The Afterlife of Jane Austen

Wednesday, February 27, 2019 | Rudder 601
Coffee and Conversation at 10:00 am, program begins at 10:30 am

Abstract

Despite her death in 1817, Jane Austen continues to make appearances in recent and contemporary popular culture. As a woman writer long loved (and also long hated) for her contributions to our understanding of marriage, manners, style, and even the erotic, she appears frequently on commodities (t-shirts and coffee mugs, tote bags and bumper stickers), in sequels and fan fiction, and in film, television, and online adaptations. She has even been known to crop up in media discussions of world and national politics. Using specific examples of Austen’s presence in our culture as an image or a reference, “The Afterlife of Jane Austen” invites us to examine some of these ghostly manifestations of Austen as a way to think about how and why we choose to reimagine her as we do, what we are thinking about when we invoke her image. Considering this author’s cultural afterlife means thinking not only about Jane Austen but about us.

About the Speaker

Mary Ann O’Farrell is associate professor of English, specializing in the works of Jane Austen and of Henry James, the novel of manners, and representations of disability. Her award-winning monograph Telling Complexions: The Nineteenth-Century English Novel and the Blush brought her international recognition as an expert on representations of the body in nineteenth-century British literature and culture. Editor of Virtual Gender: Fantasies of Subjectivity and Embodiment, she is also the author of numerous articles and book chapters on such topics as literary self-consciousness, women and envy, the practices of manners, women and detective fiction, and images of blindness in literature and film. Her work on Jane Austen has been discussed in a range of media, including The Atlantic and The New York Times. At Texas A&M, she has won AFS Distinguished Achievement Awards for Teaching at the university and college levels, as well as an Honor Teacher-Scholar Award. She is currently completing a book about appearances of Jane Austen in contemporary popular culture.

RSVP by Wednesday, February 20th to facultyretirees@tamu.edu or 979-862-2761
Please include first and last name for you and your guest (if bringing) for nametag(s)