



Jane Austen Society of North America, Southwest Region

August 2019 Newsletter

FRANKENSTEIN



'Jane Austen Meets Mary Shelley'

Saturday, September 14

Chapman University

[Registration](#) is now open for our fall meeting at Chapman University with the theme "Jane Austen Meets Mary Shelley" on Saturday, September 14.

The full-day event will include a light continental breakfast and a boxed lunch, and we will have three dynamic speakers: UCLA Distinguished Research Professor Anne Mellor; who has written extensively about Mary Shelley as well as Jane Austen; author and Professor John Kessel of North Carolina State University, whose works include a mashup of *Frankenstein* and *Pride and Prejudice*; and author Victoria Shorr, whose latest book explores three women -- Jane Austen,

Mary Shelley and Joan of Arc -- as they face their greatest challenges.

We'll be giving away a book each to the first to answer a couple of special trivia questions on unique connections between Jane Austen and *Frankenstein*.



John Kessel

John Kessel is the author of the novels *Pride and Prometheus*, *The Moon and the Other*, *Good News from Outer Space*, *Corrupting Dr. Nice* and, in collaboration with James Patrick Kelly, *Freedom Beach*. His short story collections are *Meeting in Infinity* (a *New York Times* Notable Book), *The Pure Product* and *The Baum Plan for Financial Independence and Other Stories*.

Kessel's stories have twice received the Nebula Award given by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, in addition to the Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award, the Locus Poll and the James Tiptree Jr. Award.

In 2009, *Pride and Prometheus* received both the Nebula Award and the Shirley Jackson Award. In the novel, Mary Bennet falls for the enigmatic Victor Frankenstein and befriends his Creature, fusing Mary Shelley's gothic horror and Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

Kessel holds a BA in Physics and English and a PhD in American Literature. He helped found and served as the first director of the MFA program in creative writing at North Carolina State University, where he has taught since 1982. He began teaching a survey course on science fiction that year and has taught *Frankenstein* as the first book in that course for



Anne K. Mellor

Anne K. Mellor is a Distinguished Research Professor of English and Women's Studies at UCLA and the author of books on Mary Shelley, Romantic women writers (including Jane Austen), William Blake and many other British Romantic poets.

Her book *Mothers of the Nation – Women's Political Writing in England, 1780-1830* argues that women writers were instrumental in shaping public opinion during the Romantic era. She has authored numerous books, including *Mary Shelley: Her Fiction, Her Life, Her Monsters* and *Romanticism and Gender*. She edited the first collection of feminist essays on *Romantic writing, Romanticism and Feminism* and is the co-editor of an anthology of canon-transforming Romantic writing, *British Literature 1780-1830*, as well as of *The Other Mary Shelley* and *Passionate Encounters in a Time of Sensibility*.

Her numerous awards and fellowships include the Keats-Shelley Association Distinguished Scholar Award, the UCLA Distinguished Teaching Award, two Guggenheim Fellowships and three National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Seminar for College Teachers directorships.

She earned her BA summa cum laude from Brown University and her MA and



Victoria Shorr

Victoria Shorr's first novel, *Backlands*, was named one of Booklist's top 10 first novels of 2015.

She co-founded the Archer School for Girls, and the Pine Ridge Girls' School in South Dakota, the first independent, culturally based, college-prep school for girls on a Native reservation in America.

Her most recent book, *Midnight: Three Women at the Hour of Reckoning*, was published in March 2019 and focuses on three women as they face their greatest challenge – a homeless Jane Austen, Joan of Arc at the stake and Mary Shelley in Italy as she contemplates a potential future without her husband.

Shorr lives in New York and California. She earned her bachelor's degree from Wellesley College.

A review of her new book:

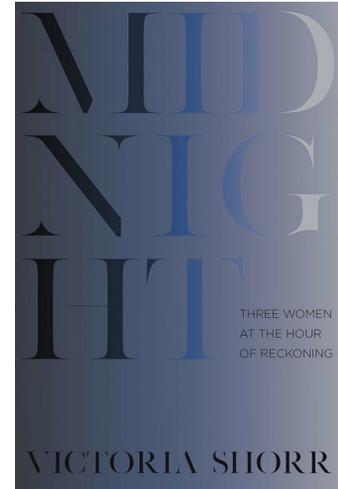
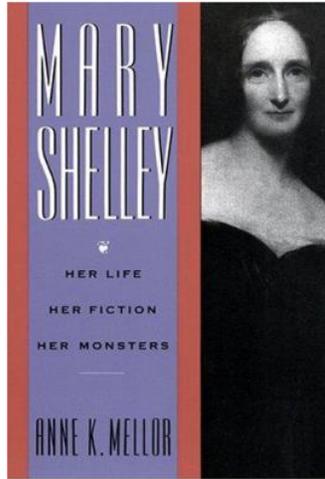
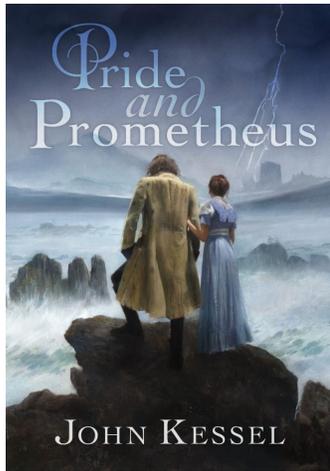
"[A] gripping, imaginative foray into the lives of Austen, Shelley, and Joan of Arc, as each faced a life-altering event. This book gives us the compelling stories we've always wished they'd recorded: Austen accepting an eligible man's marriage proposal, only to withdraw it; Shelley writing *Frankenstein* as her life careened out of control; and Joan of Arc's thoughts, in and beyond the flames." Devoney Looser, Foundation Professor of

most of that time.

He lives and works in Raleigh, N.C., with his wife, author Therese Anne Fowler.

PhD in English and Comparative Literature from Columbia University.

English at Arizona State University and author of *The Making of Jane Austen*



Five Reasons to Promote Our Young Filmmakers Contest



JASNA SW 2019 YOUNG FILMMAKERS CONTEST

By Erika Kotite

1. It's good for Jane Austen. Cinema and the digital realm have given Jane Austen and her works a firm hold in the collective imagination of our modern age. As Southwest region members, we have an opportunity and obligation to nurture this.
2. It's good for our reputation. The Young Filmmakers Contest is our own brainchild and we have a responsibility to help it grow.
3. It's good for boosting relevance. Not since JASNA's Young Writers Workshop launched in 2001 has there been a new way for students to learn more about Jane Austen through the creative process.
4. It's good for the future of cinema. Emma Thompson. Andrew Davies. Amy Heckerling. Hank Green. All of these industry greats helped create films or other forms of media around the novels of Jane Austen. Wouldn't it be satisfying to give aspiring filmmakers their first chance at success?
5. It's good fun! Our submissions have been creative and delightful interpretations of Austen's novels and themes. The more we get, the better the results.

Popcorn, anyone?

How to Promote the Contest

Word of mouth: Encourage the students in your circle to enter.

Social media: Many of you are likely film buffs and participate in special interest groups, whether it's Facebook or others. Spread the word.

Flyers: Teachers, please print the contest flyer and bring it with you to your classroom!

Everyone else: Ask your favorite bookstore to place it on the counter.

This is a contest for high school, undergraduate and graduate students, designed to encourage study, interpretation of and appreciation for Jane Austen in the generations ahead.

Films must be five minutes or less and should be adapted from, or inspired by, Jane Austen's writing or life.

Entries are due by November 1, 2019. Our website has [Young Filmmakers Contest entry forms](#) and more information.



Sanditon Trailer Released



The official trailer for the eagerly anticipated [Sanditon mini-series](#) is now online!

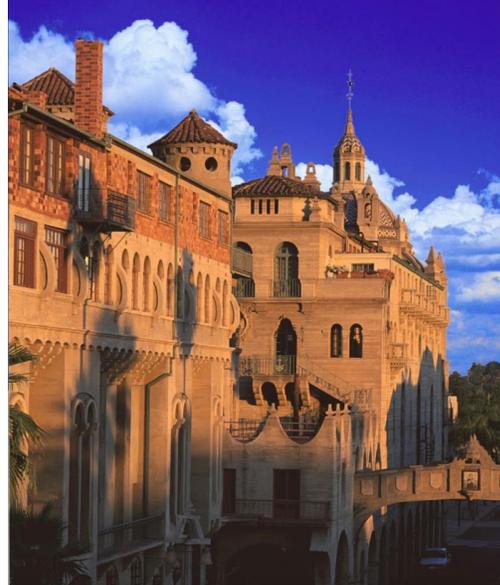
Based on the unfinished novel Jane Austen was working on shortly before her death in 1817, *Sanditon* is being brought to life by award-winning screenwriter Andrew Davies, who has already adapted *Pride and Prejudice* (1995), *Sense and Sensibility* (2008), *Northanger Abbey* (2007) and *Emma* (1996) as well as *Les Misérables* (2019) and *War and Peace* (2016). The eight-part production of *Sanditon* for ITV and MASTERPIECE will air in 2020.

The series stars Rose Williams as Charlotte Heywood, Theo James as Sidney Parker, Kris Marshall as Thomas Parker and Anne Reid as Lady Denham.

© Red Planet Pictures / ITV 2019



Mission Inn in the News



In anticipation of our very special spring meeting, set for May 2, 2020, at the beautiful and historic Mission Inn Hotel and Spa in Riverside, take a look at this article from the [July 6 Los Angeles Times](#) feature that highlights the Mission Inn and some of the other special places in its immediate environs.

Our theme for the meeting will be "Miss Austen Goes to Washington: Jane Austen and Politics." We have already booked two speakers: Congressman Mark Takano (who launched a Jane Austen reading group in Congress) and Austen scholar Sheryl Craig (author of *Jane Austen and the State of the Nation*).

It's not too early to book a room at the Mission Inn Hotel and Spa in Riverside for our event if you wish to spend the night instead of just commuting for the meeting. When booking, call the hotel's reservations department at 800-843-7755 or 951-784-0300, extension 850. Our discounted rates cannot be booked online. You must reference the Jane Austen Society, Southwest Region, Guest Room Block, to receive the group rates, which are available for both Friday and Saturday nights.

Additional nearby hotel options will be shared in an upcoming newsletter as well as in the registration materials as the event draws nearer.



In Memoriam: Gerda Kilgore

Gerda Kilgore was born in what was then West Germany. While studying English, she discovered Jane Austen.

She met the man who would become her husband during college. After they married, they came to the United States, where she worked as a teacher at a private K-12 school until 2017, when she and her husband retired and moved to Portugal to begin a new life. They spent a year touring Europe and had just returned to settle in their new home when she became ill. Her family from both sides of the Atlantic gathered to be with her.



Gerda was well-known and beloved to many in JASNA Southwest. Not long after the turn of the millennium, she teamed up with Margot Scheibe, another German-born Austen enthusiast, to form the Long Beach Reading Group. She led lively discussions of Austen novels as well as period literature and nonfiction related to Jane Austen, while Margo hosted, offering sumptuous refreshments, including many home-baked German specialties that were hugely popular among the members.

When Margo passed away, Gerda became sole leader until her return to Europe. She was

also an active participant in the Southwest Region, and often volunteered at the JASNA Southwest booth at the *Los Angeles Times* Festival of Books.

Gerda will be truly missed for the friendship, humor, enthusiasm and the love of "all things Austen" that she brought to each reading group session. She leaves a legacy of continued discussion and fellowship around the author we all love. May she rest in peace. --
Sherwood Smith, Long Beach Reading Group leader



Reading/Game Groups

Wednesday, August 7

San Gabriel Valley Reading Group

Tour of the Doheny mansion and grounds in Beverly Hills, followed by a visit to the Getty Center, where the group will have lunch. The day will conclude with dinner at Maria's Italian. For more information, contact [Kelly Duir](#).

Sunday, August 11, 1 p.m.

Riverside Reading Group

The Real Jane Austen: A Life in Small Things by Paula Byrne
Pride and Prometheus by John Kessel
For more information, contact [Vicki Broach](#).

Sunday, August 11, 5 p.m.

Santa Monica Reading Group

Summer by Edith Wharton
For more information, contact [Kathi Stafford](#).

Sunday, August 11, 1:30-4 p.m.

West Los Angeles Reading Group

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
This group is at capacity and cannot accept new members. Current members may contact [Clara Browda](#) for more information.

Wednesday, August 14, 6:30 p.m.

Janeites Reading Trollope

The Small House at Allington by Anthony Trollope
For more information, contact [Lora Walker](#).

Saturday, August 17, 10 a.m.

North Orange County Reading Group

Mansfield Park by Jane Austen (part two)
Location: Panera Bread in Fullerton
For more information, contact [Melissa Buell](#) or visit the group's [Facebook page](#).

Saturday, August 24, 2:30 p.m.

Film Group

Pride and Prejudice (2003)
For more information, contact [Teresa Chien](#).

Saturday, September 7

Long Beach Reading Group

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
For more information, contact [Sherwood Smith](#).

Saturday, September 7

South Bay Reading Group

The Tenant of Wildfell Hall by Anne Bronte
For more information, contact [Jeanine Holguin](#).

Sunday, September 8

Pasadena Area Reading Group

Northanger Abbey by Jane Austen
This group is at capacity and cannot accept new members. Current members may contact

[Susan Ridgeway](#) for more information.

Saturday, September 21, 2:30 p.m.

Jane Austen Game Group (West Los Angeles)

Join fellow Janeites for attendee choice of Austen-related games.

For more information, contact [Teresa Chien](#).

Saturday, September 21, 10 a.m.

North Orange County Reading Group

Mansfield Park by Jane Austen (part three)

Location: Panera Bread in Fullerton

For more information, contact [Melissa Buell](#) or visit the group's [Facebook page](#).

Saturday, September 21, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

San Gabriel Valley Reading Group

Mansfield Park by Jane Austen (chapters 1-24)

Location: Pasadena Library TBA

For more information, contact [Kelly Duir](#).

Saturday, September 21, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Ventura County Reading Group

Northanger Abbey by Jane Austen

Location: E.P. Foster Library, 651 E. Main Street, Ventura

For more information, contact [Priscilla Diamond](#).

San Diego Region

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, or to RSVP for, upcoming San Diego JASNA meetings, visit [JASNA San Diego's Facebook page](#).



JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY
OF NORTH AMERICA

Visit our website!



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