



Jane Austen Society of North America Southwest February 2016 Newsletter



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**Jane Austen in
the News!**



**"[Playing hard to get
and the Jane Bennet
effect](#)," in the
*Columbia Daily***

Jane Austen on Film -- 2016



Love & Friendship

Filmmaker Whit Stillman's take on Austen's novella *Lady*



["Alan Rickman -- 10 Key Performances,"](#) including his turn as Col. Brandon in the 1995 *Sense and Sensibility*, are remembered by *The Guardian*.



["The Myers-Briggs Types of 101 Famous Authors,"](#) including Jane Austen, at BookRiot



Wickham comes to Downton Abbey! A story in [The New York Times](#) notes that two actors who have previously played George Wickham appear in the final season of *Downton Abbey*: Matthew Goode (who played Wickham in the television adaptation of *Death Comes to Pemberley* plays Lady Mary's love interest)

Susan debuted at the Sundance film festival in late January with the title *Love & Friendship* (drawing from a title from Austen's juvenilia). It will be released in theaters May 13.

The film stars Kate Beckinsale as Lady Susan and Chloe Sevigny as her friend Alicia Johnson (an American in the film). The two previously starred in Stillman's *Last Days of Disco*. Australian Xavier Samuel plays Reginald DeCourcy and Stephen Fry plays Mr. Johnson.



Stillman first thought of adapting *Lady Susan* for the big screen about a dozen years ago. He turned the delay into an advantage, gathering additional financing that helped make the film true to the Regency era with period costumes and details.

and Adrian Lukis (Wickham in the 1995 BBC mini-series) was in the *Downton Abbey* season opener as a neighbor forced to sell his estate.

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The filmmaker was interviewed recently in such publications as [Vanity Fair](#) and [Indiewire](#) about the film and why Jane Austen is such a good fit for his own style. A related article in Indiewire explored the 25th anniversary of Stillman's [Metropolitan](#), loosely based on *Mansfield Park*. Stillman, Beckinsale, and Sevigny also were recently interviewed by [The Hollywood Reporter](#).

An early review from Justin Chang in [Variety](#) calls Stillman an "unsurprisingly intuitive fit for Austen, but he also knows just how to give her pointed social satire an extra stab of wink-wink postmodern drollery without breaking the spell."

[The Guardian](#) calls Kate Beckinsale a "devious delight" and gives the film four out of five stars.

[Owen Gleiberman](#) was a little less enthusiastic in his review for the BBC.

Pride+Prejudice+Zombies



More than 100 JASNA-SW members attended free advance screenings of the new movie *Pride+Prejudice+Zombies* on January 21-22. The film opens Friday, Feb. 5.

Lily James (*Downton Abbey*, the 2016 *War and Peace* mini-series) stars as Elizabeth Bennet, with Sam Riley (*Maleficent*) as Mr. Darcy. Bella Heathcote (*Dark Shadows*) plays Jane, with Douglas Booth (the 2011 *Great Expectations*) as Mr. Bingley. Charles Dance and Sally Phillips (*Bridget Jones's Diary*) portray the elder Bennets. Lena Headey (*Game of Thrones*) and Matt Smith (*Doctor Who*) play Lady Catherine and Mr. Collins, with Jack Huston as Wickham and Ellie Bamber as Lydia. Burr Steers directed the film and wrote the screenplay based on Seth Grahame-Smith's book, which borrowed very loosely from Austen.



Having read the book and now seen the film, I'll share this short, spoiler-free review. The movie version is a vast improvement on the book, as it actually uses Austen dialogue and attempts to re-envision *Pride and Prejudice* in a Regency world overtaken by zombies (rather than mostly just borrowing the title and character names, which was about all the book managed to accomplish in my view).



The acting in general was quite good, in my opinion, and most of the cast could play the same roles in a straight-up filmed version of the novel and be warmly received by most Austen fans. Matt Smith was particularly fun as Mr. Collins (or, as called in this film, Parson Collins -- presumably because Sony thinks American audiences would be confused by him being called Mr.). And I thought Lily James made a fine Lizzy Bennet (or, here, Liz).

The film will certainly not be every Austen fan's cup of tea, but I enjoyed it a great deal more than I expected to. But I'm pretty happy anytime I hear Austen dialogue on film.
--Susie Wampler



Bridget Jones's Baby



Bridget Jones is returning to the screen and, more importantly, so is Colin Firth's Mark Darcy! Hugh Grant is out, with Patrick Dempsey making the third in the love triangle this time. Jim Broadbent and Gemma Jones are back as Bridget's parents, along with James Callis and Sally Phillips as her friends Tom and Shazza. Release is scheduled for Sept. 16.



Sharon Maguire is helming again, with David Nicholls and Emma Thompson credited as writers in addition to Helen Fielding.

Read more in [Entertainment Weekly](#), [Vanity Fair](#), and [Marie Claire](#).





2016 Festival of Books

Los Angeles Times
**FESTIVAL
OF BOOKS**
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

JASNA Southwest will once again have a booth this spring at the *Los Angeles Times* Festival of Books, to be held April 9-10 at USC. If you're planning to attend the festival to pick up new books, meet and greet authors, and get your books signed, be sure to stop at the JASNA-SW booth! We will have an array of Austen-themed books and merchandise, as well as book signings with Austen-related authors, including Kate Rorick (*The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*).

For even more fun, please consider volunteering. We have numerous activities on which we could use your help. For instance, you can greet and engage visitors to the booth or assist with set up and decorating. We also need help with sales and breaking down the booth at the end of the festival. Best of all, you get to meet and talk with others interested in Jane Austen!

To volunteer, email [Emily Bergman](mailto:Emily.Bergman@jasna.org). Please indicate

the times you are available: Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon, Sunday morning, and/or Sunday afternoon. Thank you!

Jane Austen Spring Assembly



The Jane Austen Spring Assembly
Victorian Tea and Dance Society
March 13, 2016
11 a.m.-11 p.m.
South Pasadena Masonic Lodge
1126 Fair Oaks Avenue
South Pasadena 91030

Cost of attendance is \$90 before February 10 and then \$105 until sold out. No tickets are sold at the door.

Price includes two meals (tea lunch and Regency supper), dance classes, lectures and gaming hall, evening Regency Ball with caller Judee Pronovost, and live music.

Regency costumes are highly recommended for the all-day affair.

For more information, visit the [Victorian Tea and Dance Society](#) website.

Reading Groups

Upcoming Meetings/Info



*The San Fernando Valley Reading Group
at its January 2016 meeting*

Send us photos from your reading group so we can share them here, on our Facebook page, and/or the JASNA-SW website.

Sunday, February 21, 1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.

West Los Angeles Reading Group

Shirley by Charlotte Bronte

Discussion leader: Dr. Charles Lynn Batten

This group is at capacity and cannot accept new members. Current members may email [Clara Browda](mailto:Clara.Browda@jasna-sw.org) or call her at 310-278-8759 for more information on upcoming meetings.

Sunday, February 28, 5 p.m.

Santa Monica Reading Group

Matters of Fact in Jane Austen by Janine Barchas

Location: Diana Birchall's Santa Monica home
(email/call for address)

For more information, email [Diana Birchall](mailto:Diana.Birchall@jasna-sw.org) or call her at 310-394-2196.

Saturday, March 5, 2-4 p.m.

San Fernando Valley Reading Group

Jane's Fame by Claire Harman

For more information, email [Cheryl Cole](mailto:Cheryl.Cole@jasna-sw.org) or call her at 310-422-5475.

Sunday, March 6, 1:30 p.m.

Westside/405 Reading Group

Jane Austen: A Life in Small Things by Paula Byrne

For more information, email [Karen Berk](#) or call her at 310-477-6753.

Saturday, March 12, 1:30 p.m.

Long Beach Reading Group

Persuasion by Jane Austen

For more information, email [Gerda Kilgore](#) or call her at 562-496-4452.

Sunday, March 13, 2-4 p.m.

South Bay Reading Group

Location: Redondo Beach (email/call for address)

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

To RSVP or for more information, email [Jeanine Holguin](#) or call her at 805-444-8999.

Sunday, May 15, 2-4 p.m.

San Fernando Valley Reading Group

Ivanhoe by Sir Walter Scott

For more information, email [Cheryl Cole](#) or call her at 310-422-5475.

Additional Reading Groups

Pasadena Area Reading Group

This group is at capacity and cannot accept new members. Current members may email [Susan Ridgeway](#) or call her at 626-357-1397 for information on upcoming meetings.

The San Gabriel Valley Reading Group is accepting members. Email [Kelly Duir](#) or call her at 909-967-6630.

Riverside County Reading Group

Meetings are held at the Temecula Public Library, 30600 Pauba Road, Temecula, in Community Room B. For more information, email [Rebecca Weersing](#) or call her at 951-595-7046.

Ventura Reading Group

The group usually meets on the third Saturday of every month at 11:30 a.m. in the E.P. Foster Library, 651 E. Main Street, Ventura, California 93001, 805-648-2715.

San Diego Reading Group

Although San Diego is a separate JASNA region, many JASNA-Southwest members are interested in San Diego JASNA events and vice versa. For information on upcoming San Diego JASNA meetings, email [Jeanne Talbot](mailto:Jeanne.Talbot@jasna.org) or call her at 808-342-0666.

Join us on Facebook

Are you on Facebook? So is JASNA-SW! Stay connected in between our meetings and e-newsletter updates, share your Austen-related stories, favorites, travel, and more with fellow Janeites!

