. The specification “of the Holy Spirit” indicates the specific prayers that are to be used in the mass.  
 30 This antiphon appears earlier in the *Pontifical*, in the service *De sepultura*, ed. Wilson, 197 and 193.  
 31 Psalm 117  
 32 *Pontifical*, ed. Wilson, 198.  
 33 Psalm 41.  
 34 The antiphon draws from Tobit 5:11.  
 35 The *Commendatio animae* is a prayer dating to the third century. See *Pontifical*, ed. Wilson, 191. An excerpt is quoted and translated below.  
 36 *Pontifical*, ed. Wilson, 198.  
 37 Psalm 131  
 38 *Pontifical*, ed. Wilson, 198.  
 39 Psalm 138  
 40 *Pontifical*, ed. Wilson, 200 and 198, respectively; these prayers are quoted and translated in full below.

# Jane Austen’s Artful Buildings: Embodying the *Bildungsroman*

Natalie Carrier

**T**hroughout her literary career, Jane Austen regularly made use of architectural settings to embody crucial issues in her novels. Such settings in Austen’s work often function firmly within the popular attitudes of her age, serving as symbolic representations of status for her characters and operating on the associations coded by a society characterized by class tensions. For example, from her first published novel to her last, Austen makes use of the dichotomy between grand English country houses of the landed gentry and the pastoral cottages of peasants. In *Sense and Sensibility*, the Dashwood family’s harsh relocation from the family estate to “cottage” life unambiguously represents a class demotion central to the novel’s plot. In *Persuasion*, the Elliots face a similar fate, though in a more nuanced manner, when members of the working class move into Sir Walter’s Kellynch Hall estate and Anne meanwhile encounters pastoral peasant locales on her journeys to Winthrop and Lyme, signifying a blurring of boundaries between two worlds defined by their physical spaces.

In contrast, Austen’s approach to architecture, which employed contemporary intellectual and aesthetic ideas to relate more specifically to character, provides what is perhaps a more complex and fruitful way to understand the author’s general storytelling formula. In many cases, her architectural settings serve as the site of and stimulus for a pivotal shift in the heroine’s develop-

mental arc. This is clear in the two Austen novels named for the story's most important settings: *Northanger Abbey* and *Mansfield Park*. In both cases, though these works were written at opposite ends of Austen's career, the main character's interaction with and reflection on the titular architectural setting comes to catalyze and represent a shift in her thinking. Not incidentally, these novels named for their settings are also those most clearly defined as *Bildungsromane* within Austen's oeuvre.

While there appears to be a correlation between works focusing on buildings and the emphasis of the *Bildungsroman*, these elements are present in all of Austen's work. For example, though *Pride and Prejudice* is perhaps most famous for its iconic relationship between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy, what makes this central plot focus so compelling is that it facilitates the heroine's reevaluation of herself (reading Darcy's letter forced her realize that she hadn't "known her own mind"). At its core, *Pride and Prejudice* adheres to the focus on the main character's development as a model for learning how to navigate the social world in the Age of Sensibility. A point of interest for the purposes of this paper, then, is the use of architectural setting, particularly that of Pemberley, as a key element in Elizabeth's development.

Comparing and contrasting the cases of *Northanger Abbey*, *Pemberley*, and *Mansfield Park* as sites of their respective main character's self-reflection and growth show that Austen's interest in architecture reflects her own explorative journey. In each case, the heroine gains knowledge of both herself and the larger society through instructive interaction with these locations at the nexus of the manmade and the natural, and by analyzing her treatment of these subjects in each novel, we can also see how Austen either rejects or advocates for a Romantic worldview. While much scholarship surrounding Austen's work acknowledges the prominent role of architecture as reflective of the novelist's awareness of such major aesthetic themes, and others discuss the heroine's socialization using aesthetic forms as tools in the female *Bildungsroman*, earlier critics do not tend to view the two as related concepts. In contrast, I argue that Austen uses built sites as devices pivotal to her heroines' ultimate character development, effectively making such treatments into embodiments of each character's specific coming-of-age journey, but also into a map of Austen's development of such ideas within her narrative formula.

As her first novel, completed in 1803, it was in *Northanger Abbey* that Austen began to establish a pattern of using external setting as integral to a character's interiority. Though the writing and characterization of the satirical novel are often criticized as heavy-handed, such a less-nuanced handling can be useful in understanding Austen's development as an author. Her crafting of thematic emphasis using setting is especially evident in *Northanger Abbey's* treatment of the Gothic, as the heroine's preoccupation with romance novels is central to

an obvious burlesque of the genre. In fact, here she sets a precedent for later works, with Catherine Morland's confrontation with *Northanger Abbey* on her travels forcing her to confront her own assumptions and attitudes regarding society, as will be the case for Elizabeth Bennet encountering *Pemberley* and Fanny Price complicating and facilitating her homecoming.

As Avrom Fleishman argues, *Northanger Abbey* is at its heart "the story of a young lady's development," one that is firmly in the realm of the *Bildungsroman* in its "systematic exploration of the variety of forms which culture provides to constitute the individual mind—a culture including not only literature and moral dicta but esthetic norms, historiography, language, and several kinds of rhetoric." In this context, Catherine Morland's development centers on "making her mind up" with the "abstractions, symbols, and patterns of understanding ... in the process of cultural formation."<sup>1</sup> Catherine herself acknowledges her starting point with the statement, "And as to most matters, to say the truth, there are not many that I know my own mind about."<sup>2</sup>

To support his point, Fleishman cites the scene in which Catherine learns about the picturesque, an example demonstrating the role of architectural theory as a model of social learning. On their walk with Catherine, the Tilneys

were viewing the country with the eyes of persons accustomed to drawing, and decided on its capability of being formed into pictures, with all the eagerness of real taste. Here Catherine was quite lost. ... The little which she could understand however appeared to contradict the very few notions she had entertained on the matter before. It seemed as if a good view were no longer to be taken from the top of an high hill, and that a clear blue sky was no longer a proof of a fine day. (1015).

Fleishman uses this passage to demonstrate the idea that cultural symbols shape people's expectations for the world: Catherine's favoring of fair weather and a clear view are confirmation of "a lack of a terminology by which to see the countryside around her" rather than support for a basic intuition that justifies her preferences.<sup>3</sup> In this situation, though, Catherine is a quick learner: "A lecture on the picturesque immediately followed," and Catherine is easily led by Henry Tilney to accepting the picturesque as the correct mode and adapting it into her own view (1016).

While Fleishman's focus on the picturesque as representative of learned cultural symbols (comprising "real taste") is useful, this emphasis also allows for the demonstration of Catherine's seemingly girlish inclinations and impressionableness. The quickness with which Catherine's change of perspective occurs frames her as a ridiculous figure, a characterization Austen cultivates throughout the novel. Here she is easily led by an eagerness to follow the example of her new friends, driven by emotions and admiration for her

love-interest rather than by a critical assessment of the merits of the picturesque perspective. In this case, then, even though Catherine is rewarded for her quick acceptance of contemporary cultural learning, both through Henry's admiration and by adhering to the reader's culturally-learned acceptance of such learning as "correct," she is still the subject of satire rather than a heroine we are encouraged to fully embrace. This suggests an ironic view of cultured society in line with the tone of the overall burlesquing, playfully critical novel. Even when women accept the systems of thought embraced and encouraged by erudite males (and reap praise from this choice), they are still subject to an underlying judgement assuming female vacuity and a lack of agency.

Nevertheless, this instance is a step forward for Catherine in the reader's eyes, and it might be seen as a preface to Catherine's most important learning experience, which centers on her adjusted view of reality following her interaction with Gothic architecture. As Fleishman notes, the one obvious exception to Catherine's "unmade mind" is her enthusiasm for the Gothic. It is her reading "which gives her a set of terms by which to order—erroneously, as it happens—some of her perceptions" through which she can understand herself and the world around her, though in her "rudimentary" way.<sup>4</sup>

Catherine's understanding of the world through the lens of the Gothic most clearly shapes her expectations and process of dealing with the space of her greatest learning, the abbey itself. In her first approach to the abbey, we can see that Catherine's expectations are clearly governed by a taste for Romantic notions of mystery and excitement. Almost immediately, though, reality challenges her assumptions. Catherine approaches the abbey expecting

with solemn awe to afford a glimpse of its massy walls of grey stone ... with the last beams of sun playing in beautiful splendor on its high Gothic windows. But so low did the building stand, that she found herself passing through the great gates of the lodge into the very grounds of Northanger, without having discerned even a single antique chimney. (1041).

Such an opinion-changing entrance to an estate is reminiscent of the introduction to Pemberley in *Pride and Prejudice*, showing that the conventions Austen established in her early work should be viewed as devices that she continued to refine rather than as failed, heavy-handed experiments.

While exploration of the Gothic aesthetic is most obvious in the heroine's preoccupation with romance novels, which is central to Austen's burlesquing of the genre, it is also necessary to consider that such a literary trend developed concurrently with the larger aesthetic of the Gothic Revival. This architectural movement manifested an interest in revivalist styles favoring Europe's medieval past interpreted through a lens of romanticizing nostalgia—a trend which countered aesthetic Neoclassicism, an artistic continuation of Enlightenment

ideals that favored the worldly concerns of contemporary modernity. These wider aesthetic associations of the age surrounding this artistic atmosphere can be seen most clearly in Catherine's tour of the abbey led by General Tilney. Here, Austen characterizes Catherine as embodying Gothic Revival ideals, primarily through an implicit foil entailed by the General's Neoclassical impulses, to suggest the impracticability of innocent idealism in the face of the realities of a materialistic society.

The juxtaposition of these two characters of vastly different social standings presents Catherine in favor of a Romantic outlook in her valuation of the Gothic in opposition to the new and modern Neoclassical rooms presented by the General. However, the exaggerated emotive language also encourages the reader to view Catherine as a comical figure, consistent with Austen's burlesquing tone, rather than as a representative of a serious intellectual, aesthetic position. The reader is told in a short, declarative statement introducing the renovated section of the abbey that "All that was venerable ceased here," suggesting a sweeping, harsh judgement by Catherine (1054). Likewise, the claim that "The new building was not only new, but declared itself to be so" suggests an indignation towards a perceived double offense, furthering an exaggeration of an unforgiving attitude and judgement (1054). This passage also introduces a moralistic approach to appraising the surroundings and all that it represents, as the word "venerable" connotes something worthy of respect. Therefore, the following account of what is decidedly *not* venerable becomes a reflection of Catherine's morals and character in opposition to the tastes of her counterpart, General Tilney.

The opposition here between the tastes of General Tilney and Catherine clearly corresponds to the era's theoretical dichotomy between the aesthetics of Neoclassicism and Gothic Revivalism, a debate with which Austen's audience would have been familiar, suggesting that Austen is consciously using these opposing tendencies regarding architecture and design as markers of larger opposing worldviews. The renovations of General Tilney embody a Neoclassicism representing contemporary modernity, particularly in its repeatedly mentioned features that "declared" its element of distinct "newness," showing the importance of ostentatious display in the General's motives (1054). In addition, the General's renovations are defined by an overarching practicality: the renovated building was "intended only for offices," suggesting a plan of ordered designation of rooms for a single purpose (1054). The office space, intended as a male domain where business ventures are carried out, embodies the Neoclassical movement's primary proponents—the more established, powerful elite already at the top of the social hierarchy.

In light of this characterization, Catherine's sympathy for Gothic tendencies comes to denote a distinctly female viewpoint here, making her a rep-

representative of a socially subordinate and less respected group within her late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century society. The appreciation of the Gothic is expressed as central to Catherine's character throughout the novel, and it is a continuation of proclivities readers have already seen in her keen interest in reading popular literature such as *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. Austen acknowledges the opinion of many of her contemporaries who discredited such romantic novels by making Catherine a caricature of the "feeble" female mind.<sup>5</sup> In an earlier chapter, Austen says that Catherine's "passion for ancient edifices was next in degree to her passion for Henry Tilney," effectively equating her admiration of Gothic architecture with a frivolous, youthful infatuation (1030). The General also expresses an appraisal of Catherine tied to her gender by assuming that she must be pleased by the "accommodations and comforts, by which the labours of her inferiors were softened," which projects a compassion for others and self-sacrificing politeness associated with women onto her character (1054).

On the other hand, the excessive emotionality associated with the Gothic should not be solely considered a trapping of Catherine's identity as a stereotypical frivolous young woman. The educated reader of the time may have just as easily regarded Catherine's extreme reaction to the renovations as aligned with the views of Gothic-leaning architectural theorists in the larger cultural context, since enthusiasm for the romanticized Gothic as an escape from the world had by then become an acceptable preference of the gentry. The passage further complicates simple, conventional judgement of these characters based on their genders with the emphasis on the "vanity" of the General based in the "arrangement of his offices" (1054). The idea of vanity suggests a moral fault in this elite group, a fault just as characterized by separating one's mental world from one's surroundings as are the inattentive fantasies of the Gothic. Furthermore, the language of economy in this passage brings to mind the recurring issue in Austen's novels of a harsh economy of courtship and social prejudices dependent on wealth that dictates a woman's station in life. The mention of "domestic economy," "labour," and the "value" of the Gothic all suggest different modes of assigning worth and in turn raises the idea of equally valid worldviews and value systems in a world that unfairly favors one over the other, rather than a simple assertion that the Neoclassical male view is inherently superior to a female Gothic one. Austen seems to acknowledge that the former view is not more correct but simply more powerful, a reality that leads one to read her work as simple satire aligned with this system in the first place. These issues set the story up for a more complicated reading of Catherine's impending recognition of her own views, a realization which leads to greater self-awareness.

Austen's evocation of the Gothic and Neoclassic tastes is thus not simply meant to provide laughable characterizations of a mistaken (Gothic-loving) versus the correct (anti-Gothic) worldview, but it rather serves to acknowledge the realities of the society in which this tendency exists. And her message is not so juvenile as the still-developing writing style may suggest. In fact, the issues raised here show that Austen engages with highly relevant, defining concepts of the nineteenth century while furthering her own highly attentive social commentary in *Northanger Abbey*, just as in her more widely-respected works.

In Austen's later novels, the heroines are more formed in their opinions from the start, requiring a subtler sort of *Bildungsroman*. If Catherine Morland needed to make up her mind, then Elizabeth Bennet needed to learn not to make her mind up so quickly. Fleishman notes that Catherine "finds that she has made her mind up not, like Elizabeth Bennet, on the basis of insufficient evidence, but on the wrong kind of evidence altogether."<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth, usually accepted as the Austen character most deserving of the title of a proper heroine, begins the novel characterized by a cleverness and quickness. This is what makes her appealing in many ways (and it is where she differs from Catherine), but it is also something that she must overcome in order to fully develop her abilities of fair and careful judgment. The change in her thinking is most clear in her opinion of Darcy, a shift in which the architectural setting plays an important role.

The picturesque is invoked early in the novel, with Elizabeth's direct reference to the "charmingly group'd" image of the "picturesque" while on a walk, offering support for Austen's—and Elizabeth's—knowledge of this elite landscape tradition (239). Here it demonstrates Elizabeth's proclivities towards cleverness and judgement. Her laughter while saying this lends her a somewhat ridiculing tone regarding the party led by Darcy, suggesting that she does not actually take to heart the picturesque ideals of moderated evaluation and an open appreciation of beauty. Elizabeth's visit to and appraisal of the Pemberley estate in Chapter 1 of Volume 3 represents a key turning point in a development of her judgement, allowing Austen to cleverly utilize a setting embodying the sensibilities of her society in order to ultimately question them. Through Elizabeth's experience of Pemberley, Austen presents the aesthetic concept of the picturesque as a model for the proper judgement of character according to moral atmosphere of the Age of Sensibility.

Though Elizabeth's favorable impression upon her tour of Pemberley may appear to support a straightforward acceptance of social values in which the landed gentry reigns supreme and others should aspire to such material wealth and social standing, it is in fact part of a larger argument for the complication of such norms. At first blush, the description of the "large, well-proportioned,"

“handsomely fitted up” dining-parlor and the other rooms’ “furniture suitable to the fortune of their proprietor” seems to drive Elizabeth’s favorable opinion through an admiration of material wealth (342). However, putting this scene into the larger context of the story suggests that such a viewing is oversimplified. When considering that this interior description serves as a synecdoche for the estate of Pemberley as a whole, and ultimately for Mr. Darcy himself—in fact, the description of the “large, well-proportioned room, handsomely fitted” corresponds to the house as a “large, handsome stone building” and Austen’s embodied description of Darcy—we see that this positive impression is in marked contrast to Elizabeth’s previous prejudice against Darcy’s character.

Furthermore, the description of his home’s interior as having “less of splendor, and more real elegance, than the furniture of Rosings,” situates Mr. Darcy in an implicit comparison to Catherine de Bourgh (342). In typical Austenian fashion, the placement of different characters in opposition as unexpected foils illuminates a new conception of each of them: in the face of the blatantly caricatured Lady, the idea of Darcy as a stereotypically proud, rich gentleman loses its potency, and he begins to seem like more of a complete and multi-dimensional human worthy of Elizabeth’s regard. At the same time, Austen suggests through free indirect discourse that Darcy possesses an interior mind that contrasts with surface appearances, stating that “Elizabeth saw, with admiration of his taste, that it was neither gaudy nor uselessly fine” (342)—his taste, here, seems to signify an authentic intellect (a classic “real elegance”) rather than adherence to superficial fashion.

This focus on an aesthetic of authenticity is in line with the idea of the picturesque landscape, also represented quite directly in the description of Pemberley’s grounds. For example, Elizabeth’s earlier admiration of the landscape—“where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste”—reflects the landscape sensibility of the English garden, which placed value on the accentuation of a given locale rather than an imposition of order (342). At the heart of the picturesque is the concept of mental presence in the temporal and spatial moment, based both on the intellectual rationality of Enlightenment and a Romantic attention to emotional sensation created by one’s physical surroundings. Therefore, the picturesque process of seeing acts as a useful metaphor for the type of careful, unbiased, and multi-level judgement of character (a mode perhaps best summarized as “sensible”) that Austen advocates for with Elizabeth’s reassessment here.

While the tour scene takes place indoors, much of it is devoted to a virtual experience of the entire landscape, not only through the use of synecdoche, but also through the emphasis on the act of seeing. As Elizabeth looks out the window at the landscape, Austen emphasizes the idea of a whole only completely seen through multiple viewpoints. For example, “the hill from which

they had descended” took on a new meaning as “a beautiful object” rather than a space through the experience of distance (342). The description of “these objects ... taking different position ... from every window” as Elizabeth passed through each room is highly reminiscent of the picturesque ideal’s emphasis on changing vistas as comprising a complete temporal-spatial experience, while the earlier mention of her mind “too full for conversation” suggests that a fully meditative observational experience can counter her characteristic inclination towards quickness (342). More significant, though, is the idea that Elizabeth is now seeing beyond her immediate surroundings through this experience, enjoying a full “prospect” that connotes imagined possibilities. In this way, we see that Elizabeth is learning to view things outside of her own subjective prejudices and to imagine others’ perspectives. For example, she later “fixed [Darcy’s] eyes upon herself” when contemplating his painted portrait, effectively seeing things through his eyes (345).

With the language and imagery used to describe Elizabeth’s experience of viewing and interpreting Pemberley, Austen sets up her reassessment of Mr. Darcy and, by extension, her assessment of herself as firmly within the picturesque mode. With the invocation of the picturesque mode, the use of architectural setting effectively suggests the art of drawing, with its emphasis on careful looking and framing.<sup>7</sup> This is especially fitting, since Elizabeth’s lack of drawing experience is mentioned throughout the novel. Her experience with Pemberley represents, then, a new skill that allows her to correctly navigate the social world as a proper young woman. Just as Elizabeth learns the importance of meditation on the judgement of others as a means of personal and interpersonal growth and practices the art of seeing beyond caricature through careful observation, it seems that Austen’s reader is presented with this message through a parallel lesson through an exercise in close reading, perhaps an element in our own readerly *Bildungsroman*. The novel can thus be seen as serving as a tool for understanding oneself and others in a manner in line with the Age of Sensibility, balanced somewhere between the strict rationale of the Enlightenment and the sublime emotionality of Romanticism. In this way, Austen offers an alternative to the improper overly-Romantic Gothic literature satirized in *Northanger Abbey*.

While *Northanger Abbey* and *Pride and Prejudice* both explore the developmental aspects of characters by teaching a skill of perception that changes the heroine’s mind, *Mansfield Park* is clearest in its emphasis on a distinctly female *Bildungsroman* journey. While Catherine makes up her mind and Elizabeth changes hers, Austen follows the story of Fanny Price as she grows into herself. The setting of Mansfield Park, though not as fully described or even addressed as Austen’s other famous estates, still plays an important role. While one might expect travel to be the catalyst for growing into oneself, as is the case of Cath-

erine and Elizabeth's visits to the homes of their romantic interests, the architectural setting in Fanny's story facilitates a mental homecoming more than a physical one. As Nikolaus Pevsner notes, Portsmouth is the subject of little description in terms of architecture or landscape, a reticence which may be due to Austen's considerable familiarity with this area compared to her more thoroughly described imagined landscapes.<sup>8</sup> Instead, it is revealed that her true home is Mansfield Park, the stage for the story that plays out.

This is the approach to the novel taken by Matthew Taylor, who, by utilizing a framework from Shakespeare criticism, asserts that the outdoor landscapes in *Mansfield Park* serve as stages where romantic rivalries take place.<sup>9</sup> Though Taylor focuses on renovations to outdoor landscapes as modes of social competition and argues that "outdoorsmanship in Mansfield Park always boils down to self-exhibition and competition," the idea of the physical setting as a stage can also be extended to fit into Austen's pattern of invoking different artforms through architecture.<sup>10</sup> We can extend the stage metaphor to the entirety of Mansfield Park itself, with its implications of growth inherent in its name giving a hint at Austen's intent to frame the estate as a place of growth. In this novel, the theatricality and social artifice of characters such as the Crawfords serve as a foil to the moralism of Fanny. For example, she is the only one hesitant to participate in the play: "she could not endure the idea of it" (519). The idea of endurance in the face of such artifice is important, since this action facilitates Fanny's growth. Rather than changing herself by utilizing the tools of the gentry's many artifices, she instead uses theatre as a tool to define herself against others through her refusal to participate.

This instance of Fanny's moral position showing through is representative of her overall character development. Fanny remains a relatively passive actor in her own story, and her growth is characterized by a process of enduring spectatorship. In this way, Fanny represents a distinctly feminine heroine in an alternative to the traditional action-focused male *Bildungsroman*. In accordance with this approach, Austen presents Fanny as an exemplar of a distinctly feminine morality among the larger theater of a problematic and patriarchal society. In fact, this novel stands out in Austen's body of work as perhaps the most unflinching in its approach towards such topic of gender inequality. Catherine Morland's journey required cultivating her mind with an approach that outwardly suggested the need for following masculine examples of thought and learning how to navigate in a world that favored male classicisms over the female Gothic, and Elizabeth Bennet's development was a more internal process of learning how to view the world in a balanced manner (as through the picturesque process of active viewing). Fanny Price, in contrast, despite her meekness, possesses strong religious and moral values throughout the novel that put her perhaps most clearly in the realm of the Romantic coming of age

narrative. Rather than adapting to the world by learning new methods of artistic judgement, Fanny realizes her development by growing into herself with relatively little external imposition as she observes the story surrounding her. In this way, Austen inverts conventions to create a distinctly female *Bildungsroman*, working within but also subverting the norms of Romanticism, with an argument for the merits of subjective and personal judgement of the scenes playing out rather than adopting a codified approach of aesthetic criticism.

Overall, by considering these three works and Austen's engagement with both architecture and literature, visual arts (through the drawing-focused picturesque), and theater, we might identify this preoccupation with artforms as an integral part of Austen's characteristic formula. Rather than separate elements, these ideas and artforms are intertwined, showing that Austen engaged in a thorough and holistic consideration and criticism of the cultural and social trends of her time. Tracing the development of Austen's work throughout her career, it may seem as though she moves from a Neoclassical/Enlightenment worldview to one embracing Romanticism, reaching an aesthetic of Sensibility as these crossed in *Pride and Prejudice*. However, careful attention to her treatment of architecture, which simultaneously embraces and criticizes these opposing worldviews by observing a dichotomy between them, reveals that Austen's own journey regarding the *Bildungsroman* was more complex. This process plays out in her use of architectural spaces that are at once domestic and worldly, often reflecting the complexities of each main character's growth. Though her work may have become subtler across her career, Austen remained an intentional and observant critic of society, acknowledging the complicated role of gender and cultural norms in shaping one's story of personal growth.

*Natalie Carrier is a senior majoring in Art History and English. She prepared this essay as part of Professor Betsy Tontiplaphol's seminar on Jane Austen (ENGL 4426) in Spring 2018.*

#### NOTES

- 1 Avrom Fleishman, "The Socialization of Catherine Morland," *ELH* 41.4 (1974): 649-50.
- 2 Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, in *Jane Austen: The Complete Novels*, ed. Karen Joy Fowler (New York: Penguin, 2006), here 1023. All subsequent quotations of Austen's novels are from this edition and are cited parenthetically.
- 3 Fleishman, "Socialization," 657.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 650.
- 5 See, for example, Catherine's discussions with Mr. Thorpe and Henry Tilney regarding her

favorite novels in Volume I.

6 Fleishman, "Socialization," 649.

7 For example, Austen noted that the Tilney's appreciation of landscape was shaped by their knowledge of the skill of drawing, as described above.

8 Nikolaus Pevsner, "The Architectural Setting of Jane Austen's Novels," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 31 (1968): 407-11.

9 Matthew Taylor, "Traipsing into the Forest: Landscapes and Rivalry in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*," *Anthropoetics* 14.2 (2009): 1-16. Taylor cites, in particular, the outing to Sotherton and the "play-within-a play" of Volume I.

10 *Ibid.*, 5.

## "The Supremacy of Human Rights Everywhere": The Struggle against Jim Crow during World War II

*Thomas Harvell-DeGolier*

**O**n January 6, 1941, a mere eleven months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor dragged the United States into war, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt gave his eighth State of the Union address. In this speech, Roosevelt articulated the Four Freedoms that constituted his vision for a peaceful, democratic world order: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.<sup>1</sup> These freedoms were an essential component of FDR's proclamation that "Freedom means the supremacy of human rights everywhere." While this idea became important to the rhetoric of the Allies during World War II, it revealed an unsettling split in American policy abroad and the domestic treatment of African Americans and other minorities.

Indeed, while FDR promoted his four freedoms abroad, these freedoms were not fully enjoyed by all men and women in America. Specifically, African Americans did not enjoy many of FDR's espoused freedoms, with their treatment in the South being especially heinous. By championing these values, Roosevelt opened up America to charges of hypocrisy from African American intellectuals, the African American press, and foreign powers.<sup>2</sup> These criticisms formed the basis upon which African American intellectuals and black presses, during and after World War II, advocated for civil liberties and civil rights. By seizing upon FDR's four freedoms, African American intellectuals and presses advocated for the dismantling of Jim Crow, comparing the Jim Crow South to Nazi Germany, and they seized upon differences between America's stated