

Institution: University of Oxford
Unit of Assessment: 029 English Language and Literature
Title of case study: Enhancing Public Understanding and Curatorship of Jane Austen
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Jane Austen has, since the late nineteenth century, occupied a powerful position within English-speaking culture, popular and canonical, accessible and complexly academic. Kathryn Sutherland's engagement with audiences beyond academia has improved public understanding of how Austen's works and life acquired the forms and significance they have had. Sutherland's research has enabled better-informed teaching of Austen at secondary school and university level, and assisted high quality educational programme making for television. Her collaborative work on the digitization of Austen's working drafts has set new standards for the encoding of literary manuscripts, assisting literary curatorship and improving public accessibility to cultural heritage.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The underpinning research, conducted by Sutherland alone and in collaboration with colleagues in Digital Humanities internationally, focuses on the challenges textual forms present for interpretation—with the example of Jane Austen always at its heart. Sutherland, Professor of Bibliography and Textual Criticism, has since 2002 developed a body of research elucidating the role of textual criticism (the study of the transmission and transformation of writings through the history of their textual forms) in shaping our responses to this major English writer.</p> <p>An edited anthology of family-written biographies and recollections of Austen, published in 2002, brought together for the first time all the first-hand accounts of Austen's life written by those who knew her and which continue to fuel the modern biography industry's fascination with her. Sutherland used these original accounts to shine light on the Austen family's persistent management, censorship, and marketing of a particular version of Austen that has its latest manifestation in Deirdre Le Faye's 'authoritative' biography <i>Jane Austen: A Family Record</i> (2004). The editorial apparatus and critical introduction to Sutherland's anthology considered the absence of a critical theory of biography that can help us address the reality and concept of the partial life (the life of a famous figure for whom only incomplete evidence survives).</p> <p>A critical monograph, <i>Jane Austen's Textual Lives: From Aeschylus to Bollywood</i> (2005), explored Austen's multiple textual identities (manuscript, critical editions, biographies, fictional sequels, and film adaptations) to provide a conspectus of the development of English Studies as a discipline through the twentieth century and to argue the relationship between Austen's public and academic reception. Identifying the oppositions and synergies which have characterized the responses of Austen's common readers and the views of the literary establishment, the book established the cultural 'uses' of Jane Austen as a major subject for academic discussion.</p> <p>With AHRC funding, and in collaboration with major public libraries and colleagues in the Department of Digital Humanities, King's College, London, Sutherland developed (2006-10) <i>Jane Austen's Fiction Manuscripts: A Digital Edition</i> (released October 2010) (www.janeausten.ac.uk) This free-access web-based digital reunification of all Austen's extant fiction manuscripts (approximately 1100 pages) combines images of every page of manuscript writing with fully searchable diplomatic transcriptions, encoded in TEI-XML with detailed head notes describing the manuscripts as texts and as artefacts. It provides the most complete conservation record of these frail manuscripts. It also preserves and makes available globally, and for posterity, one of the earliest collections of creative writings in the author's hand to survive for a British novelist.</p> <p>Alongside this practical digital development, Sutherland organised, with Marilyn Deegan (Professor of Digital Humanities, King's College, London), a series of seminars and colloquia during the same period, involving major international scholars, examining the role and challenges of digital</p>

technologies in mediating our textual heritage. Two publications came directly from this academic-digital partnership: a co-authored book, *Transferred Illusions*, with Deegan (2009); and a co-edited collection of essays, *Text Editing, Print, and the Digital World*, with Deegan (2009).

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- J. E. Austen-Leigh, *A Memoir of Jane Austen and Other Family Recollections*, ed. Kathryn Sutherland (OUP, 2002). <http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=gQzntPPPXREC>
 A must for lovers of Austen's work' *Choice Magazine*; 'A very good introduction by Kathryn Sutherland', Derwent May, *The Times*.
- Kathryn Sutherland, *Jane Austen's Textual Lives: From Aeschylus to Bollywood* (OUP, 2005; paperback edn, 2007). <http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=P0hcUyhuEpgC>
 Review extracts: 'powerful and groundbreaking' (Simon Jarvis, *Times Literary Supplement* 10.2.2006); 'the most important scholarly work on Austen written to date' (Peter Shillingsburg, *Review of English Studies*, June 2006); 'houses a wealth of information and suggestion ... this outstanding book ... indispensable study' (Freya Johnston, *Year's Work in English Studies* 2005); 'it proposes a revolution in examining these beloved and familiar works' (Penny Gay, *Sensibilities*, June 2006).
- Jane Austen's Fiction Manuscripts: A Digital Edition*, ed. Kathryn Sutherland (2010) (www.janeausten.ac.uk).
- Sutherland with Marilyn Deegan, *Transferred Illusions: Digital Technology and the Forms of Print* (Ashgate, 2009). http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=o9Rf2o_XdqcC
- Sutherland with Deegan, co-eds, *Text Editing, Print, and the Digital World* (Ashgate, 2009). <http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=-yyV9hNAPYAC>

All these publications were rigorously peer reviewed. The proposal for the Digital Edition was rated outstanding by the AHRC peer review board.

Key grants

2003-4, one year's paid research leave, funded by HEFCE and the Special Paid Leave Scheme Oxford University.

2006-10, AHRC Resource Enhancement Scheme Award 'Jane Austen's Holograph Fiction Manuscripts: A Digital and Print Resource' (£166,605).

2012 (January-June), AHRC Research Fellowship, 'Jane Austen's Fiction Manuscripts: A Critical Edition in Four Volumes', covering Sutherland's salary costs (£54,543).

Note: The AHRC funding was awarded to Sutherland (only) as Principal Investigator. Sutherland and Deegan were members of the AHRC ICT Methods Network Board (April 2005-March 2008).

2012-15: Leverhulme three-year Major Research Fellowship, consisting of Salary Replacement and Travel Fund (£152,865). This funds a new project on 'Manuscript and the practice of meaning', building on the work of the digital edition to study the creative methods of five Romantic novelists: Austen, Godwin, Mary Shelley, Scott and Burney.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

A significant aspect of Sutherland's impact has been the contribution made to **providing new resources and forming new agendas for other academics engaged in studies of Austen**. The anthology of Austen family biographies (*A Memoir of Jane Austen and Other Family Recollections*, 2002) has been adopted world-wide as a university course book (e.g. Colby College, the University of Delaware, Southern Illinois University) as well as having wide take up by the general public (Austen commands levels of public interest probably second only to Shakespeare among Britain's classic writers). It is regularly reprinted, and has to date **sold 4,440 copies and netted revenue of £12,735, for OUP**. *Textual Lives* has directly shaped a burgeoning interest in reception studies of Austen at university level, serving as a model, for example, in recent publications from Juliet Wells, *Everybody's Jane* (2011) and Gillian Dow and Clare Hanson, eds, *Uses of Jane* (2012). Wells writes: 'Kathryn Sutherland's *Jane Austen's Textual Lives* [...] has had a profound impact within Austen studies, including but not limited to reception history and the study of popular culture ... I take up where Sutherland leaves off' (pp. 14-15). It is a recommended teaching text at numerous

universities, including the Open University, St Andrews, Exeter, and the University of Texas at Austin. It has sold **1,280 copies and netted revenue of £24,555** to date. After *Textual Lives* Sutherland was commissioned to write a series of reviews of screen adaptations of Austen for the *Times Literary Supplement* (2005-9). More recently, *Textual Lives* was used as research source for *The Many Lovers of Miss Jane Austen* (aired BBC2, 23 December 2011, director Rupert Edwards, presenter Amanda Vickery).

Jane Austen's Fiction Manuscripts: A Digital Edition provoked huge academic and public interest when it went live in October 2010 (Ref. i). The edition offered the first chance to view Austen's fiction manuscripts as a reunified collection since their dispersal in 1845, and **the first chance for any member of the general public to engage with them in high quality, free, digital form**. The site has had 4,237,474 hits (113,204 unique visitors) between its launch and the end of the auditing period (Ref. ii). Between 23 October and 19 November 2010, 454 news articles (Radio, TV, newspapers) covered the story internationally; Sutherland was interviewed by many major British and North American papers and broadcasters. Her free online podcast lectures, 'Jane Austen's Manuscripts Explored', in the Oxford University BODcasts series, had attracted 1386 downloads by the end of the audited period (Ref. iii).

The edition provided the academic community with an important teaching resource (images and searchable transcriptions of all Austen's fiction manuscripts), but the project also had important **technical implications for future work in manuscript conservation and curation**. It provided a model for the use of digital media that admits public access to materials that are too delicate and too valuable to be open to easy view in a library or museum. Technically, the project set new standards for the digital encoding of working draft manuscripts (with the establishment of an international subcommittee for TEI-XML encoding of writers' revisions, chaired by Elena Pierazzo, Technical Researcher on the Austen Digital Edition). Immediate impact came with its inclusion in the British Library's major public exhibition, 'Growing Knowledge: The Evolution of Research' (October 2010-July 2011), an interactive showcase of innovative projects from the arts, science, and medicine, inviting the general public to engage with the latest digital research. It also featured in 'Oxford Impacts', an Oxford University publicity drive, showcasing its major research. In January 2013, Sutherland demonstrated the web-edition to the Right Hon. Vince Cable, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation, and Skills as an example of innovation in the Humanities. The conservation element to Sutherland's work is important in other ways, too: she worked with curators at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, to gain funding to conserve Austen's juvenile notebook, *Volume the First*, helped draw up the successful application (July 2011) to the Heritage Memorial Fund for funds for the Bodleian Library to purchase the manuscript of Austen's novel *The Watsons*, and gave a public lecture on the manuscript in Oxford on World Book Day, 1 March 2012 (Ref. iv).

The web-edition is regularly accessed by **schools and by creative writers**. In June 2010, for example, the British Library, with Jane Austen's House Museum, organised a Day School for Sixth Formers, 'Jane Austen and Performance', with activities built around the web-edition (Ref. v). The edition was used and acknowledged as a source by the novelist Ali Smith in *Artful* (2012) (p. 16 and back of book credits).

In 2008, Sutherland was invited to become **Patron and subsequently Trustee of Jane Austen's House Museum, Chawton**, Hampshire. Work with the Museum has significantly extended the reach of the impact of her research, with regular talks to the general public and to schools (including judging an annual national fiction writing competition for school children) (Ref. vi), and **educational films and apps (with the British Library)**. Her contributions to the BL's flagship literature project, English Online (due to launch in Spring 2014) are described by the library's Digital Programmes Manager, Anna Lobbenberg, as 'invaluable': 'the site will use primary source material to aid the study of key literary works and to help shed light on the context in which these works were written. Professor Kathryn Sutherland ... sits on the project's advisory board, has written articles for the site, and has appeared in a number of short films shot both at the Library and at Jane Austen House Museum. She has also delivered a lecture to A-level students as part of our *Pride and Prejudice* conference. Her expertise and generosity have helped ensure that the literary analysis provided by the site is accessible and enticing for young people and lifelong

learners' (Ref. 1). Sutherland is regularly **called on by newspaper journalists and BBC radio and television for expert comment** on Austen, and has disseminated her knowledge of Austen's writing and editorial reshaping through numerous articles, podcasts, and interviews aimed at the general reader (Ref. 8). Since 2010 she has appeared on Swedish TV, BBC2 Austen documentaries (*The Many Lovers of Miss Jane Austen*, 23 December 2011; *Jane Austen: The Unseen Portrait*, Martha Kearney, director Neil Crombie) (Ref. 2). Sutherland has provided the 'voice over' for the Chawton House travelling exhibition of 'Pride and Prejudice' currently on tour throughout Britain (Ref. viii).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Testimony

- (1) Corroborating email from Programmes Manager, British Library 3.9.13.
- (2) Viewing data and media coverage from Managing Director, Matchlight (DVD Media Group), 3.10.13.

Other evidence sources

- (i). Sample media attention for launch of www.janeausten.ac.uk
 BBC Radio 4, Today Programme, 23/10/10, 8.19am:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/today/hi/today/newsid_9120000/9120632.stm
 The Guardian, Maev Kennedy, p.9, 23/10/10: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2010/oct/23/jane-austen-poor-punctuation-kathryn-sutherland>
 ABC News, 24/10/10: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/10/24/3046779.htm>
 Sydney Morning Herald, 25/10/10: <http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/books/bad-speller-austens-books-were-heavily-edited-20101025-16znr.html>
 CBC News, 23/10/10: <http://www.cbc.ca/arts/books/story/2010/10/23/austen-spelling.html>
 Hindustan Times, 23/10/10: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/Jane-Austen-had-helping-hand-from-editor/Article1-616889.aspx>
 Le Monde, 25/10/10: http://www.lemonde.fr/livres/article/2010/10/24/jane-austen-etait-nulle-en-orthographe-et-en-grammaire_1430568_3260.html
 Jack Malvern in *The Australian*: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/arts/editor-put-an-end-to-austen-dashing-about/story-e6frg8n6-1225943401759>
- (ii). Viewing data for www.janeausten.ac.uk, at <http://austen-webstats.cch.kcl.ac.uk/> and in digest document.
- (iii). <http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/jane-austens-manuscripts-explored-audio-0> And download figures courtesy of IT-support, University of Oxford.
- (iv). World book day podcast: <http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/watsons-jane-austen-practising-audio>
- (v). Jane Austen House Museum Day School for 6th Formers:
<http://www.bl.uk/learning/tarea/teachers/projects/youngresearchers/austen/austenconference.html>
- (vi). Chawton House, annual fiction writing competition for school children: http://www.jane-austens-house-museum.org.uk/educ_schools/writing_comp_2013.htm
- (vii). On-line examples of Sutherland's public engagement work:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2010/oct/23/jane-austen-poor-punctuation-kathryn-sutherland>
<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/itunes-u/great-writers-inspire/id520504803> (two free podcasts recorded for Oxford iTunes).
- (viii). <http://www.prideandprejudice200.org.uk/2013/04/pride-prejudice-travelling-exhibition-chawton-uk/>