

From Novel to Film: Landscape and Jane Austen
By Sara Anne Mitchell

Throughout Austen's novels she provides descriptions of the English countryside and coast with various styles of English homes. These range from cottages, to Abbeys, to seaside homes, to grand mansions of the rich. The descriptions of these provide the reader with enough knowledge to see the designs, and landscapes clearly but not enough to hinder the reader's own additional insight. Her descriptions are technical but fluid in a unique mix of realism and fiction. Each novel echoes not only Austen's views, which were derived from the ideas of landscape design of the time, and her own expediencies, but also her character's emotions. As Austen's works were transformed into film these descriptions provided strong outlines for composition, while also leaving room for interpretation with the visual imagery that was to be produced and realized in various eras of films. Not only did the characters' own emotional states get brought to the forefront in these visual depictions of the landscape and surroundings, but also interpretation of the Austen's era.

To understand the influence and historical significance of Austen's descriptions, first it is necessary to understand the common ideas about landscape in Austen's time. One of the most popular styles of painting during Austen's era was called the picturesque. The famous landscape painter William Gilpin created the idea of the picturesque. He was originally inspired by Lancelot Brown's paintings, such as the landscapes at Stowe (Fay). This type of style is a mix between controlled and wild beauty that is appealing when looked at. These ideas were of course critiqued and altered over time. Uvedale Price was one critique who argued that Brown's ideas were too strict and that nature should appear more untamed (Fay). Richard Payne Knight was another critic. He supported his mentor's ideas, Archibald Alison, that landscape should be not be as savage and created by chance, but rather controlled in an emotional way (Batey, pg 121-2). From

this arose the controversy of using nature and landscapes solely for the purpose of being beautiful, and the appropriateness behind controlling nature to look wild. Landscapes were created to be painting like; Batey states that the picturesque principles and elements were applied to nature leading to the creation of painting in the real world with the materials of nature (pg. 122). Therefore it became more about creating an environment, that was at its most basic level, ascetically pleasing in an awe-inspiring way. These ideas of beauty influenced other forms of art, music, architecture and even literature (Fay).

Landscape design during the late 1700's and 1800's had a variety of influences and was interwoven with architectural design, paintings styles, and the changing political and economic climate. The leading landscape gardener in the later 1790's and early 1800's was Humphry Repton. He focused on gardens, and pleasure grounds for small scale estates and country houses (Finch and Giles, pg. 11). His ideas followed some of the picturesque, changing the designs of several landscapes from static and geometric, to soft, and fluid, which was more pleasing from an artistic perspective. Knight and Price both critiqued Repton's moderate use of the picturesque, which Repton saw as more of a melioration of neglect and accident (Batey, pg. 126.) Repton argued that most people did not have the ability or desire to go to great lengths to design their estates as Knight and Price did for their own estates; Repton argued that most people wanted elements of the picturesque, in conjunction with flexibility and pleasantness. Repton eventually partnered with John Nash to help make landscape and architecture parts of the same whole. This allowed landscape to move beyond being a view. The house became a crucial part of the design, if not the most important piece of the landscape (Batey, pg. 127).

Taste moved beyond just the differences in opinion about philosophy. Finch and Giles argue that landscape designs were affected not only by the changing philosophy during the late

17th and 18th century but also foreign travel, fashion and various other art forms (pg. 8). These ideas were mostly derived from those with wealth, such as Knight and Price. Christie contends that British aristocracy and gentry had the most wealth and power in British society and were therefore able to dictate architectural patronage and taste, although this did conflict sometimes with architects' ideas and abilities. Their homes reflected and represented these abilities, and their dominance (pg. 28). The design of the landscape and estates therefore represent and reflect the values of those who designed them. Finch and Giles contend that the typical estate of the era included a large home, a garden, and a park surrounding these. This surrounding park would usually be a flat open areas of grass, which represented the ability of the wealthy to ride, and walk for leisure. Wooded areas were also popular and significant because they provided spaces to hunt in. Also, planting trees was a long term investment suggesting that the house would be generational. It also showed support for the government, because often there were commitments to loan wood for ships to the navy (pg. 8). As society became more economically developed the designs of landscapes changed to reflect the ideas of those who had clout. As the size of the middle class increased and the ideas of the wealthy upper class trickled down, new forms of landscape, building, and estate designs were created to reflect the new values (Finch and Giles, pg. 12). The architecture at the beginning of the 19th century had become more irregular and not so symmetrical pushing forward the ideas of the picturesque (Christie, pg. 65). After 1820, most new mansions were archaic, or medieval Gothic inspired. These styles were also mirrored in small homes such as cottages and farms. This increase of industrial life promoted the idea of separation in the countryside from the hustle and bustle of city life. There continued to be a struggle over tastes, as the 19th century began. Many aristocrats who were beginning to be threatened by the growing middle class saw their homes as a symbol of their old power (Christie, pg. 64).

These historical ideas influenced Austen and her perception of the world. Austen spent most of her life in the British Countryside, and her view of the world described in her works reflects that upbringing (Worsley, 4:11). Brown argues that Austen attempted to be accurate in her works, specifically about places and distances in the countryside, even though it is only a small portion of her novels and only slightly affects her character's actions and reactions (pg. 23). However, above and beyond the knowledge of landscapes and art, Austen shows a curiosity and interest in the picturesque. Batey argues that all of Austen's heroines were like her, fascinated with the picturesque (pg. 121). This idea can clearly be seen in four of Austen's novels, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and sensibility*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* which provide valuable insight in Austen's own mind and opinion about the landscape design. She uses the description and opinions of the countryside in these novels to give perspective to her characters' emotional states, and depth to their personalities.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, the grandeur of Pemberley is fully described, and within her details Austen shows her knowledge of the picturesque and other aspects of the landscape. This description does not escape her own experiences either, mixing with her main protagonists' emotions to create a dynamic situation. Austen states that "They gradually ascended for half a mile, and then found themselves at the top of a considerable eminence, where the wood ceased, and the eye was instantly caught by Pemberley House, situated on the opposite side of a valley, into which the road with some abruptness wound. It was a large, handsome stone building, standing well on rising ground, and backed by a ridge of high woody hills; and in front a stream of some natural importance was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance. Its banks were neither formal nor falsely adorned. Elizabeth was delighted. She had never seen a place for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by

an awkward taste. They were all of them warm in their admiration; and at that moment she felt that to be mistress of Pemberley might be something!...They entered the woods, and bidding adieu to the river for a while, ascended some of the higher grounds; whence, in spots where the opening of the trees gave the eye power to wander, were many charming views of the valley, the opposite hills, with the long range of woods overspreading many, and occasionally part of the stream...a descent among hanging woods, to the edge of the water, in one of its narrowest parts. They crossed it by a simple bridge, in character with the general air of the scene; it was a spot less adorned than any they had yet visited; and the valley, here contracted into a glen, allowed room only for the stream and a narrow walk amidst the rough coppice-wood which bordered it. Elizabeth longed to explore its windings; but when they had crossed the bridge, and perceived their distance from the house” (Austen, chp. 43).

This descriptions reflects the ideas of Gilpin’s picturesque paintings, while also commenting on the need for nature to be altered with taste. Specific word choices such as the reference to eye movement, and placement of elements in the scene, make the reader see the landscape as a painting. She describes and mentions that the eyes can settle and wander as certain elements become more and less prominent. The mention of the bridge is reminiscent of many of Gilpin’s paintings which depict simple bridges surrounded by rugged hills. Austen also notes the natural feel of the landscape, and that rather than feeling artificial, it feels real. She argues that the placement of the home, river, wooded areas, bridge, and wild areas complement each other. The naturalness of the estate is not hindered by bad taste which could ruin an individual’s ability to enjoy nature as something beyond art. Nature is focused on as much as the structure itself. The surrounding landscape in this description is fluidly woven into the overall design of the entire estate, not necessarily in a wild and untamed way, but less in an open or flat and controlled way. The house and the landscape around it are not separate beings but rather two parts of a single

whole. The description itself is not over the top, but simply worded and allows the reader to see, while not being constrained. These descriptions also show the wonder and awe that Elizabeth is feeling. She is almost regretting saying no to Darcy. The emotional state of Elizabeth is linked to her desire to see the beauty around her. It was her experience of seeing the estate and eventual tour inside Pemberley that partially changed her view of the wealthy Mr. Darcy. There is also a similarity to Austen's own experience that is presented in this description. Some elements of Elizabeth seeing the house also reflect Austen's experiences such as her tour of Stoneleigh Abbey (Worsley, 1:45). That experience left a mark on Austen, just as her visits with her brother Edward did, who had been adopted by a wealthy family in Kent at Godmersham Park (Worsley, 16:49). Godmersham was a very grand home and the images of it are similar to that which Austen describes, although Austen adds a more poetic flare.

In the 2006 (Wright) *Pride and Prejudice* Elizabeth's trip to the countryside is transformed into a physical representation of her state of mind. The novel pushes the boundaries of the description of Pemberley and adds more abstract visual imaginary to give background to Elizabeth's emotions. One scene, in which Elizabeth is shown standing on the end of a cliff and looking down in the open, molded, rolling hills of the countryside, gives symbolic meaning to her emotional state (1:19:40 – 1:20:19). She is uncertain, and confused, drawing a calmness from nature to steady herself. Additional scenes such as the one depicting the conversation between Elizabeth and the Gardeners about going to Pemberley are expanded on. The placement of this scene in a forest with thick green foliage gives the trip a more outside feel, which focuses on Elizabeth's feeling of freedom (1:20:32 – 1:21:13). These scenes lead into those of Pemberley. When they arrive, after traveling down the tree surrounded drive, Pemberley is shown (1:21:24). A large blue lake stretches out in front of the elegant and symmetrical building settled right in the

middle of the scene (1:21: 38). It is again very reminiscent of the drawings from the era of proper landscapes by Gilpin, which Austen mirrors. The house is framed by nature with surrounding sight lines drawing the eye toward the center. The house presents a contrast to the rest of the surrounding landscape, allowing the eye to rest on it. The depiction of Pemberley focuses on not only the house but the foliage, trees, plants, mountains and the placement of the lake. In the film, Elizabeth is quite in awe (1:21:41). The addition of seeing Elizabeth's reaction as interpreted by Kiera Knightly, sums up the emotion in the novel. She shows some disbelief in a humorous way, but also with reverence, appreciation and understanding. The film made room for the interpretation of the emotions which were behind the words in the novel. It is not just Pemberley that is shown but the combination of Elizabeth's emotions, consequence of her decisions, Austen's own view of nature, wealth, and nostalgia, along with the historical ideology behind the design of landscape.

In *Sense and Sensibility* the emotional state of the characters dictates the perception of the cottage, and although the description is somewhat favorable, it is not perfect. Austen describes Barton cottage in a harsh but humorous and knowledgeable way. She states that “as a house, Barton Cottage, though small, was comfortable and compact; but as a cottage it was defective, for the building was regular, the roof was tiled, the window shutters were not painted green, nor were the walls covered with honeysuckles. A narrow passage led directly through the house into the garden behind. On each side of the entrance was a sitting room, about sixteen feet square; and beyond them were the offices and the stairs. Four bed-rooms and two garrets formed the rest of the house. It had not been built many years and was in good repair. In comparison of Norland, it was poor and small indeed! -- but the tears which recollection called forth as they entered the house were soon dried away...”(Austen, chp.6). The description of this cottage is very era

specific, which might be missed by a modern reader. Many things within this description stand out. Austen says that Barton is a good home, but it was a faulty cottage. Her idea of a good cottage is very specific, saying that it was too regular, had a tiled roof, and did not have green shutters, or any honeysuckle. The meaning of regular can be taken in many ways, such as too plain in the design elements like windows, or too similar to other cottages, or too symmetrical in its overall shape. The other two things referenced are very specific and must have stood out in Austen's mind as characteristic of a good looking cottage as well. These ideas relate to the idea of cottage design in Austen's time period. In the mid- 1700's cottages had two distinct styles, one was regular and practical, and the other was irregular and picturesque. McMordie says that Knight and Price were the leading influences in making the cottage a sought after item of taste (pg.18). The expanding market of cottages during this era, the 1770's, due to the increasing size of the middle class allowed for both attention and creativity to be brought into the new designs mixing, rejecting, and using the aspects of the two prominent cottage designs. McMordie states that the cottage became "an ornament to the landscape" which was a wholesome home for the working class (McMordie, pg. 19). He argues that Austen's description reflects this period of change, and evolution in the design of cottages. Other designers beyond Knight and Price became salient during this time. While Knight believed that cottages should have reed roofs, be moss covered, with ivy and honeysuckle by the windows and door, Nathaniel Kent, encouraged more cost based designs. Kent believed cottages were meant to be functional. John Wood did too, but wanted utilitarian cottages also to be ornamental in nature. Richard Elsam was a promoter of the more traditional square, and symmetrical designs which were not products of mixed designs. Others like James Moulton attempted to combine a practical irregularity with the picturesque (McMordie, pg. 20) He argued that what was picturesque was often difficult to live in and it did not have to be, if other styles were mixed with it. Austen is aware of this in her description of Barton too,

referencing not only design but the ability to live in the cottage as well. Moulton also saw the cottage as a building that could be added on to, and that the irregularity of the additions would only add to the aesthetic design. In *Sense and Sensibility*, Willoughby has a long discussion with the Mrs. Dashwood, Elinor, and Marianne about altering Barton Cottage. Willoughby is profusely against all of Mrs. Dashwood's alterations to rooms, the outside, or general size which she proposes (Austen, chp. 14). Within the context of the story Willoughby is against the changes for sentimental reasons pertaining to his being happy there and falling in love with Marianne.

However, his push back against Mrs. Dashwood's design to expand the design of the cottage reflects some of the ideas surrounding designers opinions about the irregularity of cottages, such as Moulton. The discussion is woven into the story line very specifically so it is difficult to tell if these are Austen's own opinions about design and spending of money on improvements, or simply her character's opinion of something he holds dear. Beyond that however, the description and discussion of the cottage by Austen provides her insight into the tastes of the times. From her description of Barton it can be assumed that she did not like the regular cottage design, which suggest she favored a slightly more asymmetrical design of which was more Gothic and honeysuckle covered. The mention of honeysuckle is also significant because it is a symbol of the tenderness of love that has been lost. Although it may not have meant that to Austen at the time, today her mention of it could be seen as a foreshadowing of Marianne and Willoughby.

Austen did not only focus on the cottage itself but also the placement of it reflecting some of Repton and Nash's ideas about architectural landscape. She stated that "the situation of the house was good. High hills rose immediately behind, and at no great distance on each side; some of which were open downs, the others cultivated and woody. The village of Barton was chiefly on one of these hills, and formed a pleasant view from the cottage windows. The prospect in front was more extensive; it commanded the whole of the valley, and reached into the country beyond.

The hills which surrounded the cottage terminated the valley in that direction; under another name, and in another course, it branched out again between two of the steepest of them” (Austen chp. 6). This description shows Austen’s familiarity with the proper place of a home within a landscape. She described the cottage as part of the landscape, and how the view of the cottage is affected by it. The physical space that is around the cottage was of significant importance if not more than the actual house. The addition of this information gives the reader spatial acuity when picturing the cottage and area around it. Later Austen states “Barton Park was about half a mile from the cottage. The ladies had passed near it in their way along the valley, but it was screened from their view at home by the projection of a hill. The house was large and handsome; and the Middletons lived in a style of equal hospitality and elegance” (Austen, chp. 7). This description, while shorter, provides a clear image of the home and its meaning for those who live in it. Sir John and his mother are happy and their home reflects their temperament. This acts as a comparison also to the cottage and reminds the reader that the Dashwoods are not in a wonderful situation, but they are being provided for. The Middletons have enough ability, and sense to have a large house that is handsome and to share it with those they are related too. This situation is very reflective of Austen’s experiences also. Chawton cottage was where Austen lived while she edited and wrote many of her books. The cottage she lived in was similar to the one she describes in the novel. Chawton cottage was just a little ways off from Chawton house which was a manor owned by her brother Edward. The cottage was originally a bailiff’s house on the corner of the street (Worsley, 44:37). The description in *Sense and Sensibility* echo Austen’s own adventures in life, both emotionally and physically.

There are other mentions of landscape and other similar subjects being talked about which show their presence and importance in that era with in *Sense and Sensibility*. Eleanor states that “You will soon have exhausted each favorite topic. Another meeting will suffice to explain his

sentiments on picturesque beauty, and second marriages, and then you can have nothing farther to ask—”(Austen, chp. 10). To include this line provides a humorous moment but also shows the concerns of taste. Men needed to have good taste in beauty which included landscape. This is also seen when Edward, Marianne, and Eleanor are talking. Marianne argues that “Everybody pretends to feel and tries to describe with the taste and elegance of him who first defined what picturesque beauty was” (Austen, chp. 18). Marianne’s comment shows that Gilpin was well known enough to not be needed to be called by name, and that the debate of what was beautiful was a proper topic of discussion. This comment also shows that Marianne is well versed in the what the picturesque is, like most of the characters in the novel, and has a strong opinion about what other people should seek in a landscape. She is shocked at Edward’s rebelliousness of not liking the picturesque, and cannot understand why he is not embarrassed by not liking it. In reply Edward says “I like a fine prospect, but not on picturesque principles. I do not like crooked, twisted, blasted trees. I admire them much more if they are tall, straight and flourishing. I do not like ruins and tattered cottages. I am not fond of nettles, or heath blossoms. I have more pleasure in a snug farmhouse than a watch-tower and a troop of tidy, happy villagers please me better than the finest bandit in the world.” (Austen, ch.18) Batey argues that this statement rejects the ideals of Knight and Price. She argues Austen thought that the wild look was not beautiful in creation, only being useful in some styles of painting (pg. 123). Brown on the other hand sees it less as reflection on Austen’s landscape tastes and more of a reflection of her desire to be useful, which Edward struggles with. Brown argues that Austen recognized the difference between using the landscape for only beauty, and using it for both beauty and utilitarian purposes, such as farming, or orchards (pg. 27-8). This dialog also reflects some of the interests in *Pride and Prejudice*. The use of nature and the creation of landscapes should not just be to make something that was artificially beautiful, but something that was pleasingly useful.

Comparing the written description to the film version gives more insight into how these descriptions can be taken. In the 1995 (Lee) *Sense and Sensibility*, the scene of them first arriving at the cottage is much more deary than described in the novel. The main shot of the cottage is slightly obscured by a barren tree, and appears cold and very empty (0:27:59). It then cuts to the family standing in silence looking at their new home. Their expressions say it all. The home is a physical representation of their sorrow, grief, and unfortunate new life circumstance as compared to what it had just been. Also in the movie the closeness to the sea is very much focused on. The sea can often be used to show a melancholy state, and it was here. The sea makes things seen colder, and there is such a deepness about the location. The sea is its own force. Brown argues that this movie represents a more Romantic or Victorian era that was a little later than Austen wrote about. The addition of the stormy skies, which were added post filming, to reflect some characters' moods, specifically Marianne's, point out the tone which the director was going for (Brown, pg. 33). In the novel there is a strong focus on the house itself. This is translated to Marianne wandering around on her own before anyone else has gone inside the cottage (Lee, 0:29:24 – 0:29:46). Just as it is in the novel, Sir John's house is used as a comparison. Sir John's house is shown shortly after the cottage and it is a much more cheerful shot (0:31:04). It uses the same type of angle as the cottage but it looks much more lively and happy. This reflects the emotional state of Sir John who is friendly and outgoing. Overall the interpretation of the novel used the setting to bring forward the characters emotional states, acting as symbolic depictions of their situations.

In one of Austen's first novels *Noththanger Abbey*, the description of the Abbey which Catherine arrives at once again, reflects the state of mind of the character. However in this instance it is the stark difference which provides the context. What Catherine wants to see and what she actually sees are two different things. Austen states "As they drew near the end of their

journey, her impatience for a sight of the Abbey — for some time suspended by his conversation on subjects very different — returned in full force, and every bend in the road was expected with solemn awe to afford a glimpse of its massy walls of grey stone, rising amidst a grove of ancient oaks, with the last beams of the sun playing in beautiful splendour 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 an antique chimney” (Austen, chp. 20). Her perception of the mystery of the Abbey makes her want to see it differently. However, no full description of the outside is actually given, because her view was obstructed. This one description is different because the Abbey itself is thought of as something else beside elegant, beautiful, handsome, or expensive. Once again the position of the Abbey is painting like, being thought to be settled by old trees, and being showered in sunlight. The “ruin” of the Abbey can be pictured sitting hidden within the rough overgrown landscape, just like one of Gilpin’s paintings. The proposed descriptions is very full and intriguing, but Catherine does not actually see it. The Abbey is seen as an expression of mysteriousness, which it fails to be, instead being modern and perfectly comfortable.

In the 2017 (Foster) *Northanger Abbey* the Abbey is shown as the carriage is being driven up to it. They stop to look at it and see the stone turrets and the bridge over the water way. It is partially obstructed by trees but it is shown to be somewhat haunting along with the music. This pause to look at the Abbey allows the father to rush by and arrive first (48:19). There is little that seems haunting about it from the outside, but the addition of the music, and peacocks make Catherine see it as a Gothic place (49:00). Heavy shadowing and tone of the actors provide the mysterious nature that Catherine is seeking. Shots that are dark and lowly illuminated provide more background for Catherine's active imagination. The movie goes beyond what the novel does and shows what Catherine is hoping to see. Her disposition in the novel is also pushed forward

and her youth is obvious, along with her naivety. Also the movie adds a shot of the Abbey at the beginning of the movie (3:34) to provide the viewer with more background and cohesion in the story. The world is as Catherine wants to see it, but only for a short time. In the novel she has to look harder for the Gothic mystery than she does in the movie.

In a similar way, as in *Sense and Sensibility*, the discussion of landscape and the knowledge of it is discussed in *Northanger Abbey*. Austen notes that Mr. Tilney and his sister “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. She knew nothing of drawing — nothing of taste: and she listened to them with an attention which brought her little profit, for they talked in phrases which conveyed scarcely any idea to her. 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 a high hill, and that a clear blue sky was no longer a proof of a fine day...and a lecture on the picturesque immediately followed, in which his instructions were so clear that she soon began to see beauty in everything admired by him, and her attention was so earnest that he became perfectly satisfied of her having a great deal of natural taste. He talked of foregrounds, distances, and second distances — side-screens and perspectives — lights and shades; and Catherine was so hopeful a scholar that when they gained the top of Beechen Cliff, she voluntarily rejected the whole city of Bath as unworthy to make part of a landscape. Delighted with her progress, and fearful of wearying her with too much wisdom at once, Henry suffered the subject to decline, and by an easy transition from a piece of rocky fragment and the withered oak which he had placed near its summit, to oaks in general, to forests, the enclosure of them, waste lands, crown lands and government, he shortly found himself arrived at politics;”(Austen, chp.14). Batey notes Catherine’s awe at her companions’ knowledge of painting and landscape

design. She discusses how the opinions of those on the top of society, pushed certain ascetic ideals. During Austen's era, Gilpin, Price and Knight, were the most influential (Batey, pg.121). Knight liked the more rugged, wild look and wanted to do away with the maintained and groomed styles of many designs. Price was more focused on the abstract with smooth and gradual lines. Bates argues that Austen was not pleased with their ideas, agreeing more with Mr. Seymour, a character in a book written by Knight about his artistic feud with Price, who held that the picturesque was simply monstrous. Bates says Austen accepted the painting and sketching ideas of Gilpin, but rejected Prices and Knights more intangible ideas (pg. 123). The conversation does not have to be taken in this light however. It can be taken in a softer and more humorous light which shows the absurdity of the changing points of view of art. In a way Austen is saying that simply having knowledge about painting and landscapes does not give a person good taste.

Lastly in *Persuasion*, Austen mentions Lyme is a very picturesque way. This is very much a reference to her enjoyment of the scenery and her being happy there (Worsley, 25:15). The characters are depicted as being happy too, although only for a short time. A serious accident occurs there shattering the serenity of the moment. Austen describes Lyme as follows: "They were come too late in the year for any amusement or variety which Lyme as a public place, might offer. The rooms were shut up, the lodgers almost all gone, scarcely any family but of the residents left; and as there is nothing to admire in the buildings themselves, the remarkable situation of the town, the principal street almost hurrying into the water, the walk to the Cobb, skirting round the pleasant little bay, which in the season is animated with bathing-machines and company; the Cobb itself, its old wonders and new improvements, with the very beautiful line of cliffs stretching out to the east of the town, are what the stranger's eye will seek; and a very strange stranger it must be, who does not see charms in the immediate environs of Lyme, to make him wish to know it better. The scenes in its neighbourhood, Charmouth, with its high grounds and extensive sweeps

of country, and still more its sweet, retired bay, backed by dark cliffs, where fragments of low rock among the sands make it the happiest spot for watching the flow of the tide, for sitting in unwearied contemplation; the woody varieties of the cheerful village of Up Lyme; and, above all, Pinny, with its green chasms between romantic rocks, where the scattered forest-trees and orchards of luxuriant growth declare that many a generation must have passed away since the first partial falling of the cliff prepared the ground for such a state, where a scene so wonderful and so lovely is exhibited, as may more than equal any of the resembling scenes of the far-famed Isle of Wight: these places must be visited, and visited again to make the worth of Lyme understood” (Austen, chp. 11). This description is much more expressive than Austen's other descriptions but it does share many similarities. She focuses on space, nature, and how her characters should be reacting to it. In a way it embodies the idea of the picturesque, and like many of her other descriptions reads almost like a painting. She describes the lines which direct the viewer's eyes, and how certain aspects draw the eye more. There is such a maturity in the description, which is somewhat lacking in her earlier novels. It is much more metaphorical and poetic, and also much more telling. The desire to see something again and again to appreciate it is not a simple thing. For some, seeing the sea once is enough, but others may desire to return to it every day. Once again it is emotions which drives the description, her own emotions of nostalgia, and her characters. To Austen the seaside was something more than a place for sightseeing, it was a worthy landscape; the description reflects a holistic combination of Austen's experiences and nature's own beauty. Her familiarity with the area and setting are more obviously drawn from real things, and a specific time period. This is Austen's last novel and it feels like it in a way. Austen was a little older reflecting back and remembering the positivity of walking there herself, and knowing that the beauty of it would continue on after she left. The reference also to the age of the

elements, such as the wall, make the description have a deepness that indicates to the reader how rich this place and her memory is of it.

In the 1999 (Michell) *Persuasion* the trip to Lyme is depicted over a longer period, with various perspectives. The trip begins with a shot of ocean head on (0:49:17). The sun reflecting on the waves and the currents. It is very blue and the focus is directly on the horizon. The rocky shore and cliffs are depicted as the characters look out at the sea, and even including an overturned boat in the long shot style (0:49:38). The characters are very pleased and enjoy the sunshine, foaming wave, sea air while smiling (0:49:57). Austen was drawn to the Cobb when she visited Lyme with her family. Even though she was at the bottom of the hill, where the poorer people stayed, she was able to equally enjoy the views. She saw the sea as a place for passion (Worsley, 25:48). In the movie the characters are shown going across the wall again, and again. One of these instances is a dark silhouette of all the characters in shadow (Michell, 0:52:10). This specifically shows the beauty of the shiny sea. The third time they are shown walking on the coast they meet Mr. Elliot, and the last time is when the accident with Louisa happens. The thing that is brought to the forefront in the movie is the wind. It is inescapable and while Austen references both the sun and wind, it can be overlooked. The wind adds a feeling to the movie which goes beyond the novel. Lyme is something that almost feels encircled, kind of like Bath. It is a place talked of, and seen, but never fully appreciated or understood until left. This film and novel differ from the other descriptions and depictions in their tone and ambiance, but once again Austen places herself in the middle of it, and we read the summation of her experiences.

These four descriptions echo each other, reflecting not only on the historical opinion of landscape at the time, Austen's own critiques of these, and her own experiences, but also the characters' emotional states. The movies each use the basis of these descriptions, pushing some of the underlying emotional content to reflect the subtleties which can be missed in the novels. The

transition from novel to film is difficult in a modern setting, but the viewer is also most likely not as familiar with the specific time period. The original readers of Austen novels perhaps felt more behind these descriptions than a modern reader does because of the context of the era. However, today the descriptions provide room to expand and imagine what could be there. Austen clearly appreciated the picturesque and many of Giplin's ideas. She had her own opinions about beauty and taste and critiqued others such as Price, and Knight in a humorous way. As her descriptions are read again and again a deeper understanding can be felt and a greater appreciation for the young woman who wrote them can be acquired.

Afterward: This project evolved as I researched and wrote it. Landscaping was not an independent idea. It was intertwined with many other arts such as painting, architecture, literature, political ideology, social economic class, and social status. Re-reading Austen's descriptions I was overwhelmed by the depth of them and had a difficult time narrowing down her opinions and ideas within the historical ideas. Typically I write early and get as much down as possible, then edit and delete, but this paper kept getting longer and deeper. It was somewhat successful in including everything I wanted to include, but I wish I had left more energy for editing, and free writing. Overall this project allowed me more insight into Austen's world and provided more respect to her style, ideas, and opinions. When I read the novel that I had to skip this semester (*Mansfield Park*), I will be more appreciative of the things she discusses and sheds light on. I will also be much more critical and aware of the films depictions of her novels, and which directions the directors are taking them. The film tutorials were my favorite part of the class (besides the actual reading). Applying those concepts to multiple movies and comparing those to multiple novels was a challenge, but I felt like it was important to go beyond just one setting. Overall the research was worth it and digging through the descriptions along with the films gave me a deeper understanding of Austen's perspective, knowledge, and opinions. Thank you for the opportunity to stretch my perspective and writing style.

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