

Women as an Instrument for Marriage: A Critique of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*

Dr. Deepa Sehrawat

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Career Point University, Kota, Rajasthan

Abstract

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is a profound critique of the socio-cultural dynamics of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, particularly focusing on the role of women in marriage and society. In an era where women were regarded as second-class citizens, Austen uses her narrative to expose how societal structures reduced women to instruments of marriage, their value contingent on their ability to secure a prosperous match. The novel highlights the limited agency of women, portraying marriage not as a union of equals but as an economic and social transaction. Through characters like Elizabeth Bennet, Lydia Bennet, and Charlotte Lucas, Austen critiques the patriarchal pressures that confined women to a single life purpose—pleasing and marrying men. This paper delves deeply into Austen's exploration of female identity, autonomy, and the pervasive inequalities of her time.

Keywords: Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, Marriage, Patriarchy, Female Identity, 18th-Century Society, Gender Inequality

Introduction

The late 18th century was marked by entrenched patriarchal norms that systematically subordinated women, confining them to domestic spheres and leaving them with little autonomy. Women were not viewed as individuals with agency or aspirations beyond their familial roles but as instruments in fulfilling social and economic objectives. John Stuart Mill observes in *The Subjection of Women*, "In the case of religion and government, they are both run by man. Essentially, men use these institutions to further their own interests and make up rules, commandments, and laws to force women into marital servitude" (Stuart 66). Mill's critique aligns with Jane Austen's portrayal of societal inequalities in *Pride and Prejudice*, where women are compelled to conform to expectations that prioritize marriage and subservience over independence. Austen interrogates these norms, shedding light on how women were reduced to roles centered on marriage, childbearing, and maintaining familial honor.

Marriage in Austen's society was not a matter of personal choice but a social and economic obligation, particularly for women. This is evident from the novel's famous opening line: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife" (Austen 7). This seemingly lighthearted statement reveals the commodification of women and the transactional nature of marriage. It underscores the societal obsession with wealth and status, where women were expected to secure prosperous men to ensure their futures. For men, marriage extended their economic and social standing, while for women, it represented their only path to stability and respectability.

This expectation is embodied in Mrs. Bennet, whose obsessive pursuit of advantageous marriages for her daughters typifies the desperation instilled in women by a system denying them independence. Mrs.

Bennet declares, “The marriage of a daughter, which had been the first object of her wish since Jane was sixteen” (Austen 325). Her preoccupation reflects the limited options available to women, who were often deemed burdens on their families until successfully married. Austen uses Mrs. Bennet’s character to illustrate the pressures women and their families face while satirizing the absurdity of such a system.

Austen critiques the economic dependencies underpinning women’s subordinate roles in her society. Women of the upper and middle classes were excluded from the workforce and denied the right to inherit property, making marriage their only means of financial security. This is exemplified in the Bennet sisters’ predicament, as their father’s estate is entailed to their male cousin, Mr. Collins. Elizabeth Bennet, the novel’s protagonist, acknowledges the precariousness of their situation: “When you have five daughters, you’re sure to think of marrying them off” (Austen 64). This reflects the economic realities faced by women, where their worth was tied to their ability to secure a match.

Austen’s exploration of marriage as an economic transaction is evident in Charlotte Lucas’s pragmatic decision to marry Mr. Collins. Charlotte admits, “I am not romantic, you know. I never was. I ask only a comfortable home; and considering Mr. Collins’ character, connections, and situation in life, I am convinced that my chance of happiness with him is as fair as most people state” (Austen 158). Her candid acceptance of marriage’s practicalities reveals the limited agency available to women, who were often forced to prioritize financial security over personal happiness. Charlotte’s choice contrasts sharply with Elizabeth’s refusal to marry for convenience, highlighting Austen’s critique of a system that left women little room to assert their autonomy.

The themes of *Pride and Prejudice* resonate deeply with Mill’s assertion that women were systematically denied equality and independence. Mill writes, “Females are raised to think they must do everything in opposite to their male counterparts; largely, they are taught how to submit to the authority and superiority of males” (Stuart 177). This patriarchal conditioning is evident in Lydia Bennet, who equates romantic attention with love and jeopardizes her family’s reputation through her impulsive elopement with Mr. Wickham. Lydia’s actions reflect the societal failure to provide women with meaningful education or opportunities beyond marriage. Her lack of understanding of her worth is symptomatic of culture-defining women solely by their relationships with men.

Austen critiques societal pressures to perpetuate these norms. The community’s judgment of unmarried women is vividly illustrated in the novel. Elizabeth Bennet’s independence and refusal to marry Mr. Collins are initially met with surprise and criticism, as women are expected to accept any reasonable proposal to avoid burdening their families. As Austen wryly notes, “The most incomprehensible thing in the world to a man is a woman who rejects his offer of marriage!” (Austen 71). This underscores the double standards governing gender relations, where societal expectations constrained women’s choices while men retained the freedom to act as they pleased.

Through her nuanced portrayal of these dynamics, Austen critiques the social structures confining women to a single purpose: pleasing and serving men. The novel’s central themes of marriage, gender inequality, and female agency offer a timeless commentary on the limitations imposed on women by a patriarchal society. Austen challenges readers to question societal norms perpetuating gender-based oppression by examining the characters and their relationships. This paper explores these themes, analyzing Austen’s critique of marriage, economic dependency, and patriarchal oppression in *Pride and Prejudice* while situating her work within the broader context of 18th-century societal norms.

The Societal Expectation of Marriage

The opening line of *Pride and Prejudice* famously declares, “It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife” (Austen 7). This statement serves as more than an introduction; it critiques the societal norms of Austen’s time. Austen underscores the pervasive, transactional nature of marital expectations in 18th-century England by framing the pursuit of marriage as a universal truth. Men of wealth were viewed as assets to be pursued, while women were expected to secure their survival and social standing through advantageous marriages. This reduces women to passive participants, valued primarily for their ability to secure a prosperous match.

The Bennet sisters illustrate this societal structure, representing different aspects of women’s precarious position in a patriarchal society. Despite their distinct personalities and aspirations, they share a common predicament: without the ability to inherit their father’s estate due to entailment, their future security depends entirely on marrying well. This lack of economic independence highlights the vulnerability of women, often seen as liabilities rather than individuals with potential.

The urgency of marriage is most evident in Mrs. Bennet’s relentless efforts to secure matches for her daughters. Her preoccupation reflects societal pressures that tie a woman’s worth to her marital status. Mrs. Bennet declares, “The marriage of a daughter, which had been the first object of her wish since Jane was sixteen” (Austen 325), encapsulating the expectation that women marry young, as their value diminishes with age. In this context, marriage is a necessity, and young women are conditioned to prioritize finding a husband above all else.

Lydia Bennet’s elopement with Mr. Wickham exemplifies the societal consequences of failing to conform to these expectations. At sixteen, Lydia is naïve, impulsive, and desperate for attention—qualities that make her vulnerable to manipulation. Her actions, perceived as a moral and social failure, threaten to disgrace her family. This reflects the societal pressure on women to conform to strict codes of conduct while critiquing a system that equates a woman’s worth with her reputation and marital status. Lydia’s rushed marriage to Wickham, hastily arranged to preserve her family’s reputation, highlights the transactional nature of many such unions. Lydia’s feelings, shaped by societal conditioning, lead her to derive self-worth from male approval. Austen remarks, “His affection for her soon sunk into indifference; hers lasted a little longer” (Austen 406), revealing the shallow foundation of their relationship, based on fleeting attraction rather than mutual respect. Lydia’s plight cautions against a system that prioritizes appearances and expectations over individual happiness and autonomy.

Charlotte Lucas’s pragmatic decision to marry Mr. Collins further explores the transactional nature of marriage. Despite his lack of charm, Charlotte admits,

I am not romantic, you know. I never was. I ask only for a comfortable home, and considering Mr. Collins’ character, connections, and situation in life, I am convinced that my chance of happiness with him is as fair as most people state. (Austen 158)

Unlike Lydia, Charlotte views marriage as a practical arrangement rather than an emotional or romantic union, underscoring the limited agency of women forced to prioritize financial security over personal fulfillment.

Elizabeth Bennet, in contrast, challenges societal norms by asserting her independence and rejecting proposals that do not align with her values. Her refusal of Mr. Collins’ proposal defies a system that expects women to accept any reasonable offer to avoid burdening their families. Elizabeth’s rejection is met with disbelief, as Mr. Collins cannot fathom a woman refusing a marriage proposal. Austen humorously critiques this double standard: “The most incomprehensible thing in the world to a man is a

woman who rejects his offer of marriage!” (Austen 71). Elizabeth’s insistence on marrying for love rather than convenience or social expectation positions her as a progressive figure within a regressive society. The societal expectation of marriage is also evident in Lady Catherine de Bourgh’s attempt to control Elizabeth’s choices. Representing rigid social hierarchies, Lady Catherine dissuades Elizabeth from marrying Mr. Darcy, citing class differences and her plans for Darcy to marry her daughter. Elizabeth boldly asserts her right to make her own decisions: “He is a gentleman; I am a gentleman’s daughter; so far we are equal” (Austen 375). This statement challenges class and gender hierarchies, affirming Elizabeth’s belief in equality and her refusal to conform to societal expectations.

Austen’s exploration of marriage critiques societal structures that confine women to specific roles and limit their agency. The novel exposes the inequalities of a system that prioritizes wealth, status, and appearances over genuine connections and happiness. By portraying characters like Lydia, Charlotte, and Elizabeth, Austen highlights the diverse ways women navigate these expectations, ultimately advocating for greater autonomy and equality in relationships.

Economic Dependency and Female Identity

Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* critiques the economic dependency that underpins women’s lives in her society. In 18th-century England, women had few avenues for financial independence, tying their survival and respectability to marriage. A woman’s value was closely aligned with her marital prospects, and her security depended on alliances with wealthy men. This dependency is vividly illustrated through Charlotte Lucas, whose pragmatic approach to marriage reveals the harsh realities women face. Despite his unappealing personality and obsequious nature, Charlotte’s decision to marry Mr. Collins reflects the compromises women often make under societal expectations. Charlotte candidly admits,

I am not romantic, you know. I never was. I ask only for a comfortable home, and considering Mr. Collins’s character, connections, and situation in life, I am convinced that my chance of happiness with him is as fair as most people state. (Austen 158)

Her acknowledgment underscores the transactional nature of many marriages at the time. For Charlotte, marriage is not about love but about securing stability and respectability, revealing the limited agency available to women.

Charlotte’s marriage to Mr. Collins exemplifies the economic vulnerability women faced under a patriarchal system that denied them property rights and independent income. As the eldest daughter of a modest family, Charlotte knows her financial stability depends on marrying a man who can provide for her. Her pragmatism is a survival strategy within these constraints, highlighting the systemic injustices that limit women’s choices and reinforce their subordinate status. By presenting Charlotte’s perspective, Austen critiques a society that prioritizes economic stability over personal agency, forcing women to adapt to an oppressive system.

In contrast, Elizabeth Bennet challenges the norms of economic dependency and transactional marriage. Her refusal of Mr. Collins’ proposal asserts her autonomy and rejects societal expectations to marry for financial security rather than love. Confident in his offer, Mr. Collins assumes Elizabeth will accept, given his future inheritance of Longbourn and his position as a clergyman. His surprise at her rejection underscores the entitlement of men in Austen’s society, who view marriage as a one-sided transaction in which women are expected to conform. Elizabeth defies these expectations, stating, “You could not make me happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who could make you so” (Austen

108). Her refusal highlights her commitment to marrying for love and mutual respect, rather than succumbing to societal pressures.

Elizabeth's independence and principles set her apart, challenging deeply ingrained societal norms. Her interactions with Mr. Darcy further underscore her desire for a relationship based on equality and genuine connection. Initially, Darcy's proposal reflects male entitlement and condescension, assuming his wealth and status make him an ideal suitor. Elizabeth's rejection forces Darcy to confront his prejudices and recognize the importance of respect and equality in a partnership. His second proposal, marked by humility and appreciation for Elizabeth's intelligence, reflects his transformation: "You taught me a lesson, hard indeed at first, but most advantageous. By you, I was properly humbled" (Austen 375). Darcy's change challenges the societal norm that men hold ultimate power in relationships, offering a vision of a more egalitarian dynamic.

The economic dependency of women is further reinforced by inheritance laws privileging male heirs and excluding women from property ownership. The Bennet sisters' precarious situation, as their father's estate is entailed to Mr. Collins, underscores this systemic inequality. Elizabeth's refusal to marry Mr. Collins reflects her recognition of the injustice in a system that denies women property rights and financial stability. Her eventual marriage to Mr. Darcy, based on love and mutual respect, rejects the transactional nature of marriage and affirms her belief in personal agency.

Through the contrasting experiences of Charlotte Lucas and Elizabeth Bennet, Austen critiques economic structures that perpetuate women's dependency. Charlotte's pragmatic decision highlights the compromises women must make, while Elizabeth's insistence on marrying for love challenges these norms and asserts autonomy. By examining these characters' choices, Austen exposes the oppressive structures confining women to economic dependence and offers a vision of relationships based on equality and mutual respect. Through *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen invites readers to question societal norms that perpetuate gender inequality and imagine a more equitable world where women have the freedom to define their own lives.

Patriarchal Oppression and Limited Agency

The patriarchal structures of Jane Austen's time systematically conditioned women to accept subordinate roles in society. These structures perpetuated female inferiority through education, societal expectations, and familial influence, leaving women with limited agency. John Stuart Mill articulates this systemic oppression in *The Subjection of Women*, stating, "Females are raised to think they must do everything in opposite to their male counterparts; largely, they are taught how to submit to the authority and superiority of males" (Mill 177). This observation resonates with the social dynamics in *Pride and Prejudice*, where women are overtly and covertly taught to align with patriarchal expectations. Austen's narrative critiques this oppression, exposing the internalization of patriarchal norms by women and the societal mechanisms that reinforce their limited agency.

The behavior of characters like Mary Bennet and Lydia Bennet demonstrates how patriarchal conditioning shapes women's attitudes. Mary, the socially awkward middle Bennet sister, embodies submission through conformity. She strictly adheres to societal expectations, focusing on self-improvement in ways deemed acceptable for women. Her obsession with moral sermons and lack of individuality suggests that she has internalized the belief that women's worth lies in reflecting societal ideals rather than asserting their own identities. For instance, Mary declares, "Pride relates more to our opinion of ourselves, vanity to what we would have others think of us" (Austen 22). While insightful, her statement reflects a worldview shaped

by external validation and societal norms. Mary's passivity highlights the success of patriarchal structures in suppressing individuality.

In contrast, Lydia Bennet rebels against societal expectations through flirtation and impulsivity, but her rebellion ultimately reinforces patriarchal norms. Her elopement with Mr. Wickham, while appearing to reject societal constraints, becomes a source of shame for her family and requires a swift marriage to preserve her reputation. Austen writes, "His affection for her soon sunk into indifference; hers lasted a little longer" (Austen 406), illustrating the superficiality of their relationship and the futility of Lydia's rebellion in achieving autonomy. Lydia's fate demonstrates how patriarchal systems reassert control over women who deviate from societal expectations, using shame and reputation as tools of suppression.

Mrs. Bennet exemplifies internalized patriarchy, obsessing over marrying off her daughters to secure their futures. Early in the novel, she declares, "If I can but see one of my daughters happily settled at Netherfield, and all the others equally well married, I shall have nothing to wish for" (Austen 10). This reflects societal pressure on women to prioritize marriage above all else. For Mrs. Bennet, success is measured not by personal growth or achievement but by securing advantageous matches. Her behavior, often satirized, underscores the cyclical nature of patriarchal oppression, as women who internalize these norms perpetuate them for the next generation.

Elizabeth Bennet challenges this mindset by refusing to conform to narrow, prescribed roles for women. Her sharp wit and independence starkly contrast with her mother's obsession with marriage and her sisters' varying degrees of conformity. Elizabeth rejects the notion that a woman's worth is tied to her marital status, as evidenced by her refusal of Mr. Collins' proposal. When Mr. Collins assumes Elizabeth will accept his practical offer, she boldly declares, "You could not make me happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who could make you so" (Austen 108). Her refusal asserts her right to pursue a life aligned with her values rather than societal expectations.

Elizabeth's resistance to patriarchal oppression is further highlighted in her interactions with Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Lady Catherine, a symbol of entrenched social hierarchies, attempts to intimidate Elizabeth into rejecting Mr. Darcy's eventual proposal, citing class differences. Elizabeth's defiance is a powerful assertion of her agency. She responds, "He is a gentleman; I am a gentleman's daughter; so far we are equal" (Austen 375), challenging the class and gender hierarchies underpinning Lady Catherine's worldview and affirming her belief in equality.

Austen critiques societal mechanisms that perpetuate patriarchal oppression, particularly the emphasis on reputation and propriety. Women in *Pride and Prejudice* are harshly judged for deviating from societal norms, while men face far fewer consequences for similar actions. For instance, Mr. Wickham's reputation suffers little despite his elopement with Lydia and past transgressions, whereas Lydia's actions threaten to disgrace her family. This double standard reflects the unequal power dynamics that allow men to act with impunity while holding women to rigid moral standards. Austen uses this disparity to highlight systemic injustices that limit women's autonomy and perpetuate subordination.

Through characters like Mary, Lydia, Mrs. Bennet, and Elizabeth, Austen examines how patriarchal oppression shapes women's lives. Mary and Lydia represent the extremes of conformity and rebellion, which ultimately reinforce societal norms. Mrs. Bennet exemplifies the internalization of patriarchal values, while Elizabeth challenges these norms through her independence and refusal to compromise her principles. By critiquing these dynamics, Austen exposes the pervasive nature of patriarchal oppression and calls attention to the need for greater agency and equality for women.

The Role of Women in 18th-Century Society

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen captures the limitations imposed on women in 18th-century society, where their roles were confined to the domestic sphere. Women were denied financial independence, professional careers, and political participation, leaving them with little agency over their lives. These constraints reflected a patriarchal system that positioned men as the primary actors in both public and private life while relegating women to subservient roles. As John Stuart Mill asserts in *The Subjection of Women*, “Men believe that women should not have their freedom because they do not need it; men adopt a ‘master’ status when it comes to women” (Mill 19). This belief permeates the interactions and attitudes of Austen’s characters, shaping their relationships and decisions. Through her nuanced portrayal of women’s limited opportunities, Austen critiques the systemic inequalities of her time.

Austen’s critique is most evident in the issue of inheritance, which directly affects the Bennet sisters’ futures. The entailment of Mr. Bennet’s estate prevents his daughters from inheriting, leaving them dependent on marriage for financial security. This legal restriction underscores the societal assumption that women could not and should not manage property. Lady Catherine de Bourgh bluntly remarks, “I see no occasion for entailing estates away from the female line. It was not thought necessary in Sir Lewis de Bourgh’s family” (Austen 350). While hypocritical given her adherence to societal hierarchies, her statement highlights the pervasive belief that women were incapable of handling wealth or land. These constraints create urgency for women to marry well, as failure to secure a prosperous husband could result in social and economic ruin.

The relationship dynamics in the novel also reflect the patriarchal mindset of Austen’s society. Mr. Collins embodies men’s dismissive, self-assured attitude toward women during this period. When proposing to Elizabeth Bennet, he assumes she will accept simply because he offers financial stability and respectability. His condescending tone reveals his belief in male superiority and disregard for Elizabeth’s feelings. He states, “My situation in life, my connections with the family of de Bourgh, and my relationship to your own, are circumstances highly in my favor; and you should take it into further consideration that it is by no means certain that another offer of marriage may ever be made to you” (Austen 104). His proposal reflects the transactional nature of marriage, where women are expected to accept offers regardless of personal compatibility.

Elizabeth’s rejection of Mr. Collins’s proposal is a radical departure from societal norms, challenging the belief that women should unquestioningly submit to male authority. Her refusal to marry solely for financial security demonstrates her determination to assert her agency and prioritize her happiness. Mr. Collins’ reaction to her rejection reveals the ingrained patriarchal belief that women’s choices are inconsequential. He responds, “It is usual with young ladies to reject the addresses of the man whom they secretly mean to accept” (Austen 106), exemplifying the dismissive attitude of men who assume women’s autonomy is performative and subject to male interpretation.

Similarly, Mr. Darcy’s initial proposal reflects male entitlement and condescension. Highlighting the “inferiority” of Elizabeth’s family and social standing, Darcy states, “He spoke of apprehension and anxiety, but his countenance expressed real security. Such a circumstance could only exasperate further” (Austen 188). Darcy’s proposal underscores the societal prioritization of wealth and status over genuine connection. Elizabeth’s rejection challenges norms perpetuating male dominance, forcing Darcy to confront his prejudices and recognize the importance of equality and mutual respect in relationships.

Lady Catherine de Bourgh offers another perspective on women’s roles within the patriarchal framework. Despite her wealth and authority, she embodies internalized patriarchy, using her power to reinforce the

structures that oppress other women. Her insistence that Elizabeth rejects Darcy's second proposal is rooted in her belief that Darcy's marriage should maintain the social order. Lady Catherine declares, "I am most seriously displeased. I have not been accustomed to such language as this. I am almost the nearest relation he has in the world, and am entitled to know all his dearest concerns" (Austen 372). Her entitlement reflects rigid class and gender hierarchies as she attempts to control Elizabeth's choices and reinforce conformity to societal expectations.

Austen's critique extends to the lack of professional and educational opportunities for women. In 18th-century society, women were expected to focus on accomplishments that enhanced their desirability as wives, such as playing music, painting, and maintaining agreeable manners. Mary Bennet epitomizes this expectation, devoting herself to moralizing and acquiring knowledge aligned with societal ideals rather than pursuing intellectual growth. Her statement, "No one can be really esteemed accomplished who does not greatly surpass what is usually met with" (Austen 31), reveals the societal pressure to excel within narrowly defined parameters that ultimately reinforce women's subservience.

Austen's portrayal of women's roles offers a scathing critique of patriarchal structures that confine them to the domestic sphere and limit their opportunities. Through characters like Elizabeth Bennet, Lady Catherine, and Mr. Collins, she exposes systemic inequalities that define gender relations, highlighting the lack of agency afforded to women and the mechanisms perpetuating their subordination. By critiquing these dynamics, Austen invites readers to question the norms of her time and consider the importance of autonomy, equality, and genuine connection in relationships and society.

Conclusion

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is an enduring critique of the societal norms and patriarchal structures that governed women's lives in the 18th century. Through the experiences of characters like Elizabeth Bennet and Charlotte Lucas, Austen examines the deeply entrenched systems that reduced women's roles to that of securing advantageous marriages. The novel explores the interplay of love, autonomy, and societal expectations, illustrating the tension between individual desires and the constraints imposed by rigid social hierarchies. By juxtaposing Elizabeth's assertive independence and Charlotte's pragmatic acceptance of societal norms, Austen offers a nuanced critique of the limited agency afforded to women while exposing the transactional nature of relationships rooted in economic necessity and class consciousness.

Austen's portrayal of Elizabeth and Darcy's eventual union serves as a hopeful reimagining of what relationships can achieve when based on mutual respect, equality, and emotional compatibility. In contrast, the compromises and struggles of other characters, such as Charlotte and Lydia, reveal the compromises women were forced to make in a society that offered them little choice. Austen's exploration of these dynamics calls attention to the systemic inequities embedded in the inheritance laws, societal norms, and gender expectations of her time, prompting readers to reconsider the roles imposed upon women.

Ultimately, *Pride and Prejudice* transcends its historical context to serve as a timeless examination of gender, power, and social mobility. Austen's ability to weave incisive social critique into the fabric of her narrative makes the novel as relevant today as it was in her time, continuing to inspire discussions about equality, personal freedom, and the enduring need to challenge oppressive structures. By illuminating the challenges faced by women in a patriarchal society and envisioning relationships based on equity and respect, Austen invites her readers to imagine a world where autonomy and happiness are not privileges but rights.

Works Cited

1. Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Fingerprint Publishing, 2019.
2. Austen, Jane. *Mansfield Park*. Fingerprint Publishing, 2019.
3. Austen, Jane. *Emma*. Fingerprint Publishing, 2019.
4. Mill, John Stuart. *The Subjection of Women*. London: Longmans, Green, Reader and Dyer, 1869.
5. Mullen, John. "Courtship, Love and Marriage in Jane Austen's Novels." *The British Library*, 15 May 2017, <https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/courtship-love-and-marriage-in-jane-austens-novels>. Accessed 15 May 2023.