

"Catherine Morland is not like the beautiful orphan heiresses of gothic or sentimental fiction; she is an ordinary young woman who lives with both of her fairly sensible parents and the rest of her large, affectionate family. Catherine's family are "plain matter-of-fact people" (65–66), and Catherine has similarly modest traits. She also acquires little of the range of the prescribed "feminine" accomplishments of languages and the fine arts." p44

"The eagerness of her desire to explain how she came to miss her appointment adds power to her speech, and when she says that she would have "jumped out and run after [him]" if she could (94), her speech conveys sincerity. What might sound like overstatement is simply true in Catherine's case. She would gladly jump from a carriage and run through the street to save a friend from distress. She is a woman who is open with her affections, and when she likes a person, she shows her feelings. Though the narrator compares Catherine's behavior to the "heroic," one can also compare her to the contemporary ideal. Rather than following an artificial script, Catherine prefers bluntness and directness to elegance." p46 *Unlike heroines of sensibility*

LECTURE NOTES:

Sensibility:

- Meant both:
 - the ability to feel strongly (empathy)
 - And conscience - the capacity for rational feeling
 - allow them to understand environment and act appropriately
- Values associated: moral and aesthetic
- Virtue linked to taste
- Inevitably lead to love
- Selfishness
- Ambivalent term used by radicals and conservatives
- Refer to the feminine domestic, values that must be protected
- Associated with a democratic levelling of tastes
 - Love not just imposed from the top, appropriate for family
 - you love, act of freedom, associated with democracy
- Like French feminism - uses feminine difference and multiplicity to critique masculine world
 - here feminine sensitivity and virtue used to critique masculine world
- Sensibility associated with genuine liberal values
- Radicals feel empathy or sympathy for under-trodden
- Also requires protected space - needs paternal father to create that space - separate from crown and economic
- only when its protected you have exquisite sense of emotion and value
- seems to create democracy of tastes
- Leaving sensibility unguarded
- In novels - paternal father is personified often as love, father - protect space of family
- Toward end of 18th c - values associated with sensibility became more associated with women
 - men still need sensibility, focused on women
- modesty, delicacy, sympathy - seen as qualities women have
- Give women a certain degree of power
 - Woolstonecraft noted it was likely to become a weakness rather than a strength
- Feminism
 - Home was increasingly peripheral to capitalist economy
 - Home used to be crucial part of economy in farming
 - Threat to sensibility
 - Heroine loses space that protects her, plunged into world beyond her control
 - Terror - she's so sensitive, open, vulnerable to external threat

Catherine

- Naive, ordinary
 - disjunction between other gothic heroines, not a work of art
 - Ellena - Grecian nymph
 - Antonia - Becomes inanimate form, Venus
- Austen separate women from aesthetic objects
 - giving a picture of Catherine in early childhood - unusual, radical at time
 - Women interesting only when marriagable age
- Catherine

- Construct in contrast to patriarchal, is revolutionary
- Friendship between men
- Wife and daughter as centre of social world, domestic
- Birth of modern feminism
- Moment in terms of development in terms of male identity
 - men orient themselves in relation to the family - key source of value (not God)
 - Sense of feeling - emotion, sensitivity, not dominant
 - Androgynous - Lorenzo

Northanger Abbey

- Novel was a genre with which women were actively involved - perceived that large percentage/majority were women
 - Dilemma for masculine culture
 - Takes women away from culture, subjectivity not policed by states culture
 - Sets up trope - women associated with mass culture
- Paternal family - women meant to be centre, open perceptive, empathy, virtue
 - women also reading gothic fiction
 - emotions and sensitivities raises, heightened by artificial stimulus
 - Become a new source of anxiety
 - Guide books for young women
- Women aren't always good and moral and fair
 - belief that men are monsters
 - sentiment
 - language of fiction
 - divine sensibility - appears externally
 - Catherine guilty of all of them
 - General Tilney
 - Lives in regions of fictions
- Key image critique of text - veil
 - Udolpho critique of patriarchy - behind patriarchal figure, right for novel is a women
- Behind the surface of things is the suffering of women
 - Rad - women readers to look behind the surface
 - Austen- social world, etiquette is veil
- Female sensibility or male reason
- Nothing behind the veil - Catherine's imaginings out of place
 - punishing Catherine, bringing women back to Earth
 - Discipline
 - Threat to gothic
 - Education of Catherine
- How gothic romance should be read

Gothic in everyday life

ART 2: "[Thorpe lies about Tilney's having left already - they pass them in the carriage, he won't let Catherine out] "The gothic reminiscence is clear here, but it is not as strong as the immediate appeal to our normal moral disapproval. What most strikes the reader in fact is the truth to everyday life of the incident and attitudes" p 804

ART 11: "Catherine's emotions cannot be dismissed as teenage self-dramatization: Henry is angry with her until she has explained the situation, so she does risk losing his regard; his cold looks at the theatre, combined with Eleanor's not receiving her, convince her that her error was egregious. Catherine's unintentional "breach of propriety" (105) could have resulted in a permanent breach with the Tilneys and perhaps injured her character. Catherine's fears for her reputation are as justified as Emily's fears for her life—and more probable, as a young woman in Regency England had a greater chance of being unjustly maligned than of being murdered." p93