5-2014

Femininity, Pinterest, and the Appropriation of Jane Austen

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A thesis

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Communication

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Professional Communication

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by
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May 2014

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ABSTRACT

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by

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This analysis is an examination of the use of Jane Austen quotes on the social networking site Pinterest in order to explore the messages disseminated by the dismantling of Austen's works. Austen's novels contain subtle feminist ideals that empower women to find their own unique paths. Pinterest has a large female following and the messages created and shared by women hold importance because they highlight salient values and ideas. The quotes collected were analyzed using a feminist rhetorical method. Questions of whether women were empowered outside the private sphere and encouraged to engage in independent thought guided the analysis. Findings indicated that Austen's words are removed from context in order to reinforce hegemonic ideas of beauty, love, and intelligence. Women can engage in independent thought and exist outside the home as long as they follow socially prescribed rules that create unattainable standards and contradictory dichotomies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"I do not think I ever opened a book in my life which had not something to say upon woman's inconstancy. Songs and proverbs, all talk of woman's fickleness. But perhaps you will say, these were all written by men."

"Perhaps I shall. Yes, yes, if you please, no reference to examples in books. Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands. I will not allow books to prove anything."
— Jane Austen, *Persuasion*

Jane Austen used her novels to illustrate that women had the capability to think for themselves and govern their own lives. She picked up the male pen and wrote her own story. To be a woman and author during the 18th century was a feminist action that could bring censure and shame in a time where respectable women did not write (Fergus, 2011; Kirkham, 1983). Fergus noted that authorship entailed publicity and gaze from the public eye, which resulted in a loss of femininity. Austen and many other female authors such as Frances Burney and Anne Radcliffe chose to publish their first novels anonymously. Many female authors created works that are still studied today, but none have garnered the recognition and continued popularity that Jane Austen has and still receives throughout the world. Austen produced six novels that have been adapted and transformed to entertain and educate even in contemporary times. Although her novels were written in a time different from ours, her realism and philosophies are still relevant. As Austen's works are adapted to fit into our time, her words and themes are modified to be more entertaining or marketable. In a review of Austen's journey to film, Parrill (2002) stated "They (Austen's novels) tell good stories –simple love stories which are still appealing, particularly to a female audience" (p. 3). Appallingly, after centuries of publication and scholarly recognition, Austen's novels are referred to as simple love stories. These love stories are used to create idealized standards of love with a focus on the feminine role. A contradiction arises when one considers

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Austen as more than a romance novelist and woman interested in things other than love. Social retelling of Austen is important because if we are not careful the true content of a female author will slowly be eroded until all that remains is a simple love story. By creatively manipulating Austen's or any other female's words, we experience a loss of both their viewpoint and their experience. Uniqueness is lost, and a cookie cutter version of the ideal woman takes center stage to ensure the continued performance of hegemonic femininity.

Some critics argue that Austen was simply a romance novelist whose only interests consisted of money, marriage, and love. Her status as a feminist is largely unacknowledged and ignored because she chose to write stories ending with marriage. During Austen's time, novels written for women by a woman were seen as having no literary significance and were greatly disliked by intellectuals and the upper class (Brownstein, 2001; Ivins, 2011). The general perception of women consisted of them maintaining "modest, retiring, essentially domestic and private" functions within society (Fergus, p. 2, 2011). How could a good woman who correctly performed her role have any useful public knowledge or have an experience differing from every other woman? Henry James contended that Austen's talent was a "part of her unconsciousness" as though she "fell a musing over her work basket" and picked up her dropped stitches as pieces of masterful imagination (as cited in Booth, 1983, p. 243). This type of criticism perpetuated the stereotype of women existing and creating in the private sphere as well attributes any intellectual value a woman may have to a happy accident. Although James stripped Austen of her intelligence, her family would have stood behind the portrayal of her as a homebody. Austen's brother, Henry, introduced her to the world (after her death) as a pious and prudish homebody, which led to disconnection between Austen and any "radical" ideas of women's independence (Kirkham, 1983). His accounts of her personality and demeanor fed myths of her being

"ladylike, unmercenary, unprofessional, private, delicate, and domestic" (Fergus, 2011, p. 1). It was unpopular to directly associate oneself with feminist thought due to a scandalous memoir of writer Mary Wollstonecraft written by her husband. The memoir revealed Wollstonecraft had a child out of wedlock, had illicit affairs, rejected Christianity, and attempted suicide (Kirkham, 1983; Smith, 2000). Whether Henry had drawn comparisons between his sisters work and Wollstonecraft's is unknown, but Austen most likely read Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* and her novels shared similar ideas to those presented in Wollstonecraft's works (Kirkham, 1983). Evans (2006) noted that both Wollstonecraft and Austen "subvert the boundaries between constructions of masculinity and femininity" (p. 18). Austen used her brilliant skill and wit to wrap her feminist inclinations inside of love stories. If love is viewed as a superficial theme of Austen's novels, it is easy to see that she is writing about the female experience (Morrison, 1994). Austen's works are full of what Johnson (1974) called vigorous and independent ideas that were meant to reflect a truthful picture of society. Austen's novels illustrated female culture during her time and offered the world her feminine gaze (Morrison, 1994). Morrison noted that Austen's novels were most likely not written for men and that is why the focus of her novels remained on her heroines and their ability to retain agency.

Austen wrote six novels within her short lifetime, with two of the six being published posthumously. Her first published novel was *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) followed by *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), and *Emma* (1815). *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey*, published after Austen's death in 1817, included the biographical piece by Henry Austen revealing his sister Jane's authorship.

The adaptation of Austen to the stage inspired Harpo Marx to bring Austen to the movie screen (Brownstein, 2001). Debuting in 1940, *Pride and Prejudice* served as Hollywood's first

attempt to bring Austen to life and it reduced her novel to a hunt for a husband. Marketing for the film read "Bachelors Beware! Five Gorgeous Beauties are on a Madcap Manhunt" and the dialogue from the book was condensed to simple phrasing (Brownstein, 2001, p. 85). The marketing for this film reduced Austen's novel to a story about attractive, crazy women who needed to find a man, any man, immediately. Brownstein noted that between 1952 and the late 1980s cinematic representations of Austen's works became less about romance and focused more on respect and realism. She also argued that the turnaround most likely resulted because of the feminist movements of the 1970s. According to Brownstein films after the 1980s reflected Austen's irony and assume a general public knowledge of Austen's novels. These films respected Austen's dialogues and displayed her heroines as more than attractive women on a manhunt. The general public's knowledge of Austen's story lines meant that screen writers had less freedom to manipulate story lines and characters to achieve their own ends.

Austen's novels have been consistently adapted to new forms of technology such as film, television, and the internet. Her representation and transformation on the internet is just as important as her journey to film and television. The internet is easily accessible to the public, who can then shape what they want to see and how they want to see it. Users of the social networking site Pinterest have freedom to create the images they see and the quotes that are read by themselves and other members of the site. Pinterest, launched in 2010, has become one the fastest growing social networking sites (Stellerecht, 2012). Pinterest functions as a virtual pin board where users can pin (share) images of everything from clothing to architecture and organize the pins into discrete categories. Members can search Pinterest for images, upload their own images or pin images from other online sites. Every time a pinner uploads or pins an Austen quote a choice is made about what ideas from Austen's novels hold importance. Pinterest's

largest following is composed of Austen's target audience: women. According to Tekobbe (2013) an estimated 87% of Pinterest users are women. The power of creation and acknowledgement lies in these women's hands. Unlike film or television, individuals have a say in what they choose to be exposed to and the messages they expose others to. Are women today embracing Austen's words advocating education and equality or are they simplifying her down to a romantic writer with an emphasis on domesticity? Austen's appearance on the internet causes her to occupy what feminists argue is a masculine space. Feminist technologists argue the technology sector views women who use Pinterest as "a community of women who indulge in silly feminine daydreams" and assume women use Pinterest only to shop and plan their dream weddings (Tekobbe, 2013, p. 382). This opinion of women illustrates that although we are far removed from the 18th century, opinions of women's main interests being centered on marriage and self-beautification are still prevalent.

Women have been constantly fighting discourses reinforcing hegemonic feminine roles. In the early stages of the feminist movement, fighting for equality, survival outside the home and impacting the world around them prompted women into action. Women began to find their voice and began to break down educational, political, and some marital strongholds. Although women and have moved mountains and shattered the proverbial glass ceiling with the feminist movement, inequality survives. At the start of the feminist movement inequalities were blatantly obvious, now the postfeminist movement suggests that women's struggles are over and that women have effectively removed all barriers (Douglas, 2010; Joseph, 2009). As these postfeminism ideas spread it is important to critically asses the messages women receive in order to ascertain how far we have come.

<u>Preview</u>

This project explores how Austen quotes are being used on the social networking site Pinterst. In order to investigate how the quotes pinned communicate social expectations and stereotypes for women, a feminist rhetorical method was used to guide my analysis. As I conducted my analysis I was guided by the following questions: Are women being empowered to enjoy life both in and outside of the home? Are women being encouraged to engage in independent thought? These questions are important because they explore whether women are being empowered by the social media they consume or refitted into hegemonic social roles. Austen provided a way to discuss these issues because her works contained themes of independence and a life of one's own choosing.

Chapter 2 examines Austen's life, her status as a feminist, and the reconstructions of her work. I review Austen's unique background and how it allowed her to flourish as a female writer. The female characters she created embody what was at that time very unfeminine behavior. Austen allowed women to grow into their own concept of femininity and none of her characters have the same journey. Although her novels end in marriage, the main focus of the novel is not the romance, it is the journey. Austen offered empowering examples of women who defy conventions and are respected by their male counterparts.

In chapter 3, I present feminist rhetorical criticism. Feminism has evolved and changed since its conception. Many women originally began fighting to solve social issues, but their struggle evolved into a cry for equality. Women's presence in the public sphere and their sense of unity was attacked and at times repackaged by patriarchal authorities. Although fractured, feminists made strides towards women's equality. Women found a unique voice to empower themselves while simultaneously working to create a public space for themselves. Many of their

words disappeared, but scholars worked hard to rediscover and reintroduce their unique voices to the rhetorical cannon. The methods feminist speakers and groups used created an interesting history of struggling between the masculine and feminine ways of speaking that impacted and shaped contemporary feminist criticism. Recently, the idea that women and other oppressed groups have successfully achieved equality has become prevalent. Despite the appearance of equality, women's status and place in society has not changed, it has simply been repackaged (Douglas, 2010). This chapter also outlines the methodology and goals of the current study.

Chapter 4 contains my analysis of Austen quotes using a feminist rhetorical method. The quotes were organized into themes that were then broken down into categories. Each category was examined to see what discourses it produced in regards to women. The analysis showed that although some empowering categories are contained within the quotes, when examined as a whole they communicate hegemonic stereotypes and impossible standards for women.

In the conclusion, the examination of the quotes provided a picture of both empowering and hegemonic discourses. Unattainable standards of love and beauty that Austen would never have intentionally communicated take center stage. Intelligence finds itself confined to the private sphere, while the public demands a performance of ideal femininity. Austen's ironic comments on marriage and money stand alone, out of context, to promote hegemonic ideals. Empowerment can be found in Austen's words dealing with individuality and the female perspective of the home. Quotes also promote women's travel and precious relationships with friends. Unfortunately, the majority of quotes set an unattainable standard for women and feed into hegemonic repackaging of women's words.

CHAPTER 2

JANE AUSTEN

Jane Austen, born in 1775, was George and Cassandra Austen seventh child. George Austen, educated at Oxford, worked as a rector and saw to it that each of his children received an education and supported their educational endeavors. In his biography of Austen, Johnson (1974) stated that "Jane never heard bad grammar or slang" (p. 5). Jane and her sister, Cassandra, were both sent to boarding school to receive a formal education, but Johnson (1974) attributes Jane's genus to her "father's learning and her mother's wit"(p. 5). George Austen had an extensive library and provided his children with whatever they needed to further their creative endeavors. The cultivation of Austen children's minds was important to the family and, although only Jane crafted novels, James and Henry wrote articles, while their brother Frank kept a detailed notebook whose attention to detail is compared to Jane's (Johnson, 1974). Austen was closest to her brother Henry and sister Cassandra, which can be seen in her novels that feature strong sisterly and brotherly bonds between main characters.

Few women had the opportunity to flourish in an environment like the Austen home, where creativity and education were allotted to every child no matter the sex. Upper-middle class (white) women normally received an education about their bodies and emotions in order to continue justification of their exclusion from the public sphere (Evans, 2006). Young women were to be accomplished at keeping house, playing an instrument, entertaining guests rather than chasing intellectual pursuits (Ivins, 2011). Wollstonecraft expounded on the problem of women's education in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* in which she states that women who lack education "do today what they did yesterday, merely because they did it yesterday" (as cited in Evans, 2006, p. 19). Wollstonecraft's arguments for education and other female rights were not

well received by patriarchal society because to call for a woman's education and equality disturbed the social order (Evans, 2006). Women were already being educated in the things they needed to know to become better wives and mothers, all other education was unneeded. With only an education equipping them to be wives and mothers women were forced to rely on marriage for survival. It was not surprising that women during this time would align themselves with antislavery movements. Women were denied an education on any subject other than what their station demanded and they were excluded from the public sphere (Evans, 2006). Although most (white) women lived in a much better state than slaves, their rights were greatly diminished, especially if they were married. Married women had no legal rights and could not own property or sign contracts (Fergus, 2011). With obstacles such as a lack of education and limited work outside the home, many women had no option but to marry. Wollstonecraft's demand for education built on a foundation laid by Mary Astell (1700), who argued for women to be principled and taught the world and way men truly behaved so they could make better decisions about marriage. Astell noted in *Some Reflections upon Marriage* that if a woman actually reflected on marriage she would rarely enter into it.

Austen may not have been raised in a typical household, but society at large held her to the same standards it did all women. George Austen made the first attempt to have *First Impressions (Pride and Prejudice)* published in 1797 and was denied by publisher Thomas Cadell. Although the reason for the denial is unknown, George Austen did imply that the work was written by a female in his letter to the publisher (Kirkham, 1983). Kirkham (1983) stated that "it will not do to approach female authors of this period and divide them into genuine feminists versus the rest, for at this period to become an author was, in itself, a feminist act" (p. 33) A woman writing material that could be consumed by the general public was an invasion of

the male public sphere. A woman who wrote advocating for women's rights was not only an invader but a threat to society. The novel was a new invention during the 18th century. Longer than poetry or drama, it contained realistic characters and taught the reader a moral lesson from the character's experiences (Ivins, 2011). Gerster (2000) argued the novel "gave men and women new ideas about the society they lived in, including a wide variety of ideas about how to understand themselves and behave towards one another" (p. 115). However, many feared problems could arise if a weak minded reader (a woman) allowed a novel's possibly dangerous influence to guide them (Gerster, 2000). The novel opened the door for reflections on women and their status and rather than reaffirming their place, it called into question the cornerstones of society. Gerster considers Austen's defense of the novel a stand against masculine ideas of supremacy while simultaneously authorizing "women's ideas about themselves" (p. 123).   A backlash also ensued over mixed characters. Mixed characters were characters "in whom good and bad qualities were confused" (Kirkham, 1983, p. 16). An example of a mixed character could be Austen's Elizabeth Bennett. Elizabeth is both a dutiful daughter and a stubborn, opinionated individual with no fear of ignoring her mother's wishes. These contradictory notions within one character distorted the norms for individuals. Every character needed to be virtuous, and Austen spurned this "distortion of human nature" in favor of creating characters who were truly realistic (Kirkham, 1983, p. 17). Armstrong contended that Austen understood, as did critiques of the novel, the power of fiction to represent "truth and reality" (as cited in Galperin, 2003, p. 18). She provided "a new image of woman capable of judging for herself" (Gerster, 2000, p, 122).

Truth and reality composed the backbone of Austen's writing that has a distinctly feminist focus on the personal (Morrison, 2002). Hutcheson (1983) characterized Austen as a

"subdued feminist" because she never explicitly attacked patriarchy. Austen is a subdued

feminist but not in the way Hutcheson argues. She does not overtly defy patriarchy and her

works do not explicitly scream "give women equality." Other female writers were overtly saying

these things but they were considered immoral and ostracized from society. Even if a woman

agreed with them, their male guardians (fathers/husbands) would not approve of them joining or

endorsing such a movement. Men controlled money and property and women generally fell into

the category of property. They needed guidance and protection from unsavory influences. How

to reach and then motivate women under patriarchal authority was difficult. Campbell (1973)

noted that women had a low self-concept that left them questioning whether they could transcend

patriarchy to evolve into agents of change. Women needed to realize they had choices and find

their voice. Previous feminist works were written by women who were scandalized, or as in

Daniel Defoe's works *Roxana* and *Moll Flanders*, found agency through theft and selling their

bodies. Prostitution provided economic freedom, but women needed an outlet for agency that did

not objectify them. Austen offered this type of subdued feminism by creating heroines who were

natural and real. Women could relate to the day-to-day details, struggles, and resolutions that

Austen is often criticized for. Marriage functioned as the prominent mode of survival for women,

but Austen offers the idea that a woman can say no even if the man as a good income.

<div align="center">Austen's Heroines</div>

Within Austen's six novels live heroines who defy acceptable behavior for women by

standing up for their own happiness. The heroines in Austen's novels are not immoral but they

stand up for themselves and defy patriarchal figures and societal pressures within the novels. An

insolent woman who refused to do what her family and station asked (demanded) of her was not

a "good" woman. Her heroines mix feminine grace with feminist actions that always results in

happiness. Rather than examine the plot of Austen's novels it is more important to examine the women she created who have captivated readers for centuries.

Pride and Prejudice: Elizabeth Bennett

Elizabeth Bennet, the heroine in *Pride and Prejudice*, is one Austen's most popular characters. The romance between Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy generally becomes the focus of readers and adaptations of the novel. Although Elizabeth is viewed as a witty and intelligent character, she is often left connected to the romance rather than being viewed as her own independent person. Elizabeth embodied feminine morality but noted characteristics about herself that are distinctly masculine: "There is a stubbornness about me that never can bear to be frightened at the will of others. My courage always rises at every attempt to intimidate me" (Austen, 2000, p. 127). Elizabeth dispels the notion that women were by nature subservient and docile (Fergus 2011). Elizabeth refused to marry for financial security despite pressure from her mother and finds herself disappointed by a friend who does. Elizabeth's refusal to a financially acceptable proposal is followed by her stating that "You could not make me happy" (Austen, 2000, p. 80). This portrays a very selfish reason not to marry because it was a woman's job to make sure the man had a happy home not the other way around. Elizabeth showed women that they did not need to conform to the will of others in order to be happy. True happiness could be attained by defending one's own happiness against the will of others. In the end Elizabeth does marry Mr. Darcy, but his choice of her has no basis in her conformity to feminine norms. She is headstrong, opinionated, and confrontational with not only her family but with him.

Emma: Emma Woodhouse

Emma can be viewed as one of Austen's most masculine characters. She embodies the feminine ideal of being a good daughter and excelled in feminine pursuits such as music and

painting. She is attractive and has an outgoing personality. However, Emma's masculine qualities appear in her approach to love and her assertiveness in others' lives. Emma fancies herself a matchmaker because she chooses two people and facilitates their marriage. Her meddling is similar to how a guardian would go about choosing a mate for a ward. She assumes an almost fatherly role with her friend Harriet by guiding her away from a man she believes is too low in status and convincing Harriet to affix her affections on a suitor Emma approves of. When all of Emma's intentions for Harriet fail to materialize, she realizes Harriet could be happy with a man she, herself, chose to marry. When Mr. Knightley gives Emma the news of Harriet's marriage to the man she originally refused, she expects him to address her in masculine rather than feminine manner: "Oh! I always deserve the best treatment, because I never put up with any other; and, therefore, you must give me a plain, direct answer" (Austen, 2009, p. 443). Emma does not want to be addressed with care; she demands and deserves the simple truth of the matter. Because Emma, like a man, has access to her own fortune she has no need to marry:

> I have none of the usual inducements of women to marry. Were I
>
> to fall in love, indeed, it would be a different thing; but I have
>
> never been in love; it is not my way, or my nature; and I do not
>
> think I ever shall. And, without love, I am sure I should be a fool to
>
> change such a situation as mine. (Austen, 2009, p. 82)

Austen drew from Astell's (1700) and Wollstonecraft's notion that if women rely on their own intelligence they can make wise, independent choices about marriage. Emma does not need to get married or fall in love and she is intelligent enough to know her options. Emma's journey is one of self-realization. In her quest for self-improvement she hoped "it would yet find her more rational, more acquainted with herself" (Austen, 2009, p. 396). This is not an indication that she

needed to be more feminine or needed a man's guidance; she simply needed to know and understand herself. Women were not expected to be rational or think about themselves in abstract terms. Bennet noted that only men were capable of abstract thought and that enabled them to be more productive than women in the public sphere (as cited in Walzer, 1995). Emma's options and opinions in choosing a mate are more masculine than feminine and allow her freedom of choice.

Northanger Abbey: Catherine Morland

Catherine Morland serves as one of Austen's most unintelligent heroines. Her journey can be viewed as one from masculine ignorance to feminine intelligence. Austen portrays Catherine in a masculine light from the beginning: "She was fond of all boys' plays, and greatly preferred cricket not merely to dolls, but to the more heroic enjoyments of infancy, nursing a dormouse, feeding a canary-bird, or watering a rose-bush" (Austen, 2002, p. 37). Her ability in feminine pursuits such as drawing, playing music, and speaking French were all unremarkable. "She was moreover noisy and wild, hated confinement and cleanliness, and loved nothing so well in the world as rolling down the green slope at the back of the house"(Austen, 2002, p. 39). As Catherine grows older she begins to adapt to superficial forms of knowledge and femininity. Her masculine inclinations give way to societal femininity. When she arrived in Bath and lived amongst high society she began to experience reality and develops the intelligence to form her own opinions about the world around her. Catherine avoided a disappointing marriage by her refusing to marry a man she disliked. She acknowledges her feminine boundaries and assertively casts them off when she stated, "If I could not be persuaded into doing what I thought was wrong, I never will be tricked into it" (Austen, 2002, p 115). Catherine's intellectual growth allowed her to embrace her own femininity while rejecting society's standards of femininity. Her

journey mirrors what Elizabeth Cady Stanton outlines in her lecture "Our Girls." Stanton advocated for girls to grow up free from artificial constraints and Catherine's upbringing allowed her to indulge in both masculine and feminine pursuits (Strange, 2002). Stanton describes the "coming girl" as self reliant and immune to societal ideals of feminism (Strange, 2002). By the end of *Northanger Abbey*, like the coming girl, Catherine rejected the immortality and expectations of fashionable society while learning to be self-sufficient.

Mansfield Park: Fanny Price

Fanny Price functions as one of Austen's most timid characters, who some argue embodied feminism more than the others (Despotopoulou, 2004; Evans, 2006). Fanny created her own unique feminine space within the novel and resists both the male gaze and the marriage market (Despotopoulou, 2004; Evans, 2006). Fanny had neither money nor an education, but she operates on a rational level and observes the inconsistencies in the world around her. Evans noted that Austen's heroines always have the ability to command whatever limitations they are under. Although Fanny lacked the feminine graces of her wealthy cousins, she embodied the feminine qualities of docility and obedience throughout most of the novel. Although she is obedient she asserts herself against patriarchal domination when she refused to marry Henry Crawford. She placed herself in a place of superior judgment of his character and refuses him against her uncle's wishes. Fanny has few options to support herself outside of marriage because of her lack of education and wealth. She operated around this limitation in a masculine fashion by refusing the easy way out and assuming control of her own life no matter the consequences. Her opinion of her own rationale is masculine in that she trusts her own judgment: "We have all a better guide in ourselves, if we would attend to it, than any other person can be" (Austen, 2004, p. 358). She asserts that women and men can guide their own lives better than anyone else can.

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Austen used Fanny to endorse rationality and reason to "subvert patriarchal society," which in turn endorses women's equality to men (Evans, 2006, p. 21).

Persuasion: Anne Elliot

Anne Elliot succumbed to societal pressures and ends an engagement with the man she loved, Captain Wentworth. Anne's character can be seen as didactic, in that she shows how miserable and unhappy life can be when one does not follow one's own guidance. Lady Russell (a motherly character) talked Anne out of her engagement because she believed Wentworth to be below Anne in status. Anne allowed herself to be persuaded by bad advice rather than believing herself capable of making a sound decision on her own. Her actions, although harmful to her own future, lined up with how a woman should behave toward the advice of someone with more experience. Anne acts as a dutiful daughter and gives up a man who would not improve her family's connections or status. Wentworth returned wealthy and in search of a wife. He immediately disqualified Anne because of her weak, pliable, and persuadable nature (Walzer, 1995). What disqualified Anne were her feminine characteristics to which society demanded women adhere. Walzer noted that Anne embodied the female role of servant to others but she does not receive the fulfillment that conduct books implied a woman received for executing her proper role. Anne must stand up for herself and resist the persuasive forces of Lady Russell once more before she wins Wentworth back. His qualifications for a wife include "strength of mind" and once Anne developed a sense of her own wants and needs she became rational in her pursuit and immune to persuasion by outside forces (Austen, 2009, p. 58). Wollstonecraft advocated strength of mind in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, only she called for a man to have it in order to see the equality of women. Austen's reversal can be interpreted as women need to view themselves as having strong minds before men will view them as equal. Anne's happy ending

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relied on her ability to stop selflessly giving to others and her reliance on her own rational capabilities.

Sense and Sensibility: Elinor and Marianne Dashwood

Elinor and Marianne Dashwood represent two sides of traditional femininity and display the least amount of agency when compared to Austen's other characters. Elinor is dutiful and reserved, while Marianne is passionate and imprudent. Elinor hides all emotion and does her best to be a good daughter but it leaves her with regrets:

> She was stronger alone, and her own good sense so well supported
>
> her, that her firmness was as unshaken, her appearance of
>
> cheerfulness as invariable, as with regrets so poignant and so fresh,
>
> as it was possible for them to be. (Austen, 2003, p. 115)

Elinor fell in love with Edward Ferrars, who she later finds out is engaged to another. Elinor bore her pain alone and masked her emotion to maintain her feminine façade. Elinor's reality mirrored that of *Persuasion's* Anne Elliot, playing the perfect model of femininity left her with unhappy and filled with regret. Marianne functions as Elinor's foil; she displayed her emotions for all to see. Stove (2007) noted that Marianne's inconsiderate outward displays of emotion make her and everyone around her miserable. Once she realized she would not be able to marry the man she loved, she becomes violently ill due to her reckless behavior. Marianne displayed ridiculous characteristics that aligned her with characters Austen often allows unhappy endings. Austen also noted in the beginning of the novel that Marianne's disposition is similar that of her mother; mothers are another one of Austen's unlikable or absent characters (Austen, 2003, p. 6). Austen gave to Marianne what she called an "extraordinary fate" by allowing her realize her own faults and willingly marrying a good man she previously rejected (2003, p. 311).

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Elinor achieved happiness but not from any actions on her own part. Edward's fiancé married his brother instead, which freed him to marry Elinor. The battle within this novel focused more on financial barriers caused by parents disinheriting children who did not comply with their wishes. Marianne's first love left her because he needed a fiancé with an income, while Edward was cut off because of his loyalty to his first fiancé. Although Elinor is not Edward's mother's first choice, she did eventually warm to the idea and welcome him back in the family along with Elinor. Elinor and Marianne do little to work within or around notions of traditional femininity, although they do share the acquisition of self clarity that all Austen heroines receive.

A Heroine's Journey

All of Austen's heroines grew to see themselves and the world around them more clearly. They learned to rely on their own judgments rather than the standards placed on them by class or sex. These strong female characters are always surrounded by other female foils, women who embraced all of society's boundaries and expectations and allow themselves to be unhappy. Elizabeth Bennet has a mother, sisters, and a friend who bought into the idea that one must marry the first available man to offer financial support. One of her marriage-obsessed sisters ran off with a soldier who forced her family to pay him in order to restore her reputation. Emma is contrasted to Harriet, her female friend who is easily influenced and does not trust her own judgment. Fanny Price lived with her two female cousins who had the luxury of an education in every feminine grace, but after marrying a man she does not love her older cousin forsook her husband for another man. Fanny is also contrasted to Mary Crawford, a woman who refused to marry for anything other than wealth. Catherine Moreland realized the fickleness of other women when her brother's fiancé (who is also her friend) left him for a wealthier man. Anne Elliot is

contrasted to her two social climbing sisters and the Musgrove sisters who fall easily in love. The Dashwood sisters, foils to one another, are contrasted to other silly and snobbish female characters. Devlin (1975) argued that Austen's characters are exposed to bitter realities in order to see themselves and those around them more clearly. Austen's heroines received happy endings but they come at the expense of a painful process of self-discovery and a detachment from society's idea of perfect femininity.

Austen and Feminism

Happy endings that result in marriage produced mixed opinions from feminists because of their need to define women as independent outside of marriage. Austen faced criticism from male and female writers of her own time and a struggle continues over whether she was a feminist. Clery (2011) noted that Austen's endings do not actually offer complete resolutions and the type of romance she offered lacks magic and serves as a reward for the tribulations of the characters. Clery also argued that Austen cannot be forced into the cookie cutter fairy-tale romance role and states "although she might bandy about the terminology of a fairy-tale happy ending there is a kind of infantilism about it that Austen the skeptic could never accede to" (p. 166). In 1917 critic Reginald Farrer tapped into the reason why Austen spurns the fairytale ending: "For, while no novelist is more sympathetic to real values and sincere emotion, none also is so keen on detecting false currency, or so relentless in exposing it (Farrer, 1970, p. 21). The fairytale romance that some women still try to achieve is a false social construction. Austen, in her own ironic way, saw the falseness in this and her endings, although happy, give no indication of a life without obstacles.

Although Austen created realistic characters and women who pressed social boundaries, she faced criticism from both men and women. Charlotte Brontë found Austen's fame puzzling and believed she knew little of the actual human heart (Brontë, p. 7, 1970). In her 1848 critique Brontë (1970) called Austen a "most sensible lady, but a very incomplete and rather insensible (not senseless) woman" (p. 7). D.H. Lawrence also attacked Austen as a person and titled his 1930 critique of her "This Old Maid." Throughout he referred to her as an old maid as though her marital status somehow affected her writing. He stated:

> This old maid typifies personality instead of character, and sharp
> knowing in apartness instead of knowing in togetherness, and she
> is, to my feeling, thoroughly unpleasant, English in the bad, mean,
> snobbish sense of the word, just as Fielding is English in the good,
> generous sense. (Lawrence, 1970, p. 32)

Lawrence's attack of Austen is not overtly sexist until he compares her to a male author. Her marital status and sex make her unknowing of true character and knowledge. I find his definitions of types of knowledge interesting. Austen's knowledge does emphasize an apartness of knowledge, a woman's ability to have knowledge apart from a man and her family. Lawrence's characterization of her as unpleasant likely stemmed from the idea that if Austen were pleasant she would have a husband.

Other critics attacked Austen's style, but her sex and marital status still taint their critiques. In 1862 Julia Kavanagh critiqued Austen's dependence on realism and found it to be one of Austen's limitations because "the literary taste of the majority is always tinged with coarseness; it loves exaggeration, and slights the modesty of truth" (1970, p. 11). The truth of

women's situation and society's absurd expectations were a truth that Austen highlighted in her novels. Austen's stories needed no exaggeration because the truth was so absurd and ridiculous it rivaled any fictional story. Where Kavanagh believed Austen's realism would hurt her fan base, H.W. Garrod found Austen's stories repetitive and boring: "Her art shows no development…her range never widens, her tone never deepens" (1970, p. 28). Later in the critique Garrod (1970) complained that Austen's men do not converse with one another and assumed she had no idea how men communicate (p. 29). This complaint with her work is a statement on the perceived importance of men and Austen's marital status and sex. As mentioned earlier, novels written by women did not receive literary credibility. Not only does Garrod deny Austen's talent as a female, he also denied her credibility because the novels focus on the female experience while completely ignoring the masculine. Garrod ignored the idea that Austen was not writing to highlight the intricacies of manhood, she wrote for women.

G.K. Chesterton's (1970) critique viewed Austen's knowledge of men in a different light. Chesterton believed that Austen knew more about men than the Brontë sisters and George Elliot. In his critique he stated, "Jane Austen knew much more about men than either of them. Austen may have been protected from the truth: but it was precious little of truth that was protected from her" (Chesterton, 1970, p. 20). Chesterton opened his 1912 critique emphasizing that Austen was born in a time where women were protected from the truth. Rather than dwelling on Austen's lack of focus on males or her marital status, Chesterton realized she was a woman who knew her true situation and had the confidence to write about it before it was acceptable to do so. Another male critic, George Henry Lewes (1970), also saw Austen's value and stated in 1859: "Her fame, we think, must endure. Such art as hers can never grow old, never be superseded" (p. 10). Lewes had no idea how correct this statement would be. This "Old Maid" stayed in print for centuries

and inspired a multitude of scholarly critiques, novels, essays, films, television shows, merchandise, and blogs.

Contemporary Critics

Contemporary critics find themselves convinced of Austen's feminist inclinations, or question her motives and the end results of her novels. Rapping (1996) likened Austen's endings to a retrograde viewpoint of a woman's fate (p. 37). Brown (1990) argued that feminists find Austen's use of marriage an endorsement of the established hegemonic social order. Clery (2011) countered this viewpoint by offering that Austen resists Cinderella endings by bandying about fairytale language that produced results that are neither magical nor conclusive. Current research on Austen tends to focus on her conservative elements that are highlighted in recent adaptations of her novels leaving the focus on heterosexual love stories (Clery, 2011). Gleaning these types of discourse based on adaptations is easily done because films remove Austen from the political and social constructs of her time. If one generalizes Austen without respecting her irony and the female role during her time she can appear to be antifeminist (Brown, 1973).

According to Clery (2011) Austen's adaptations create problems, but for Wooden (2002) and Looser (2001) the plethora of Austen adaptations signals feminist progression in popular culture. In order to make the claim that Austen's popularity enhances feminism, a look at the themes within Austen's novels is necessary. Some feminists view Austen with ambivalence and see her character's ability to work within their situations as a weakness (Brown, 1990). Brown (1990) noted that feminists regret Austen's female character's ability to deal with contradictions rather than letting it master them. Morrison (1994) contended that Austen, herself, serves a pivotal historical function by looking both forward and backward. Austen saw a history of masculine oppression and at the same time she was positioned to see a steady rise in female

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agency. Austen functioned within a society where overt patriarchy posed no social problem along with the subtle beginnings of a feminist movement. It is easy to look backward and see Austen's contribution as limited but, placed within context, she found her own unique voice before women had any agency or ability to fight on their own behalf. Austen highlighted feminine truth and gave the private sphere a unique voice (Kirkham, 1983).

Similarly to Kirkham (1983), Morrison (1994) argued that Austen's works should be examined for feminine truth rather than inflating the importance of male characters. Brown (1973) also argued that Austen rejects "a biologically inspired concept of human perception and feeling" (p. 326). Austen traded biology for true feminine experiences (Brown, 1973; Evans 2006). The emphasis placed on Austen's heroines was unique and gave validity to women's unique voices. Despotopoulou (2004) noted that Austen's novel offer importance to the personal and private sphere by distinguishing its ability to function without depending on men for significance. Men do function within the novels but their lives hold less significance and importance in comparison with female characters. Jones (2008) noted that male and female ways of knowing are contrasted with the novels in order for them to be transcended. Heroines are confronted with hegemonic masculinity as well as femininity. In order to reach the end of their journeys, heroines maneuver around male power and privilege while actively combating feminine stereotypes of passivity and helplessness. Brown (1990) noted that this portrayal of women who posses power and authority as bad as or worse than men offended many feminists. Austen did not shy away from despicable female characters simply because she was advocating for her sex. Heroines must transcend these ways of knowing in order to create their own unique experience.

Whether a critic views Austen as a feminist or not, it is impossible to deny she wrote about the female experience. Although some question her endings, the self-awareness gained be her heroines' functions as a pathway to their agency. Austen does not promise "happily ever after" simply because her heroines marry; her novels are meant to communicate more. Women have unique experiences and should not be bound by gendered social structures. Austen contrasted hegemonic masculinity and femininity in order to advocate a unique personal path. By empowering the private sphere, Austen empowered women within the home and this, in my opinion, is not a "cowardly" approach to femininisn (Morrison, 1994, p. 1).

<div align="center">Bringing Austen to Life</div>

Current adaptations of Austen are attempting to transition Austen from quiet homebody into the "godmother of twenty-first century romance" (Sutherland, 2011, p. 220). Austen has slowly shifted from her family's idea of quaint femininity into a modern matriarch of love. Sutherland (2011) noted that Austen was not a visual writer and when descriptions were used it was to communicate a larger point about the person (p. 244). Film and television rely on the visual, so adaptations of Austen are both revealing and unreliable. The visual portrayals of life and landscape are more or less accurate for Austen novels. The problem lies in the portrayals of her characters. Greenfield and Troost (2001) noted "the simplest visual choices for a film can easily remold the values of the novels" (p. 7). The women chosen to play Austen's heroines were typically thin, and this posed a problem for critics. Wooden (2002) noted that Austen films were being used to reinforce current cultural weight norms for women. Attractiveness and body norms are not dominant themes in Austen's novels but play a large role in Austen films, especially for men.

Austen's male characters suffer inaccurate representations more than her female characters. As her critics noted, Austen's male characters were not incredibly interesting or important. Nixon (2001) noted that films try to "fix" this by making Austen's men more appealing to viewers. By forcing male characters into the forefront of the story Austen's heroines are reduced and their journey begins to compete with those of their male counterparts. Austen's novels held unbalanced portrayals because she was not trying to sell love stories. Once her novels are reduced to mere love stories, it becomes necessary to make both the male and female important. Filmmakers found it necessary to not only reinforce feminine norms but also to introduce society's definition of masculinity. Austen's men are turned into commodities and objects worthy of both lust and love. In Andrew Davies's 1995 recreation of *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Darcy dives into a pool and emerges with his white (now see through) shirt clinging to his body. Mr. Darcy and other central male characters are shown doing athletic activities not included in the novels. This perpetuates the ideal that the ideal man should be active and attractive. This emphasis on the body led to films in which both the male and female gaze becomes important. Female characters ogle male characters and fantasize about them in private, while the male gaze, especially in public, becomes important and wanted (Hopkins, 2001). Austen would be appalled by the recreation of her characters; her heroines become women who want men to look at them and want them, while her male characters become the heroes.

The portrayals of Austen's characters' bodies would be enough to dull her feminist edge, but the changes did not stop there. Austen's female characters' personalities are changed to make them more or less likable. Unlikeable female characters tend to be represented as more obnoxious and outspoken than they are in the novels (Dickson, 2001). This does not sound like a

problem, but their historically unrealistic behavior overshadows Austen's quieter heroines such as Anne Elliot. Dickson argued that Elizabeth Elliot's overtly rude behavior in Nick Dear's 1996 version of *Persuasion* indicates that women were allowed to be outspoken and makes Anne's softer feminist stance seem cowardly. *Sense & Sensibility's* heroines, Elinor and Marianne, have their roles reversed in Emma Thompson's (1995) adaptation of the novel. In Austen's novel Elinor is emotionally stable and strong while Marianne is flighty and selfish. Thompson's adaptation removes Elinor's strength and portrays her having various emotional breakdowns (Dickson, 2001). Rather than portray Elinor as the strong, intelligent, and perceptive woman Austen created, Thompson changed her. The Elinor in the film embodies the stereotype of the emotionally distraught woman who must come to terms with her own feelings (Dickson, 2001). In the novel Marianne learns the hard lessons and is forced to grow up. She is overly emotional and extremely selfish in the novel. The film allows Marianne to still indulge in her emotions and selfishness, but she is not portrayed as having any problems. She is not afraid of her feminine emotions; therefore, she has no need to change (Dickson, 2001). It is disappointing that some of Austen's strongest characters are reduced to mere shadows of the women she created.

These examples are not provided to imply that every adaptation of Austen is antifeminist and bent on destroying Austen's work. I personally enjoy adaptations of Austen's novels and believe they lead watchers to read the novels. The purpose of these examples is to expose a larger problem that consists of the commercialization of the female and male body and the repackaging of feminist themes in a way that makes women look weak or overbearing.

The TV series *Lost in Austen* received praise for providing a contrast between Austen's time and our own. Cox (2013) observed that *Lost in Austen* provides viewers the opportunity to compare women's rights now to those of Austen's time. The show illustrated that although we

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may think we have moved beyond the need for feminism, there are still inequalities that existed in Austen's time (Cox, 2013). Cox (2013) stated "*Lost in Austen* implies that these fruits are bitter and even hints at the failures of feminism" (p. 37). Series like *Lost in Austen* are a step in the right direction for adaptations of Austen's work. Challenging women to question the world around them is vital and was an important theme in Austen's work. Austen's heroines question social standards, their families, morals, feminine roles, and themselves in order to find happiness.

Austen challenged the social expectations of her time and did what she loved. She was a subtle feminist who wanted her readers to question and recognize their situation. Women are the main focus of her novels with men fading into the background. She created a literary feminine space for women to reside in and thrive. Her popularity led to adaptations of her work that have given viewers and readers a different perspective of her works. Problems arise when we decide which parts of Austen to make important and which ones to leave by wayside. As female authors and speakers are brought into contemporary times, the importance of their actual message whether negative or positive should take center stage. Their unique voices should be used to empower women to break the mold and to define themselves according to their own terms not societies. As Austen adapts to yet another form of technology, it remains vital that the discourses created by her words face continual scrutiny.

CHAPTER 3

FEMINISM AND FEMINIST RHETORICAL METHOD

Feminist rhetoricians deal with both external and internal tensions that manifest themselves in the methods they employ. External tensions included hegemonic cultural practices, patriarchal authority, and the introduction, classification, and examination of women. Internally, feminist rhetoricians worked to find their own unique voices in order to discover useful theoretical approaches that give justice to women and other marginalized groups. These external and internal struggles have created a flexible yet critical approach to studying rhetorical works through a feminist lens. Researchers have built on the approaches by Campbell (1973), Biesecker (1992), Dow (1995, and many others to create their own unique approaches to feminist rhetorical studies. Feminist rhetorical theory examines the representation of women and other disenfranchised groups. It allows a multitude of mediums to be studied while using a variety of approaches. Scholars who use feminist rhetorical methods undergo a process of discovering their own viewpoint within field rather than following a set methodology. Dobris and White-Mills (2006) noted that "feminist methodology will not be found in some stable orthodoxy but in an evolving dialogue" (p. 28).

This chapter is an examination of how the tensions mentioned above have continually shaped feminist rhetorical criticism as well as the feminist movement. First, I examine the work of female rhetorical scholars to add female speakers into the rhetorical cannon and the tensions that developed. Then the unique styles that emerged upon studying female rhetoric are discussed as well as the history feminist movement and the emergence of feminist rhetors. The final section is an examination of the importance of the current study and the method through which data were gleaned and organized.

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Introducing Female Speakers

The normalcy of excluding women as valuable rhetoricians prompted scholars like Karlyn Campbell (1973) to fight for their importance and the survival of their words. The exclusion of female speakers on the basis of sex highlights the importance of feminist rhetorical theory and the scholars who use it. Poulakas (1983) noted that rhetoric was grounded in the human experience rather than philosophical reflections, which situates rhetoric not only as masculine but also as feminine. During the 19th century men were considered the intellectual sex, which unfairly gave their discourses more power and prestige when compared to women (Kirkham, 1983). The link between rhetoric and the human experience adds importance and power to any individual's words no matter their sex or intellectual background. Although at times it historically appears that men were the only human beings experiencing situations that called for rhetorical action, women were there having their own unique experiences and finding their own voices. Men had the opportunity to speak and function in the public sphere, which left women in the home, apparently separated from important issues. The exclusion of women from the public sphere did not make their discourses less important or exclude them from situations that called for rhetorical actions (Campbell, 1973; Evans, 2006).

There are different definitions of where rhetoric arises from and what creates a rhetorical situation but neither excludes or diminishes the importance of female rhetors. Bitzer (1968) argued in "The Rhetorical Situation," that rhetoric must arise from a rhetorical situation. These situations exist and one may or may not choose to create a discourse. Bitzer (1968) noted that rhetoric "comes into existence for the sake of something beyond itself; it functions ultimately to produce action or change in the world; it performs some task" (p. 4). I agree with Bitzer's argument that rhetoric arises for an important purpose and produces change. By speaking for

themselves, early feminist rhetors acknowledged their own existence and ability to take action in the world. Campebell (1973) found Bitzer's definition of a rhetorical situation to be inaccurate because it failed to account for conflicting public and private factors that influenced women's rhetoric. In order to both act and influence, women had to violate cultural norms that ignored their right to create any type of discourse (Campbell, 1973). Norms not only constrained women from speaking but forced them to speak in specific conditions (Campbell, 1973). Campbell's grievances with Bitzer are well founded because Bitzer does not address possible factors affecting disenfranchised groups. However, Bitzer's premise of rhetoric rising to bring about change characterizes the drive of early female rhetors. The factors surrounding the rhetorical situation may need additional explanation in order to adequately include oppressed groups, but the factors do not undermine the idea that a rhetorical situation did exist.

Campbell's (1973) opinion of Bitzer's (1968) lack of cognizance also illustrates the need of feminist rhetorical scholars to critique the roots of rhetoric. Whatever the factors may be, situations cause discourses that rhetor's shape by creating specific meaning. Men had been the principle rhetors; they had the advantage of a public platform and the ability to choose the issues presented (Walzer, 1995). A rhetorical situation existed for women because men took the time to speak for them and to them. They faced the problems of having no forum or power to join masculine conversation, so the situations they faced went unanswered. Women's ability to rise above social constraints and create meaning from their own personal perspective empowered their sex and other disenfranchised groups.

Women found their voices and began answering the situations around them despite religious and social resistance. By the time Campbell (1973) began her studies many brave women had spoken out in order to secure the rights of themselves and others. Campbell argued

the rhetoric of the women's liberation movement was distinctive and had unique rhetorical qualities that arose from their position in society. Women, constrained by spiritual and cultural authorities, did not have the right to speak openly in public. According to Campbell (1973), the qualities of a rhetor were "self-reliance, self-confidence, and independence" (p. 75). These qualities were not considered an inherent or a necessary part of the female role (Campbell, 1973). Women used the abolitionist movement to began stepping outside their role and voicing their concerns about the evils of slavery. When women began speaking out against slavery the parallel between the role of woman and the role of slave was highlighted. For example, abolitionist Angela Grimké wrote that her investigation into slavery led her to a better understanding of her own circumstances (Japp, 1985). Grimké and other female rhetors violated every facet of their role by speaking and writing to a public audience (Campbell, 1995). Women were viewed as sentimental, timid, and less intelligent, which placed them in a lower position of power (Campbell, 1995). McKerrow (1989) noted that discourses are a component of power, and can be used to call people into existence. Women speaking placed them in a position of power and allowed them to call themselves and other oppressed groups into reality. Although women speakers began to surface, their rhetorical history was severely lacking in comparison to men's and there was little preservation of their works (Campbell, 1989). Campbell (1989) noted that a "distinctive women's rights movement began when reformers recognized that they had to work for their own rights before they could be effective in other reform efforts" (p. 5).

Campbell sought to give women the rhetorical importance they deserved, but how to select and celebrate these women sparked some debate. Campbell (1973) examined the work of female rhetors in order to emphasize their importance and unique communication styles. Biesecker (1992) offered a counter argument to Campbell's (1973) push for inclusion on the

basis of female importance. Biesecker (1992) did not oppose including women, but expressed concerns of female tokenism and the inclusion of women simply for the sake of it. Biesecker (1992) defined female tokenism as a false power that male society offered to women in order to separate them from other women and the female condition. Biesecker argued that the addition of particular female texts added to the myth that some women posses more capability than others (Biesecker, 1992). The question then arose about what the actual criteria were for adding women. Biesecker contended that the addition of women to rhetorical history as though they spoke for all women presented danger. The addition of women to the rhetorical cannon should have less to do with who created discourse and more to do with why they created the discourse (Biesecker, 1992). This debate shaped the way feminist rhetoricians understand and develop theories and methods. Campbell's (1973) work to introduce women into the rhetorical cannon was important and necessary to empower women speakers. The importance of past and present females discourses would be lost if scholars did not fight for their equality. However, Biesecker's concerns merit acknowledgement. Women's inclusion should be dependent on their merit rather than their sex. It is also important to ensure the representation of a variety of female voices. White men and women tend to be presented as though they represent the entire population, so a conscious effort to find balance and fairness is important. The importance of Campbell's work is undeniable, and Biesecker's recommendation to remain cognizant of the admittance process is equally important. It is vital to constantly re-examine our methods of research in order to better understand, represent, and impart knowledge.

Unique Styles

Campbell (1973) noted differences in how early feminist rhetors communicated when they spoke when compared to male rhetors. How to effectively communicate to a large audience did not take center stage in a woman's upbringing. Early female rhetors had to synthesize and create their own style of rhetoric. Campbell (1989) compared learning to use rhetoric to the process of learning a craft. This learning process produced unique styles of discourse for women because of their social and cultural positioning. Due to public exclusion and perceived intellectual and physical weakness, women had to find a way to break the traditional mold of speaking. Campbell called the style of rhetoric women developed, feminine style. This style was personal in tone, relied heavily on personal experience, invited audience participation, and addressed the audience as peers (Campbell, 1989). Campbell noted this type of rhetoric empowered the audience to effectively act and transform into agents of change. Feminine style was not exclusive to only women and had qualities compatible with consciousness-raising (Campbell, 1989). Consciousness-raising invited audience members to participate, which helps them break out of passivity and empowers them (Campbell, 1989). Dow (1995) agreed with Campbell's argument that feminine style is not an innate characteristic but a strategic approach. Dow broadened her definition of feminine style and noted that it functioned as a cultural descriptor rather than a biological one. Feminine style should be viewed as an alternative to patriarchal modes of discourse. Dow's closing arguments, similar to Biesecker's, advocated for a middle ground that highlighted positives rather than negatives. Dow also advocated for a self-reflective stance that allowed for a better understanding of our own feminist arguments. This stance would ensure that feminist rhetorical scholars not only examined the methods of others, but also their own perceptions and possible misconceptions about feminist argumentation.

A closer look at feminist arguments and methodology lead other scholars to add to and challenge feminine style. Foss and Griffin (1995) build on the feminist principles of equality, immanent value, and self-determination to create what they call invitational rhetoric. Invitational rhetoric offers an alternative to traditional rhetorical practices that attempt to force change through pain and guilt (Foss & Griffin, 1995). Invitational rhetoric seeks to build a relationship with the audience based on understanding and openness. Similar to the characteristics of feminine style, invitational rhetoric was not exclusive to women but served as a method of communication for any marginalized group (Foss & Griffin, 1995). Bruner found fault with Foss and Griffin's (1995), Campbell's (1989), and Dow's (1995) approaches to feminist argumentation. Bruner (1996) argued that these approaches reinforce gender stereotypes rather than challenge them. Bruner noted three types of studies: studies that reveal the importance and absence of female rhetors, studies that distinguish between patriarchal and feminist argumentation, and studies that deal with feminine style (Bruner, 1996, p. 185). Bruner disagreed with studies that have used women's differences from men as a basis to say that women cannot argue aggressively or be confrontational. By straying from the identities created by the terms feminist and patriarchal, gendered subjects can be emancipated rather than limited. Bruner argued that these identities created a fictional unity in order to create power and they can enable and constrain. Bruner's solution to this problem was an approach called limit work. Limit work identified limitations and had a proactive way of engaging identity while mapping ways gender dividing practices appear (Bruner, 1996). It sought not to label argumentation but to question stereotypical identities that constrain. Bruner argued that feminists should avoid imprisoning feminist argumentation with unnecessary constraints that emphasize gender stereotypes.

As women began to break the barriers preventing them from engaging in public discourse they developed a distinctive style (Campbell, 1973; Dow, 1993; Foss & Griffin, 1995). The development and adaptation of this style is important to understand and study. Women faced obstacles finding a position of authority and persuasion because of their cultural role within society. These obstacles created a unique style that has been identified as feminine although it works for any powerless group. Although female rhetors did posses a unique style, I agree with Bruner's (1996) approach of examining how identification limits feminist studies. Bruner's and Biesecker's (1995) critical approaches do not take away from the important work of other feminist scholars. They sought to scrutinize approaches to feminist rhetorical studies to ensure research does not inadvertently reify or create more gendered stereotypes. Female speakers and writers have faced and overcome numerous obstacles to create social change. Definitions of rhetoric and rhetor attributes rarely favored the female sex and made their evolution into rhetors important and unique. Their achievements should be celebrated, but our approach to celebrating women needs to include all women not just a privileged few.

<div align="center">Feminist History Through a Rhetorical Lens</div>

Early female speakers had no examples of how to create a speech or how to address the public. Their ignorance arose from the lack of female examples and the resistance to their rhetorical presence. Their eventual fight for their own rights sprang from their efforts to reform society. This section is an examination of feminist history and some of the women whose discourses illuminate or shape feminist rhetorical methods. These women had to navigate around social barriers to their cause and create their own versions of what a female public address should be. Women advocating for the freedom of slavery had to contend with the problem of being viewed as a woman first and an abolitionist second. These early female speakers highlight

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the female struggle to find a voice and inform feminist rhetorical ideas about style. In addition to dealing with society's conception of ideal femininity, contemporary female rhetors also deal with the repackaging of their messages and the false idea that they have achieved complete equality.

Initial Difficulties

Problems arose for female abolitionists when they moved from the private (speaking in homes with other women) to the public. One of the faults society found with women abolitionist speakers was their addressing of promiscuous audiences (an audience of both men and women) (Zaeske, 1995). It was acceptable for women to address other women but not men. This criticism had force because it drew from stereotypes about women's proper role in politics (Zaeske, 1995). If female speakers could persuade men they had political power, which gave them power in the public sphere (Zaeske, 1995). Women who agreed with the promiscuous audience label avoided speaking publicly and looked down on women who did. Other women simply avoided speaking to mixed crowds because they believed it unwise to challenge the bible. Pioneering women during this time used arguments of morality rather than natural rights or laws. They stood on the premise that it was their right to engage in benevolent action that was based on morals. The idea that woman is morally superior to man reinforced feminine stereotypes and tainted the efforts of many women's rights activists. These women were working within the boundaries placed on them and although their arguments were valid they began to drift away from women's equality to women's moral superiority and duty to protect the home.

Conrad (1981) followed this transition of the feminist movement from women's equality to a fight for the right to vote in order to safeguard their homes from immorality. Conrad noted that as an ideology become more pragmatic to facilitate changes it becomes less visionary in its pursuits. The old feminist movement was more humanistic in nature and called for the

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destruction of molds that advocated a woman's place (Conrad, 1981). It wanted women to be recognized as individuals who were capable and responsible for their own actions. Changes to this agenda occurred when a strong concern for women's political rights arose (Conrad, 1981). Rhetors began looking at changes for society rather than women's equality. Reactions to antimovement rhetors became more important than women's experiences, and advocates began calling for practical political action (Conrad, 1981). If women could vote they could widen their sphere and employment opportunities as well as combat social and moral problems such as drunkenness (Conrad, 1981). Conrad noted that the debates about divorce and marriage at the 1860 convention were a deciding factor in the direction of feminism. Three of the debates argued for the humanness of both the husband and the wife, while others looked at the end goal of feminism as getting women to the ballot box (Conrad, 1981). This began the shift from independence of women to their right to vote. The right to vote transformed into the right to protect the feminine sphere rather than creating new space for the equality of women.

First women had to move beyond social and religious construction preventing their ability to address men. After passing this milestone, a slow and subtle movement began shifting women's messages away from equality to that of a moral right to protect their homes. This shift is important for feminist rhetorical scholars to study because it involved the repackaging of women's issues in order to make them serve patriarchal purposes. These subtle shifts continue to occur and a careful examination of historical repackaging makes it current changes more obvious.

Examples of Early Female Rhetors

Pioneering female speakers rose from the abolitionist movement and gave feminism its roots (Japp. 1995). Abolitionist Angela Grimké personified the female struggle to find a voice

and illustrated early distinctive styles in feminist rhetoric. Grimké used two different styles of speaking when she delivered speeches at abolitionist events. She believed the immorality of the situation overrode all objections to a woman speaking publicly (Japp, 1985). Her first speech introduced her as the biblical queen Esther who was forced to speak on the behalf of her people. This role enabled her to justify her presence while maintaining her feminine role (Japp, 1985). Her second speech exuded masculine dominance and demanded equality. Japp noted that her stance transformed from telling the audience what should be done to what must be done. Once she moved into this role she could never return to Esther. She had shown that women could control their own space rather than exist only in the role allotted to them by society. Japp argued that her rejection of her feminine role showed that women were dominated by their helplessness rather than society. Although women like Grimké showed faithfulness to their cause, their disregard of the female role and public presence led to controversy. Grimké and other female abolitionists broke down barriers concerning mixed audiences but their accomplishments were credited to feminine morality. A woman's impeccable moral compass enabled her to publicly fight because men had the potential to be immoral without female guidance.

The moral superiority of women fueled the rhetoric of suffragist Francis E. Willard. Willard managed to successfully gain both male and female approval for women's suffrage but at a cost to women's equality. The push for suffrage originally appeared as women trying to leave their sphere and destroy traditional values (Dow, 1991). Willard's success came from her rhetorical strategies that appealed to middle class values and implied the vote would not change women but allow them to fight against evil (Dow, 1991). If moral reform was necessary, women, the protectors of the home had to able to vote in order to maintain order and tradition. Her rhetoric reinforced rather than separated women from their traditional roles of being loving,

tender, and moral (Dow, 1991). Suffrage then transformed from being about equality to a focus on a woman's duty to protect her home from intemperance. Willard's rhetoric appealed to everyone within the mainstream because it reinforced morals and values while avoiding women's rights as humans (Dow, 1991). Dow noted that the implications of what Willard did took strength away from feminist position that men and women were equal. Emphasis on morality and the home made the victories women won, such as abolition, less satisfying because they found themselves in the same area of the social hierarchy.

Although women were participants in the fight against slavery, they found themselves in same position after the slaves were freed. This led to resentment from feminists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Stanton originally deemphasized natural and biological differences between men and women in order to position all humans as equals. When it seemed more likely that black males would be allowed to vote before women, Stanton shifted from the advocacy of universal citizenship to a one-sex model that assumed hierarchy (Poirot, 2010). Some humans were better equipped both morally and intellectually to participate in the public sphere, and Stanton used education to distinguish subjects hierarchically (Poirot, 2010). Poirot (2010) noted that Stanton's racist rhetoric was symptomatic of a divergent way of theorizing difference rather than opportunistic (p. 188). A forced hierarchy and the denial of biological foundationalism are in Stanton's early feminist theory (Poirot, 2010). Poirot argued the importance of noting that while women created sex they also created race. As women began highlighting differences they added to the idea that differences can determine the importance or worthiness of an individual.

Stanton had her flaws, but her stance on women's rights was powerful. In 1869 her inspirational lecture for young girls seemed innocent and she adopted traditional motherly persona (Strange, 2002). She argued that women and girls were forced into unnatural, artificial

gender distinctions (Strange, 2002). Dress reform had been attempted earlier by Amelia Bloomer but had failed (Strange, 2002). Stanton attacked prevailing dress codes and feminine beauty. Stanton delivered this as a part of lyceum lectures that were meant to be educational rather than political. Stanton creatively maneuvered within the rhetorical conventions of the lyceum and ideas about traditional femininity. Stanton's lectures were educational and she addressed the audience as a concerned, nurturing, and loving mother (Strange, 2002). Stanton appeared a picture of traditional femininity, but she argued for radical changes to the way young girls were raised (Strange, 2002). Stanton believed a young girl's independence and freedom were taken away by patriarchal standards of fashion (Strange, 2002). Fashion dictated that women were meant to please men, which led to a double standard between men and women's fashions. Men were completely covered while women were expected to show more skin in order to be attractive. To this Stanton not only raised moral issues but also health issues (Strange, 2002). Corsets, heavy gowns, and other fashionable items could cause serious injuries and these man-made devices destroyed God's creation (Strange, 2002). Stanton's argument reached beyond dress reform into the heart of debilitating social norms. She used anecdotes to show how tragic the socialization of young girls was and how it affected them psychologically and economically while stealing their ambition (Strange, 2002). Stanton did not see class as an issue because rich women were in the same position. The change had to be made in how young girls were socialized (Strange, 2002). Stanton emphasized girl's natural strength and intelligence and that the "coming girl" would discard patriarchal rule and grow up to be healthy and self-reliant (Strange, 2002, p. 10). She redefined beauty as "intelligence, energy, taste, and ambition" (Strange, 2002, p. 9). These things would come naturally to girls when they were freed from artificial concepts of gender.

The arguments Stanton made against the socialization of women are very relevant to feminist theory today. One of the most widely held stereotypes of feminists sprang from an attempt to fight the unnatural standards of beauty that society expects of young women. Stanton exposed double standards along with other first wave feminists, but the problem still persisted during the second wave. The events that followed Stanton serve as an example of patriarchy (external tension) creating division and dissention (internal tensions) among women.

Grimké, Willard, and Stanton represent early female rhetors whose experiences can be learned from. Grimké's adoption of both feminine and masculine stances exposes the dichotomies women faced and continue to face. Willard's reliance on a strategy that worked illustrates how careful feminists and feminist rhetorical scholars must be regarding successful campaigns. Questions about what we may give up in order to succeed arise from Willard's example. Stanton advocated for equal treatment of women from childhood but while campaigning for women she also hurt another oppressed group. The human condition cannot simply be looked at in terms of sex or ability. Equality must be considered a universal requirement for all, not a select few.

Feminism in Contemporary Society

Feminist action taken during the 1968 Miss American pageant made feminism synonymous with the term "bra-burning" (Dow, 2003). Feminists believed pageants portrayed women as mindless sex objects (Dow, 2003). During the demonstration women tossed objects into a freedom trash can (that was never lit on fire) that Stanton would have considered as oppressive as corsets and heavy gowns. According to Dow (2003), women disposed of bras, high heels, girdles, cosmetics, wigs, magazines, and other items of torture. After this event the women involved were portrayed as envious unattractive women who were critiquing the contestants

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rather than the pageant (Dow, 2003). The only difference between the pageant contestants and these women was the level of attractiveness. The battle against patriarchy was portrayed as a fight between beautiful women and unattractive women. This placed the battle for equality on the sidelines and reframed what feminism meant to the public. Miss America was the target and the battle was between types of women rather than an effort on the behalf of all women (Dow, 2003). Rather than reforming the pageants, feminists were framed as out of touch and unwilling to allow women to make their own choices (Dow, 2003). The media created a specific type of feminism and the pageant repackaged itself so contestants would appear to victors rather than victims. It is important to note the reaction and repercussions of this event. Women advocating for equality and the destruction of social constraints for all women ended up portrayed as villains. Their words repackaged and used to create division among women rather than unity. The media reframed this event so well that individuals still use the term bra burning without any idea the act never happened.

Despite the push back from society and the media, feminists continued to fight for equal rights. The next promising stride and source of contention for women appeared with the Equal Rights Amendment. The ERA originally looked like it would pass quickly until it reached southern legislators (Solomon, 1987). The attitudes of the southern governors played no role in its ratification because the amendment failed in states that had supportive governors. The rhetorical styles used by the women show an interesting interaction between two aggressive styles of rhetoric and a dependence on previously successful feminist rhetorical campaigns. Although both sides used similar strategies, the anti-ERA rhetoric tapped into southern culture at a deep emotional and spiritual level by reinforcing the importance of home, tradition, and religion (Solomon, 1987). The opponents to the ERA started a grassroots movement united with

the single goal of defeating the ERA. Solomon (1987) noted that these women called themselves feminine rather than feminist. They inundated the government with massive letter writing campaigns and, like Willard, injected a moral tone into the debates (Solomon, 1987). Those for ERA used existing groups but had difficulty uniting them. They also faced the battle of always being on the defensive because the opposition maintained that this legislation was a Trojan horse that would cause the moral decay of culture along with allowing the federal government to assume more power over states (Solomon, 1987). These criticisms appealed strongly in the south and brought forth a strong emotional response, especially from religious groups. Solomon argued the logical responses feminists offered to these accusations lacked the rhetorical strength to defeat the anti-ERA's vivid and emotional rhetoric. The ERA began as an attempt for women's equality and turned into an evil attack on morality and states' rights. This situation is similar to that of the pageants in that both times feminism was thwarted by an untruthful repackaging of the issue. The pageant protest and the ERA both illustrate a developing theme of pitting women against one another in order maintain hegemonic practices and inequality. The divisions created between groups of women are important for feminist rhetorical scholars to examine and understand. When adding women to the rhetorical cannon it is easy to pick women like Stanton, women who stood firm on equality, but it is also important to recognize the opinions and experiences of women against certain elements of the feminist movement. Understanding the motivations behind those who support or oppose an agenda impacts the construction and delivery of messages.

Women who break through gendered walls into the public sphere find themselves obligated to carefully manage their message delivery and construction. An example of such women resides in female politicians. Women in politics are continuously scrutinized and must be

careful of media repackaging. They are required to prove themselves as competent leaders while men are not. Their situation is similar to that of Grimké and other early female rhetors of having to prove they are masculine and/or feminine. Dow and Tonn (1993) examined how politician Anne Richards used feminine style to offer alternative political reasoning. Richards tested claims by introducing personal experience and this tactic empowered audiences to see the private as political (Dow & Tonn, 1993). Richards's reliance on human and parental experience transferred feminine private reasoning into the public sphere. Richards validated a feminine perspective while using a personal tone and self-disclosures that induced a willingness in the audience to identify with her (Dow & Tonn, 1993). Richards's rhetoric also identified with feminine style in its valuing of connections and relationships. This connectedness gives way to nurturing which uses authority, but with the purpose of fostering growth rather trying to persuade the audience (Dow & Tonn, 1993).

Miller (1997) also examined Anne Richards's style and contrasted it to her masculine opponent. During her campaign Richards wove together both masculine and feminine characteristics (Miller, 1997). Miller introduced the term "woven gender" to communicate how masculine and feminist traits are combined to form a new political identity. Richards made explicit reference to her gender and attempted to show off how tough and competent she was. Ambiguity arose from her gender representation when she had photo ops riding a motorcycle and hunting (Miller, 1997). She was labeled a "good ol' girl", which suggested a feminine quality while simultaneously comparing her to a man (Miller, 1997). George W. Bush also created a woven gender by appearing tough and determined as well as vulnerable and comfortable with family responsibilities (Miller, 1997). Bush supported some feminist issues that insinuated a balance between masculine and female concerns (Miller, 1997). Richards attacked Bush's

masculinity while he attacked her record rather than her sex (Miller, 1997). For Richards, the media emphasized her masculine attributes and called her endorsement of feminist issues as being too feminist (Miller, 1997). The media offered a more balanced portrayal of Bush by showing him as a Texas Ranger and by attributing his success to two women (Miller, 1997). While woven gender implies the breakdown of strict gender roles, it causes some problems. It is not beneficial for both men and women because women are still not allowed to display certain masculine traits. This unbalanced portrayal of men and women in politics continues to persist with female politicians such as Hilary Clinton being framed as masculine and bitchy (Douglas, 2010).

Women in politics struggle with the possibility of losing their messages due to repackaging, having to constantly prove competence, while simultaneously appearing masculine and feminine. Although this example cites one particular political campaign, the necessity of evaluating women in public positions in power holds great merit. These women face many of the same barriers early feminists and female rhetors worked to overcome. Female politicians have the disadvantage of constant comparison to male counterparts. How this affects their style and construction of messages holds importance for feminist rhetorical scholars and comments on how far we have progressed.

Early female rhetors spoke out before the media played an important role in society. No one owned a television or picked up a magazine highlighting Grimké's or Stanton's appearance, attractiveness or style. Standards existed for women's appearance but they were managed privately rather than publicly. Society's focus on public appearance and female sexuality prompted feminist actions like the 1968 pageant protest. Unfortunately, the media machine did not slow and the objectification of women continued to worsen. During the same year Ann

Richards campaigned and demonstrated women could be politically active, advertisers were answering feminist outcries about the objectification of women. Women's bodies had begun to be depicted sexually in ways that emphasized pleasure, playfulness, and empowerment, which made feminist rhetorical critiques of images necessary and important (Gill, 2007). Gill called this type of product promotion midriff advertising. Gill identified four central themes of midriff advertising: "emphasis on the body, a shift from objectification to sexual subjectification, a pronounced discourse of choice and autonomy and an emphasis upon empowerment" (Gill, 2007, p. 99). Rather than women's bodies being objects for exploitation, they were now a woman's primary source of capital (Gill, 2007). Forward thinking women chose to present themselves in an objectified manner because they wanted to. Advertisers made it seem as though the desires of men and women are the same, although the probability of that is low. Midriff advertising built on feminist ideas of emancipation and empowerment but only offered women the power of bringing men to their knees with their sexual prowess (Gill, 2007). It also drew from the modern postfeminist notion that feminism was no longer needed because women have achieved equality. Gill noted that midriff advertisers exclude all women outside the heterosexual norm and women who are older, disabled, obese, or unable to achieve the narrow standards of perfection. Midriff advertising has caused a shift to a self-policing gaze that Gill (2007) considered a more "pernicious form of exploitation" (p. 107). The result of this postfeminist advertising is to communicate that women now enjoy and understand the objectification of their bodies (Gill, 2007). This more recent example of subtle shifts echoes that of the early feminist movement. All individuals want to feel empowered, by insinuating that objectifying oneself leads to empowerment, advertisers and the media had little need to change existing practices.

This reconstructed message tied to the idea that women live in complete equality serves to hide hegemonic practices that refuse to die.

The false idea that feminism has emancipated women has become prevalent in mainstream society. Joseph (2009) commented on this situation in her examination of the Tyra Banks weight scandal. Joseph examined both feminism and race, which are both considered obsolete as issues. Joseph also argued that postattitudes about feminism and race strengthen hegemonic practices rather than tearing them down. Although popular culture would like to believe we have moved beyond racism and unequal standards for women, the issues still remain just below the surface guiding decisions and attitudes. Douglas (2010) calls this trend enlightened sexism rather than postfeminist. Enlightened sexism appears to be feminism from the outside but it uses the strides women have made as an excuse to treat them as objects defined by biology and their appearance (Douglas, 2010). If women can be convinced that they have achieved equality when they are still paid less than men, judged by unrealistic standards of beauty, and unable to make decisions about their own bodies, the media, the government, and society do not have to change. The women Campbell (1973) worked to make relevant faced explicit sexism and inequality. As the feminist movement evolved the media took over and began creating its own frame of what feminism was. The message became distorted and implied that women were against one another rather than patriarchy. Dow (2006) argued that media is feeding the idea that men are no longer the issue by portraying them as more feminine. It appears that the more things have changed, the more they have stayed the same. Each time women make strides patriarchal society finds a new way to rebrand sexism to imply it is what women want. The right to vote turned into the right to protect the home. Women asking for equal rights were seen as immoral, unfeminine tyrants who wanted to ruin the home. The objectification and

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exploitation of women was transformed into a game that women are supposed to enjoy playing (Douglas 2010). It is difficult to examine the current status of women and claim there is no need for feminism.

This move beyond the need for feminism makes feminist theory incredibly important. Feminist theory "deals with feminist perspectives and varieties of feminism, ways of being and doing, which demands a significant shift in women's outlook and behaviors" (English & Peters, 2012, p. 104). It is necessary for all women to constantly examine and reexamine their own behaviors and the world around them to ensure they are not contributing to their own bondage. Feminist theory also seeks to understand how gender is socially constructed and manipulated to either empower or limit both men and women (Miller, 2007). The social construction of gender can only be fully understood by examining history in order to see themes and trends of oppression. By briefly examining feminist history through feminist rhetorical scholars' eyes, the subtle shifts and changes to oppression can be understood and fought against. Butler (2004) argued that gender is a performance and its fragility demands that women must constantly adopt and reproduce femininity. The repetitive nature of the events during the feminist movement and now suggest that women are still gendering themselves with performances that feed hegemonic ideologies of femininity. The tidy repackaging of hegemonic femininity is subtle but appears in many facets of everyday life.

<div align="center">Current Study</div>

Feminist rhetorical theory allowed for a closer look at the discourses women are receiving about romance, independence, education, and the female role. This study examined Austen quotes on the social networking site Pinterest. According to Tekobbe (2012), an estimated 87% of Pinterest users are women. This statistic holds importance because it implies

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the majority of the messages are sent and received by women. Pinterest allows users to share images they find interesting, humorous, and important. Quotes taken from many different authors can easily be found on Pinterest. The appearance of female authors interests me because it could serves as a way to preserve and circulate female authors' opinions, themes, and ideals. In theory, women can shed new light and importance on possibly forgotten female works. Austen makes an obvious and easily found appearance on Pinterest. I was excited in finding Austen because many film representations ignore or simply do not have time to include her knowledge, wit, and irony. In finding Austen, I hoped to see witty statements about the pros and cons of marriage, inspiring words about education and making my own way in life as well as Austen's statements on society. As I began to find and arrange Austen quotes I enjoyed, contradictory notions began to emerge from the featured quotes. The discourses created by Austen quotes I found are broken down and disseminated to women in order to make a statement about what should be important in their lives. After my first examination of Austen quotes I began to ask myself the following questions: Are women being empowered to enjoy life both in and outside of the home? Are women being encouraged to engage in independent thought? These questions guided the following analysis as I examined each quote.

As I mentioned above, the sample was collected from the social networking site Pinterest over a 3-month period. Pinterest is a public site that allows users to follow other users who have similar interests. New pins can be added at any time so a specific time period was used to search for quotes. Users can search the site for particular pins by category or directly typing a search term into a search engine provided by the website. To obtain a sample I used eight search terms: 1) Austen, 2) Jane Austen, 3) Jane Austen quotes, 4) *Pride and Prejudice,* 5) *Persuasion,* 6) *Northanger Abbey,* 7) *Mansfield Park,* and 8) *Sense Sensibility.* The terms Jane and Emma were

not used because they resulted in photos of actresses and other famous women with the first names Jane and Emma. The pins were chosen based on two specific criteria. 1) Each pin must be an actual Austen quote. Some users pin quotes from films based on Austen's novels but the text was not actually written by Austen. To ensure accuracy, each quote was found within the novel it belonged and verified for accuracy. 2) The quotes cannot be featured on Austen merchandise. Many stores allow shoppers to directly transfer photos of products directly onto Pinterest. If the quote is on a mug, blanket, or any other product, it was not included. Quotes on merchandise were excluded because the quote is often hard to read or not the main focus of the pin. Excerpts from Austen's personal letters were also excluded. The goal was to see how Austen's novels are being fragmented and repackaged. Her letters are not as popular or as accessible to the general public as her novels.

The quotes that met the criteria were placed in a Jane Austen folder on Pinterest. After quote collection, each quote was printed and organized into one of four themes that emerged from the analysis of the quotes: emotions, activities, traits, and personal life. The text of each quote was analyzed using a feminist rhetorical approach guided by feminist theory and the questions mentioned above. The background, font, and stylistic choices of the creator were not examined because they would prove too large for the scope of this study due the continual addition of new pins. The main focus is restricted to the text and how it constructs gender roles and ideal feminine characteristics.

In order to better negotiate my on understanding of feminism and feminist theory I had to look at the feminist movement and the foundations of rhetoric. This chapter is an examination of the external and internal tensions presented to those who study feminist rhetoric and feminism while exploring the history of feminism and the importance of feminist rhetorical critique.

Admitting women into the rhetorical cannons required a thorough examination of women speakers and their unique style. The earliest female rhetors had nothing to base their public addresses on and created a feminine style that empowered the powerless. Examining their works required careful deliberation by current researchers in order to represent them in an honest and inclusive light. Once women identified their own barriers and began to work to tear them down, their character came under fire. Women who wanted more freedom for themselves were considered selfish and in opposition to the important roles of mother, daughter, and sister. Although women have made great strides since Angela Grimké's speeches on slavery, we still have work to do. Feminists now deal with the mainstream idea that feminism is dead and no longer needed. It is necessary for feminist scholars to unearth and expose the continued oppressive treatment of women that still exists. Many hegemonic sentiments are hidden in everyday discourses other than advertisements. The books we read, the movies we watch, and even the quotes we enjoy send a message that shapes the way we think about our role as women.

This study adds to the body of feminist research in its examination of ideals women are unconsciously exposing themselves to. The beauty of Pinterest is that users can create what they want to see. Women can add their own viewpoints and shape the narratives they are creating for themselves and others. Female authors laid the foundation for the feminists of today and their current representation is important. By using feminist theory I can evaluate the representation of women and the use of rhetoric to construct gender. After the completion of following analysis chapter I hope to have successfully connected Pinterest and Austen to larger discourses dealing with tensions present in feminism, popular romantic notions, and the continuing reinforcement of a traditional feminine role.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

In this chapter I analyze the quotes I gathered using feminist theory to examine how a female writer's texts are dissected, what dominate themes arise, and which genders are represented as knowledgeable. An examination of these factors allowed me to answer my research questions: 1) are women being empowered to enjoy life both in and outside of the home and 2) are women being encouraged to engage in independent thought? This chapter begins with an analysis of themes evident in the quotes. The quotes are first analyzed context free (without reference to the novel) and then examined from a feminist perspective guided by my two questions. This is followed by a cursory examination of the film quotes I chose not to include in sample. In conclusion I examine the over arching themes found in the quotes and how Austen relates to current feminist concerns.

First I extracted Austen pins using my search terms and added them to a folder labeled Jane Austen. After removing quotes that did not meet the previously mentioned criteria, 61 quotes remained. As I began to examine the quotes, four dominant themes arose: Emotions, Activities, Character traits, and Personal life. Each of these main themes is broken into more specific categories within this analysis. Many quotes fit into multiple themes and categories, so the number of quotes presented in each section is larger than the actual number of quotes found. The number of quotes in each of the themes is as follows: character traits 28, emotions 27, personal life 17, and activities 7. The sex of the speaker is rarely evident when reading the quotes, which made an evaluation of who said the quote important to the analysis. Female character's thoughts and words dominated the theme of character traits, while male characters dominated emotions and had a slight lead in personal life. The anonymous voice of the narrator

said the lowest number of quotes with the exception of the theme of activities. A majority of the quotes are attributed to Austen, so the typical reader on Pinterest does not know the origin of the text, but this differentiation is important. The usage of male and female character's statements taken out of context leads to assumptions about the speaker's importance. Characters that Austen meant to be didactic or unlikeable transform into knowledgeable authorities on certain subjects. The examination of who said the quote and their role within the novels is important and is delved into more deeply later in the analysis.

<div align="center">Emotions</div>

Categories under emotions include happiness, love and comfort. These categories are seemingly harmless in that they are important to the human experience. Unfortunately, they feed into the general idea that a woman's main concerns are to find love that in turn will cause her to experience happiness and comfort.

Love

The idea that love is the most important emotion to experience and to be concerned with is indicated in the number of quotes that fit into the category. Sixteen quotes fit into the category of love giving it the largest number of quotes in all of the themes. The majority of quotes dealing with love are declarations that occur at the end of Austen's novels. One such declaration comes from Captain Wentworth at the end of *Persuasion*: "You pierce my soul. I am half agony, half hope. . . I have loved none but you" (Pierce my soul, 2013). This quote portrays love as painful and as something to hold onto. This quote skips over some text in the passage but the parts excluded can be found in other pins. In the novel, Wentworth's declaration is made in the form of a letter. The length of the letter makes it difficult use as a pin, so it was dissected. Later in Wentworth's declaration he stated: "Dare not say that man forgets sooner than woman, that his

love has an earlier death" (Dare not say, 2013). These quotes suggest love is undying, timeless and should be expressed while others make it more of an enigma: "If I loved you less, I might be able to talk about it more" (Loved you less, 2013). Love deviates between being expressed and unexpressed in the majority of the quotes. Characters either cannot hold back their love because they are so passionate or they are so passionate they cannot express their love adequately. Other quotes mock love: "A lady's imagination is very rapid, it jumps from admiration to love, from love to matrimony in a moment" (A lady's imagination, 2013). This quote implies that love can quickly come and go (for women) and is false. In their entirety the quotes portray love as passionate, confusing, expressible yet inexpressible, with a possibility of being untrue. In other words, love is confusing.

During Austen's time love was less important than finding a man with the financial means to support you. Austen paired heroines with compatible male counterparts who profess love for them, but the heroine's main ambition is never to find true love. Today women are surrounded by discourses that imply finding love will solve all their problems and bring them happiness. The choice of quotes from the end of the novels makes the quotes more passionate, which perpetuates the ideal that love must be expressed in grand, romantic statements. The choice of these quotes from Austen does more than imply love should make one happy. Tying love to grand romantic gestures reinforces the commercialization of love. Love should come with all the pomp and circumstance of jewelry, cards, flowers, poetry and all of these gifts should culminate in an elaborate wedding. It also feeds unrealistic expectations of one's partner, so when men fail to live up to Mr. Darcy, they fail as a viable partners. The prevailing idea from these quotes is that when a partner is found who can live up to this unrealistic ideal, true happiness and comfort may be found.

Although most of the quotes are declarations of love, one in particular stood out as a positive example of all that love could be: "There are as many forms of love as there are moments in time" (Many forms of love, 2013). This quote is not a declaration of undying love; it is a simple statement that sends a positive message. Love is not static and does not follow a singular path outlined by society. This quote adds to positive discourses surrounding love, love can be many different things to individuals and it is up to them to identify their own happiness (Brown, 1990; Morrison, 1994). While some quotes portray love positively, the majority of the quotes promote a fairy-tale ideal that is false and does not exist within any of Austen's novels.

Happiness

Love's closest follower in the number of quotes was happiness, which included eight quotes. Although happiness holds importance, quotes involving happiness are only half as visible as the theme of love. Examined outside the context of the novel, these quotes implied that happiness is important and should at times outweigh the importance of other attributes. Happiness was also portrayed as an inner strength that individuals must attain and maintain within themselves and on their own terms: "I wish, as well as everybody else, to be perfectly happy; but, like everybody else, it must be in my own way" (To be perfectly happy, 2013). Similar empowering quotes such as "Know your own happiness" were also included (Know your own, 2013). Self-discovery and happiness are two concepts Austen often put together and these concepts are also important for women today.

While most of the quotes exuded positivity, others when taken out of their original context bore negative implications. The most disempowered quote from this section came from the novel *Emma*: "I would have much rather have been merry than wise" (Merry than wise, 2013). This speaks volumes about how intelligence is displayed in relation to happiness. Emma

makes this statement after her intelligence is complemented not demeaned. Rather than display Austen's heroines intelligence as positive, Austen's words are used to reinforce negative stereotypes about women and intelligence. An intelligent woman may be "too smart for her own good," which will in turn cause her to be unhappy. Women are often socialized to avoid appearing smarter than males even when they are in positions of power. This particular quote reinforces discourses implying that intelligence should be hidden in order to maintain stability and avoid discontentment. Austen had no intentions of downplaying intelligence in favor of comfort and her refusal to allow her heroines to be ignorant causes them problems across all the novels (Evans, 2006). Austen's heroines do find comfort, but it comes from familial relationships and at the end of their journey, not from any form of ignorance.

Comfort

Comfort is the last type of quote in the emotional category and contains only three quotes. All three quotes deal with inactivity and the home. Inactivity is portrayed as employment: "I think we are a great deal better employed, sitting comfortably here among ourselves, and doing nothing" (Better employed, 2013). Many individuals find being home a comfort, especially in our fast paced society. Comfort and home are linked as an escape from outside forces that demand constant activity. This seems a positive ideal, but when looking at whether women are encouraged to leave the home another picture is formed.

For women these quotes connect comfort with the notion that a woman should stay in her own sphere–the home. Two of the quotes involved the word sitting, which implies that a feeling of comfort can be derived from inactivity. Inactivity is not inherently a bad thing, but if a woman is inactive it means she may not be supporting herself or taking an active role in her own outcomes. Comfort can come from having time to be calm and reflect but in combination with

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the other two categories within the theme a negative suggestion forms. When a woman finds a man (who can meet all romantic and financial expectations) she can then spend her time blissfully and inactively at home.

Within this set of quotes, emotions are portrayed in a positive light but the quotes contained bear undertones of hegemonic ideals. The ideal performances of love created by these quotes sets extremely high standards for both men and women, while the individual pursuit of happiness ends in financial security and perceived ignorance. Myths about happiness and love do not make an appearance. Austen's disbelief that love and happiness are connected can be seen when the quotes involving happiness are examined. There are no overlapping quotes between the categories of love and happiness. These quotes do, however, perpetuate the untrue discourse that if one has money one will also have happiness. Comfort appears to extend from the simplicity of being home and these quotes suggest that one should stay in their proper sphere. Another interesting finding in this category dealt with the sex of the speaker. More male voices were represented than female, which suggests that male opinions of emotion bear more credibility and importance. The majority of the male voices that appear are likeable characters who marry the heroines in the end. The few female voices that make appearances in these categories are dislikable foils to Austen heroines. Although this finding is interesting to this analysis, unless pinners have read Austen's novels they may have no knowledge of who actually said the quote because it is rarely indicated on the pins.

<div align="center">Activities</div>

While comfort can be found in inactivity, activities are also visible in pinned Austen quotes. Activities, the next theme examined broke down into the two categories of travel and

reading. The appearance of these two categories is a positive sign and provides support for women leaving the home and expanding their minds.

Travel

Only two quotes deal with travel and they do not overlap with any other categories. One is a simple statement about going to the sea: "A little sea-bathing would set me up forever" (Sea-bathing, 2013). Although going to the sea does not inherently mean travel for everyone, it does assume that women are doing an activity outside the boundaries of home. The other quote contained deals with adventure: "If adventures will not befall a young lady in her own village, she must seek them abroad" (Adventures will not befall, 2013). This quote suggests that if a woman's life lacks excitement she should go out and find it. Both within and out of context these quotes create a positive relationship between travel and women. Women are empowered to seek a life outside the home that fulfills their need for adventure and excitement. This freedom has no contingence on a partner.

Reading

Another way to find adventure and keep an active mind is to read. Austen promoted reading, which is evident in the quotes used from her novels regarding reading. Reading holds benefit for both sexes: "The person, be it gentlemen or lady, who has not pleasure in a good novel, must be intolerably stupid" (Gentlemen or lady, 2013). The quotes pertaining to reading also tie it to education and self-improvement: "A fondness for reading, properly directed, must be an education in itself" (Fondness for reading, 2013) These quotes promote reading for both sexes and encourage it in order to have a more enriched education. A problem occurs when examining their implications. These quotes imply someone who does not enjoy reading is less intelligent and interesting in comparison to someone who does. Austen focused on the

importance of reading in all her novels, and as an author, her emphasis on reading is logical. Pinners may have no contextual or historical knowledge of Austen's background, so Austen's definitive stance on the importance of reading may not be completely understood. As a female author of novels, Austen's did not receive immediate praise. Novels were considered bad reading material and if a female penned them credibility fell even lower (Gerster, 2000; Kirkhm, 1983). Austen's push for reading may have been to encourage women to continue reading anything and everything (including novels) in order to educate themselves.

Overall, from a feminist standpoint these quotes are empowering women to find adventure and to enjoy learning. Rather than imprisoning women to the home or even a specific area, these quotes suggest that if you do not feel happiness where you are, you should leave. Women find encouragement to explore without reservations about leaving home or family. These quotes give women a sense of freedom and the ability to break from constraining social expectations. If individuals enjoy reading it enriches their education and exposes them to new thoughts and ideas. While reading creates enjoyable and educational pastimes, not everyone finds reading enjoyable, and these quotes demean anyone who does not enjoy books. When examining who actually said the quotes, the interesting finding is that all of these quotes with the exception of one come from the narrator or a female character. Austen's voice present in the narrator coupled with the female characters she created give women freedom of space and mind.

Individual Characteristics

Individual characteristics such as intelligence comprise the third theme that breaks down into four categories that contain 27 quotes. The four categories are: attractiveness, vanity, intelligence, and individuality. These characteristics contradict one another and function to set

impossible standards and complicated dichotomies. These quotes ask women to be attractive but not vain, intelligent and not show it, while simultaneously being individuals.

<u>Attractiveness</u>

The first category examined was attractiveness. Quotes dealing with attractiveness use both female and male pronouns and do not discriminate based on age. Growing older has positive effects on attractiveness rather than negative ones:"It sometimes happens that a woman is handsomer at twenty-nine than she was ten years before (Handsomer at twenty-nine, 2013)" For women this is an uplifting quote because attraction generally is assumed to decrease rather than increase with age. Advertisers and the media promote women finding ways to recapture their youth in order to continue to be considered attractive. This quote breaks down the myth that women should fear aging because they will no longer look attractive. For men the opposite effect can be found in Austen's words: "He had been remarkably handsome in his youth" (Remarkably handsome, 2013). This quote leaves his current state of attractiveness to the reader's imagination. He could still be handsome or his looks may have diminished. The difference in these two quotes is that only sometimes a woman grows more attractive with time; no time distinctions apply to men. Quotes dealing with attraction also link it to finance: "He considered the blessing of beauty as inferior only to the blessing of a baronetcy" (Blessing of beauty, 2013). These quotes suggest that attractiveness is desirable, waivers with age, and can be superseded by wealth, which fosters unhealthy ideals pertaining to outward appearance and money.

Upon deeper examination harmful standards for beauty are reinforced by these quotes. Austen's words are being used to perpetuate modern beauty myths that commercialize and elevate beauty. Quotes dealing with beauty come from the narrator and one female character

giving the quotes a female voice rather than male, which implies women own the right to judge attractiveness. Discourses surrounding women and attractiveness are heavily prevalent in today's media and marketing. What makes women or men special or worthy of attention is attached to their ability to fit into society's prescribed standards of attractiveness. The usual way to bypass social rules of attractiveness comes from having or obtaining wealth. Society's standards of beauty can be attained through wealth (makeup/plastic surgery) or one can offer money as a trade for the lack of attractiveness. One's own perception of personal attractiveness can lead to vanity, which leads us to the next characteristic.

Vanity

While it is implied attractiveness holds importance, vanity is framed as a flaw. Vanity's effects are dependent on the person's mind: "Vanity working on a weak head, produces every sort of mischief" (Vanity working, 2013). Vanity causes problems for individual who are less intelligent or unable to distinguish social norms. Quotes dealing with vanity also make a distinction between it and pride. This definition is provided: "Pride relates more to our opinion of ourselves, vanity to what we would have others think of us" (Pride relates, 2013). The concern of these quotes fixates on self-presentation and an individual's ability to manage the need of outside approval. An individual who has a "weak" mind must have others approval while an intelligent and attractive person does not need outside approval. Not being tied to other's approval seems empowering, but coupled with the previous quotes emphasis on being attractive, a confusing and contradictory ideal is formed. Appearing attractive to the outside world is dependent on knowing and understanding what others think of you. If caring what others think represents a flaw, why should attractiveness matter? Although a distinction is made between vanity and pride, no quotes dealing with the repercussions of being prideful are present. Other

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quotes speak to vanity's deceptive nature: "It is very often nothing but our own vanity that deceives us" (Vanity that deceives, 2013). Overall, an avid pinner could assume that vanity deceives individuals (especially stupid ones) and causes an unnecessary need for outside approval. To be vain and need approval from others is presented as flawed and negative.

Shunning a constant need for outside approval is a positive attribute for a woman to have. Self-presentation should not depend only on outside approval. Social approval entrenches women in the performance of femininity. Femininity is a creation that requires constant repetition to ensure adherence to norms policed by society (Bartky, 1988). Individuals should be happy with themselves without a constant need for outside validation, but achieving this state nears impossibility when examined in relation with the category of attractiveness. Keeping Austen's definition of vanity in mind, mixed messages can be drawn between the framing of attractiveness and that of vanity. These pins suggest it is important to be attractive (an attribute largely defined by other's opinions), but it is not acceptable to want others to think we are attractive. This notion is confusing and feeds into discourses that a woman should be beautiful but if she appears to know that she is attractive she is considered a snob or a bitch by other women. While keeping women at odds with themselves and other women poses little resistance to hegemonic ideals of beauty and femininity, promoting female intellect could create questioning and conflict. An additional reinforcement of hegemonic ideals keeping women divided lies in who said the quotes. All of these quotes come from women, some are heroines who grow and others are women meant to represent the dangers of societal femininity. By mixing good and bad female characters together Austen's meanings are lost and the lesson she tried to impart defeated. Austen strived to constantly promote education and improvement of the mind (Evans, 2006). Austen shunned traditional notions of femininity and her most aggressive

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stance against it can be seen in *Northanger Abbey*. Throughout this novel Austen exposes traditional feminine rituals as fake and immoral. The heroine finds happiness after rejecting society's definition of what a lady should be.

<u>Intelligence</u>

As noted in the earlier category of reading, intelligence directly relates to reading. All of the quotes that intersect between intelligence and reading are positive. Reading enhances intelligence that can lead to an enriched life. Two other quotes can be found in these categories that do not relate intelligence to reading. The first comments on an active mind: "A mind lively and at ease, can do with seeing nothing, and can see nothing that does not answer" (A mind lively, 2013). This suggests a mind in motion is always entertained and stimulated no matter the circumstances. The second additional pin on intelligence does not dismiss the importance of intelligence but gives social parameters of when to show it: "A woman, especially if she have the misfortune of knowing anything, should conceal it as well as she can" (Misfortune of knowing, 2013). This quote tells women to hide their intelligence in the public sphere. It also diminishes any knowledge a woman may have as unimportant. Quotes dealing with intelligence display it as a positive attribute that for women should remain hidden.

Intelligence in a woman shows interests that may stem outside the realm of femininity. These quotes suggest it is unacceptable not to enjoy reading because it leads to intelligence, but if a woman attains any level of intelligence she should hide it. The diminishment of women's knowledge in the public sphere should be obsolete, but the discourses created by these quotes discourage women from showing intelligence. A woman who hides her intelligence has the potential to find happiness. It is acceptable to promote reading because it suggests private rather than social activity. Within the private sphere, intelligence can exist, but upon entering society a

woman should conceal her knowledge in exchange for happiness. As mentioned previously,

Austen advocated education and the quote diminishing intelligence comes from the narrator.

Read in context, Austen is actually making the point that if one wants to easily fit into society

one should pretend to know nothing in order to apply to the vanity of others. Austen's intent was

to expose ridiculous social expectations of women in regards to their education not to encourage

women to pretend they are stupid. This promotion of specific standards for intelligence and

beauty stand at odds with the next category of individuality.

Individuality

In contradiction to other characteristics that promote adherence to social rules, the largest

number of quotes within this theme dealt with being an individual. These quotes mainly contain

gender neutral pronouns and promote individuality for all: "Everybody likes to go their own

way–to choose their own time and manner of devotion" (Everybody likes to go, 2013). Standing

up for one's self and maintaining independent opinions is also promoted: "Laugh as much as you

chose, but you will not laugh me out of my opinion" (Laugh as much, 2013). These quotes are

positive and suggest that individuals should hold their own opinions and forge their own path.

Self-reflection also surfaces as an attribute of individuality: "We have all a better guide in

ourselves, if we would attend to it, than any other person can be" (A better guide in ourselves,

2013). Different characters, both male and female, emphasize the importance of making

individualized choices based on personal wants rather than social demands. Individuality also

has direct ties to happiness: "I wish, as well as everybody else, to be perfectly happy; but, like

everybody else, it must be in my own way" (To be perfectly happy, 2013). Self-reflection,

personal opinions, and happiness all contribute and stem from one's sense of individuality.

Discourses from these quotes surrounding individuality highlight its importance in women's lives. These quotes create discourses that encourage women and men to challenge the status quo and to never bend under pressure. This category in particular offered women freedom of choice without connecting their individual decisions to regret or punishment. When examining the construction of agency over all the quotes, this category offers women the most power over themselves and their lives. It offers the power to make decisions and chose a unique path that lies beyond familial or social demands.

The theme of individual characteristics contained both positives and negatives. Attractiveness and vanity contradicted one another and reinforced hegemonic perceptions of beauty and femininity. Female intelligence, although praised in the private sphere, found no welcome in the public. While women work to perform the standards set for attractiveness, vanity, and intelligence, they must simultaneously be individuals. Individuality offered women agency but no suggestions about how to exercise it when constricted under the other social rules. While male characters spoke on emotions, female characters dominated opinions about traits. Women are often placed in positions of judging one another based on traits such as appearance. The number of women speakers in this category suggests that women have the authority to judge others, especially their own sex.

<div align="center">Personal Life</div>

While the previous quotes describe what characteristics are important and how they should be handled, the following and last set of quotes deals with one's personal life. The 18 quotes included in this section divide into the categories of home, relationships, finance, and opinions. The largest number of quotes can be found between the categories of relationships and opinions. The category of relationships is composed of quotes that deal with nonromantic

relationships. The relationships mentioned are friendships, acquaintances, and neighbors. The category of opinions contains quotes that make a definitive statement about a character, situation, or actually discuss opinions. Unlike the categories of opinions or relationships, home and finance have only four quotes (two in each category). The balance of the how many quotes are in each category interestingly suggested that relationships and opinions are worth more notice than finance and home.

<u>Home</u>

First I examined the two quotes dealing with the home. As mentioned earlier home and comfort are linked: "Ah! There is nothing like staying home for real comfort (home for real comfort, 2013)." Home as a place of comfort and security portrays a positive emotional link with the home. The other quote dealing with the home attaches it to negative emotions: "We live at home, quiet, confined, and our feelings prey upon us (We live at home, 2013)." This quote implied that the speaker rarely leaves home and finds it a confining space. Together these quotes project contradictory notions of the home.

The reason the two quotes may be at odds with one another could be explained by the speaker. The first quote dealing with home comes from a male and the second a female, which brings up the importance of who actually said the quote. The first quote comes from the novel *Emma* and this particular speaker (Mr. Elton) elicits dislike from readers (Ivins, 2011; Strasbaugh, 2013). Emma chooses Mr. Elton as a suitor for her friend Harriet but he turns out to an arrogant, judgmental man who marries an equally dislikeable female character. Mr. Elton's quote described home as a comforting place in which one wants to remain. This quote generates the feelings of happiness and comfort in connection with home and makes it seem like a place everyone should want to be. Placed within the context of the book, a contradictory viewpoint

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emerges that highlights the statement as the opinion of an unlikable man. Austen would never recommend one taking his advice. The second quote comes from a female voice and contradicts the Mr. Elton's claim to give home a very different connotation. The female voice stems from *Persuasion's* Anne Elliot, who spends the novel within a home dominated by overpowering and inconsiderate characters. When examining the quote within the novel it directly speaks to women's situation during that time period and is followed by a comment on men's lives. "You have always a profession, pursuits, business of some sort or other, to take you back into the world immediately…" (Austen, 2009, p. 207). She distinguishes the limitations of females and male privilege. Men had the privilege of an existence outside the home and coming home may have functioned as a comfort for them. Women faced the obligations of staying within the home in order maintain standards of comfort. The role difference places visions of the home in two contradictory realms.

While the male voice praises the home, the female voice depicts home as a prison where emotions eat one alive. These different viewpoints were prevalent in male and female opinions during Austen's time and still war with one another today. A male works outside the home so the woman can stay comfortably within the home. The female voice breaks this idyllic model by confronting it head on and dismissing the idea that home provides any comfort. This quote fuels the fire that women do not want to stay at home perfecting their baking and doing laundry. Women have a mental and physical need for a life outside the home in order to be happy. Pinterst already carries with it stereotypes of women sitting at home planning their next shopping trip (Tekobe, 2013). The allocation of Austen quotes that speak on the home is small, but the prevailing message depicts home as a positive environment. Perceptions of the women who use Pinterest suggest women are expected to do something other than be at home examining content.

The content presented to these women glorifies the home and the comfort it provides. This creates yet another confusing double standard women are expected to follow.

Finance

Finances are linked to one's choice in a mate and to one's happiness. According to the two quotes included in this section a large income is essential. As mentioned earlier, in the analysis, happiness and money are inextricably linked. One quote stated: "A large income is the best recipe for happiness I ever heard of" (A large income, 2013). This quote can be taken either seriously or as a joke. Either interpretation suggests that money may have an impact on happiness. Placed within the novel, the quote comes from a woman playing the marriage market to find a rich husband. Austen portrays her as selfish and manipulative; she is a representation of what not to be. The second quote also leaves interpretation up to the pinner: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife" (It is a truth, 2013). Unlike the previous quote, this quote overtly linked finances to a marital relationship. Both quotes imply money makes for a happy relationship and leave the interpretation of seriousness up to the reader. This quote is said by the narrator in first line of *Pride and Prejudice*, the novel and the pin both leave interpretation to the reader.

The hunt for a man of fortune generally compels a (usually dislikable) female character within Austen's novel to make unwise decisions. These quotes suggest this may be an ideal that pinners have chosen to bring into contemporary times. While the quotes can be taken for their absurdity, the second quote contained in this category serves to reinforce the importance of money over love and leads one to wonder how far we have evolved. These quotes both represent a bit of irony from Austen and may not be taken as they should by someone who has not read the novels. While (most) parents no longer preach money over love, the general notion of financial

improvement still lingers. These quotes, although few in number, effectively link happiness, marriage, and money without ever bringing love into the mix.

The other notion that can be taken from these quotes is one of practicality. Austen's heroines marry men with substantial or sustainable incomes that would provide them with security for a lifetime. Although her heroines show a deep compatibility with their significant others, not all characters who marry do so out of love or fortune hunting. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth Bennett's close friend marries a man Elizabeth turned down out of a feeling of obligation and practicality. She no longer had the privilege of youth and beauty, so she made the choice to marry a man who had connections and a suitable living. During this time period entering into a marriage carried with it a need to feel financially secure (Copeland, 2011). The problematic aspect of this need develops in how one approaches searching for a mate. Should love come first or second after financial stability? If finances are examined first is it practicality or gold digging?

Whatever the interpretation a pinner may make these pins do link money and marriage in a way that implies they go hand in hand. They represent another ruthless dichotomy for women to struggle with. Money functions as an important part of everyday life but how we talk about it and whether we talk about it can cause problems. If a woman admits she agrees with this sentiment she is a gold digger, so these feelings, if shared must be made in a cynical or jesting fashion to be perceived as appropriate.

Opinions

The category of opinions functions as a home for quotes that do not have a clear fit in other categories, but they do make a statement of fact describing a situation or character. The second financial quote mentioned above serves as an example of an opinion and also resides in

the category of opinions. The financial quote is an example of an opinion that makes a statement about all of the male characters that are housed within that novel (*Pride and Prejudice*).Some quotes in this section refer to a character's state, an opinion about their personality, manner, or treatment. Other quotes are opinions about situations created by characters and perhaps society in general: "It will, I believe, be everywhere found, that as the clergy are, or are not, what they ought to be, so are the rest nation" (Be everywhere found, 2013). Austen chose to write unfavorable depictions of the clergy and this quote fits with her portrayals of the church across her novels. Other quotes similar to this one note that we often think of reasons for approving things we like and that nobody minds having what is too good for them. These quotes are loosely linked and other than the one dealing with finances, none of them fit into other categories.

The final type of quote in this section actually deals with importance of having the good opinion of others: "My good opinion, once lost is lost forever" (My good opinion, 2013). This quote comes from the infamous Mr. Darcy, who makes the comment when describing his own character. This section, although fragmented, justifies having an opinion about the world as a whole. Whether it be marriage, money, morality, or how people justify decisions, an individual can think freely and come to their own opinion. An important note about these opinions is that they are more factual rather than negative or positive. Whether being ironic or trying to prove a point Austen was not abusive and her style of voicing opinions is being portrayed as important. Some could argue that it is a soft, feminine approach to voicing an opinion, but in my personal opinion it shows how one can communicate an idea without being abrasive or abusive. Taken separately these quotes say little that answers either of my research questions; they do, however, provide an example of a feminine opinion that resides in calm facts rather than emotional judgment.

<u>Relationships</u>

The last category of quotes comments on relationships with friends, neighbors, and acquaintances. Friendships are portrayed as an important asset that should be protected, valued, and fought for: "There is nothing I would not do for those who are really my friends. I have no notion of loving people by halves, it is not my nature" (There is nothing, 2013). This quote emphasizes true friends and suggests that once they are found they should be valued. The other quote dealing with friendship examines the benefits of friendship when facing hardship. Austen created strong nonromantic bonds between characters within her novels and these quotes are an accurate sampling of her opinion of true friendship. False friends do emerge throughout her novels but no quotes describing these relationships are present. While relationships with friends are valued, the relationship with one's neighbor is less cordial: "For what do we live, but to make sport for our neighbors and laugh at them in our turn" (What do we live, 2013). Other quotes refer to neighbors as "voluntary spies," which leads one to the conclusion that neighbors as pests that one must deal with. Although the quotes do not promote loving your neighbor, they do present a give and take on both sides. All of the quotes describing relationships with neighbors are from men. This interestingly situates men near or within the home. These particular male characters are likable and try to do what is best for the women in their lives.

Acquaintances, however, should not be at all like neighbors. Good company is described as interesting and full of conversation:

My idea of good company . . . is the company of clever, well-

informed people, who have a great deal of conversation; that is

what I call good company. You are mistaken, said he gently, that is

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not good company, that is the best. (My idea of good company,

2013)

A high bar is set for good company and it is unfortunately a double edged sword. If good company must embody the previous adjectives, then in order to be good company one must maintain these same qualities. This feat seems quite difficult for a woman , especially if she is following the previous quotes advising that intelligence should be hidden. It also adds a lot of pressure to social interactions and how people must conduct themselves in order to be liked. Placed within the novel, Austen intends to lower the bar rather than raise it. In *Persuasion,* Anne Elliot makes this statement in defense of keeping company with others regardless of birth or social status. Austen's words out of context suggest that if you lack these traits you may find yourself alone. The other quote speaks to this problem and calls it awkward to be unable to find a group of acquaintances to join. In order to gain and maintain acquaintances one must be exceedingly entertaining, and if one cannot do achieve this feat they are portrayed as awkward.

The quotes in this category promote friendship, a tolerance for neighbors, a high degree of pressure to be entertaining, and the necessity to find acquaintances. Women must always be cognizant and ever vigilant in relationship management. A failure to adhere to these norms could mean social criticism and exclusion. The emphasized points on friendship and neighbors are positive while the presentation of social situations in which one makes acquaintances proved more problematic. The emphasis on social performance in order to be liked is negative and makes it seem as though likability is more important than simply being yourself.

In conclusion, this section examined aspects of one's personal life and how one should act and navigate within the spaces of home, relationships, finances, and opinions. These quotes promote positive relationships, a love of home, and the ability for women to have factual rather

than emotional opinions. Despite this theme's positive aspects high standards are created and quotes contradict themselves. Another interesting finding occurred in the dominant voice featured within the quotes. Unlike the other categories, the narrator, male characters, and female characters have an almost equal voice. Only one quote separates the distribution with male characters having one more quote than females, and females having one more than the narrator.

Review

A careful analysis of Austen quotes gathered from Pinterest provided four key themes. Each theme broke into categories that allowed examination of the dominant messages being provided through the use of Austen. The theme of emotions contained messages about love, happiness, and comfort. Love is placed on a pedestal and unrealistic expectations are set. Quotes dealing with happiness make it more important than appearing intelligent while comfort can only be derived from the home. The theme of activities offers less hegemonic standards with the categories of travel and reading promoting women maintaining the freedom to explore and learn. The third theme of individual characteristics provided a study of the importance of certain traits. Attractiveness and vanity are juxtaposed against one another to suggest that attractiveness is important as long as one is not vain. Intelligence finds praise in the private sphere, but it is expected to be hidden in public. While simultaneously following the rules for attractiveness, vanity, and intelligence, women are expected to be individuals. The quotes in the category of individuality empower women to think for themselves but it does little to explain how a woman can be an individual without following the standards set by other quotes. Quotes in contained in the fourth and last theme of personal life suggest how women should conduct themselves in relation to the home, finances, personal relationships, and opinion formation. The home created contradictions between the masculine and feminine experiences. Home represented both a

comfort and a prison. The financial status of potential mates also played a role in whom to love and create a home with. The final aspect of one's personal life comes from their creation of opinions. Opinions stem from facts rather than emotions providing women with a rational mind rather than an emotional one.

In answer to my questions I found that women are being encouraged to engage in some independent thought. Individuality, positive relationships, education, freedom to travel, and factual opinions suggest that women can move beyond social expectations to create their own unique path. Unfortunately, the strongest cultural and social norms reinforcing attractiveness, unrealistic expectations of love and money, and feigned ignorance also appear within the quotes. These ideas taken as a whole contradict one another and create standards of ideal femininity that cannot be reached. My second question about women finding empowerment outside the home met with the same contradictory notions. Freedom to leave the home is presented but home also composes the true source of comfort. Austen's words removed from context create dichotomies that both function as both empowering and disempowering.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

When all of the quotes are examined both separately and as a whole, an overall

contradictory and disempowering message begins to emerge. This message adds evidence to

Douglas's (2010) argument of the necessity of feminism because society has not progressed far.

Women continue to receive messages of confinement and an expectation of adherence to

hegemonic social roles. The same confusing mixed messages and roadblocks that Campbell

(1973) noticed in her work with early women speakers present themselves within these quotes.

In addition to these problems, a female's words are being dissected and repackaged to fit

hegemonic ideals of womanhood. A woman should be attractive but not vain, intelligent but not

show it. She can be an individual but she should find happiness and comfort within a home

provided by a rich husband. While being an individual, she should also be sure to present herself

in a way that clever and amusing to everyone in order to be considered good company. An

impossible ideal has been created that makes this analysis necessary and crucial to understanding

what messages are being communicated to women.

These same messages spread themselves across the feminist movement and can be seen

in the patterns of female speakers. Angela Grimké had to choose between feminine and

masculine ways of speaking and in doing so she had to bring her knowledge from the private into

the public. She faced the same criticisms that arise in these quotes. Intelligence can live within

the home but should be hidden in public in order to appear amiable. Ideas surrounding

attractiveness and vanity were used to divide women after the 1968 Miss America pageant

protest. The precedent set by the dialogue following the protest supports the notion of a woman

being both an individual and following social norms for attractiveness. Protestors were

unattractive and did not respect the individual choices made by pageant contestants. The ERA sparked a war between contradictory notions of the home by dividing women into those who found comfort and support in the home and those who understood the need to have a life outside it. Female politicians and celebrities constantly face scrutiny and criticism regarding their ability to maneuver back and forth between the dichotomies created by these quotes.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton believed the time was coming for females to move beyond ridiculous and unhealthy social expectations. Although her vision seemed to have materialized, there is a subtle force at work that has existed since the idea of women's equality began to surface. This same force reinterpreted women's role in abolition and prohibition to their feminine moral high ground. It changed the feminist movement and turned it into a fight between women rather than a fight for all women. This same voice exists now and says women no longer need feminism because they have accomplished enough to be equal. If women continue to inadvertently listen to these patriarchal messages there will never be equality for any oppressed group. This is why feminist theory and scholarship is so important. Although women want to believe they have achieved equality, the themes found within this sample of quotes indicate otherwise. Subtle messages are being communicated that women's role is to be attractive in order find a rich husband who can supply a comfortable home. These messages are contrary to the notion that we have progressed past a need for feminism.

Steps have been taken by researchers like Campbell (1973) and Dow (1993) to find and restore women's unique messages to the world. If all that remained of Austen were these quotes, her messages would be lost. The dissection of her words leads to questions of who chooses what is important. The popularity of these pins with an audience estimated to be 87% women means that women are receiving these messages whether they realize it or not (Tekkobe, 2013). Women

casually read quotes and decide what to regard and what to discard. They unwittingly create and perpetuate certain standards in the words they choose to pin and display to others who view their pins. No matter the intention, pins are read and when they tap into and reinforce social norms they silently give power to hegemonic standards. Women are pinning items that tie them back to patriarchal authority and hegemonic ideals that feminists fought to destroy. Although the quotes are not overtly hegemonic, taken in their entirety they paint a picture of the perfect woman and that woman does not differ from the ideal woman portrayed in the conduct books of Austen's time. The quotes that portray positive attributes for women such as individuality and the importance of an education still create dichotomies that set impossible standards. Austen's characters always find ways to flout or work around the impossible standards of their time and it is doubtful she intended for her words to be used to re-create an unattainable goals for women. In a postfeminist world a woman's words are not overlooked or construed as unimportant, they are simply repackaged to communicate an old message under the guise of female acceptance.

Limitations and Future Research

Quotes from Austen films pose a limitation to this analysis and an opportunity for further study of Austen and the repackaging of the female experience. Quotes that were created from screenplays based on Austen's novels were excluded from my analysis. Although an in depth analysis of their themes was not done the majority of the film quotes were romantic in nature. Many quotes from *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility* were excluded because they were lines from screenplays rather than the novel. These quotes featured photos of the actors playing iconic Austen characters and usually featured a line that declared undying selfless love. Many of these quotes mirror Austen quotes, but they tend to be shortened or reworded to get the point across more quickly. Changing a passage for a film is a necessary evil because there is no

way to condense Austen's few hundred of pages detail and dialogue into 2 hours without cutting content. Most movie goers know and expect deviations from novels when they are adapted to film that does not make film adaptations less flawed, but there is an understanding that the films may not be a mirror of the novel. Unfortunately, adaptations tend to focus on romance and ignore other themes within Austen's work. Austen's novels lose their uniqueness and are forced into the stereotypical mold of a romantic movie. Examining these quotes taken from these films in order to analyze the themes and ideals they communicate should be examined further in order to explore Austen's entire image created by Pinterest.

Broadening further than Austen to explore other female authors and speaker's presence on Pinterest could also enlighten scholars and women about the messages being communicated. Austen is very popular on Pinterest and quotes attributed to her are easy to find. Other female authors may not share the same clout as European, white, middle class Austen enjoys. The portrayal of her and her novels only speaks to the experience of one type of woman; although the sentiments can be applied to many. Her prevalence, not only on Pinterest, but in society as a whole, furthers the power of white women to speak for the experiences of women as a whole. Although Austen's visibility makes her an important figure to study, the women left out and forced into invisibility also have an interesting story to tell and further attention should be paid to who is visible or invisible in comparison to Austen.

In conclusion, Austen's words have been dissected and cut to create quotes that are meant to inspire and amuse. Although positive themes and categories emerged from this analysis, a disturbing trend that represented a hegemonic ideal was very prevalent. Austen's words are being used to seemingly empower women while simultaneously creating standards that are unattainable and patriarchal. Power is taken from women and given back into the hands of men

who are allowed to manage money and provide comfort. Men were silently allotted power especially in the theme of emotions. Male characters dominated this category by having more quotes than female characters and the narrator. The higher numbers of male character quotes in this category reinforces the old stereotype that men are more rational than women. Not only did this analysis find women influenced to pursue a ridiculous standard, they are being told what to do and what their expectations should via the careful manipulation of Austen's words. I find this appalling and it establishes the need for continuous study of social networking and its effects on society. Women receive discourses that imply they are equal and beyond feminism, but this analysis finds that subtle hegemonic voices are still prevalent in places many do not look for them.

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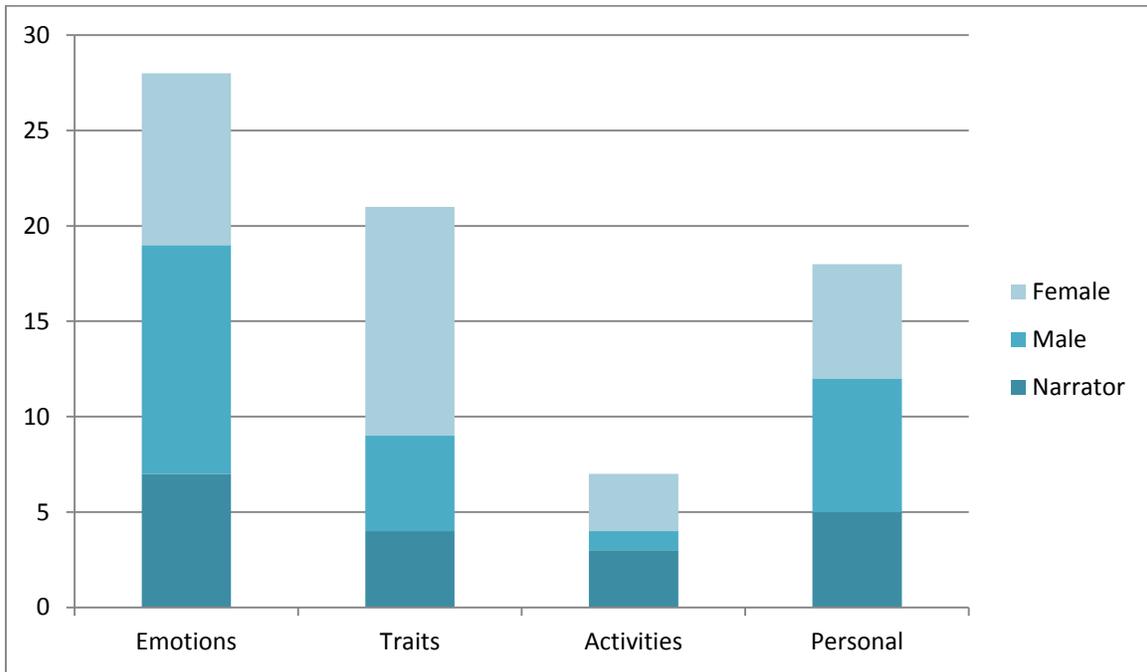
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